

Stat of the week

Men's basketball was ranked No. 25 in the AP preseason top-25 poll on Monday.



Freshman guard Bones Hyland was the highest-rated recruit VCU signed since senior guard De'Riante Jenkins in 2016.

Photo by Alessandro Latour

After a life-altering house fire, Bones Hyland draws strength from losses

RYAN GRUBE
Staff Writer

WHEN HE SMELLED THE SMOKE, Bones Hyland was lying on his bed, watching the Kansas-Duke Elite Eight game on his laptop and FaceTiming a teammate. That Sunday, which he spent with family and friends like any other, Hyland's Wilmington, Delaware, home was engulfed in flames.

He had to act quickly as black smoke filled the house. Hyland was forced to jump out of his second-floor bedroom on March 25, 2018, as his grandmother and two baby cousins remained trapped inside.

Although a neighbor and his friend were able to catch the top half of Hyland's body, his right knee slammed into the brick stairs below.

Hyland's grandmother and cousins were rushed to nearby hospitals, where his "Mom Mom," Fay, and cousin Maurice later died.

The months that followed were some of the toughest times for the freshman guard. Doctors feared his playing career could be over, and he couldn't stop thinking about the losses to his family. He couldn't even bring himself to attend his grandmother and baby cousin's funerals.

Luckily for Hyland, he was only diagnosed with a torn patellar tendon. But, the six-month recovery process still took a toll on him.

"They [the doctors] came back into where I was in the room, and they said it was going to be six months, and I broke down," Hyland said. "When they told me

that, I broke into pieces because it was the game I loved."

Hyland said his determination powered him through his recovery. The idea of not returning to his old form never crossed Hyland's mind.

"Just being able to bounce back from that, and get back on the floor when people thought I was done, it proves a lot," Hyland said.

Hyland's first return to the court was a memorable one. He showed out in an event he hosted called Tressi Day, a streetball game named after his group of friends, at Prince's Park in Wilmington.

Hyland called the experience a huge stress relief because the fans who attended weren't expecting him to suit up.

"It felt really good out there. There were a lot of people who came out," Hyland said. "It was just like a surprise — I came out and I played. It felt like I was myself again."

Hyland has used the tragedy to improve himself on and off the court. He said the fire and its aftermath gave him a better outlook on life.

"It made me become a better man because it helped me visualize things better, as far as what I was doing and what I was playing basketball for," Hyland said. "It really helped me grow and become more mature, and just help me become a leader."

A few months later, in September 2018, Hyland narrowed his list of colleges to seven. Hyland committed to the black and gold on June 4. Listed as the No. 64 ranked player in the 2019 class by 247Sports, Hyland became VCU's highest-ranked recruit since senior guard De'Riante Jenkins in 2016. For

Hyland, the decision to pick VCU was an easy one.

"I came on a visit, and it was just the love and the energy they had towards me," Hyland said. "I had almost every school in the country contacting me, but VCU always stayed around and always stayed loyal to me."

There's no telling what Hyland's ceiling is for the black and gold, or what his exact

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Bones Hyland, freshman guard

role will be for Rhoades this season. But, if one thing is for certain, Hyland will be playing for his grandmother and cousin whenever he is on the floor.

"I actually got a tattoo just as a reminder for them. Every time it feels as if I can't go anymore, I look at my tattoo," Hyland said. "That's the reason who I am doing it for. They're just always in my heart."

MEET THE PLAYERS

This season's men's basketball squad brings experience and youth to the Siegel Center

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Illustrations by Sammy Newman



DE'RIANTE JENKINS
0 - SENIOR G

Jenkins heads a returning class of nine players, with the senior guard coming off a season in which he started all 33 games. The 6-foot-5 Jenkins racked up 20 double-digit scoring games and led all black and gold players with 63 buckets from beyond the arc. His average of 11.3 points makes him a solid player to have on the floor at any time — he's started all of the Rams' 66 games since he was a sophomore.



MIKE'L SIMMS
1 - SENIOR G

The Richmond native returns for his third season of play with the Rams. The 6-foot-5 guard has appeared in all 66 games since he arrived at VCU. He scored double-digit points four times last season, including 15 in 18 minutes during the Rams' Dec. 30 win over Rider.



KESHAWN CURRY
11 - SOPHOMORE G

After the Jacksonville, Florida, native made 15 appearances off the bench for the Rams in their 2018-19 campaign, he's solidified his place on the roster as a solid shooter and a quality guard. Curry's season-high 8 points in December came off a 3-for-3 shooting day from the paint, and he racked up a shooting average well over .500 in almost 30 attempts. Look for Kyrie Irving-esque antics from the guard who wears the same number as the NBA star.



TRE CLARK
12 - FRESHMAN G

One of four freshmen on this year's team, a combo guard, Clark brings dynamic scoring ability and adds depth to VCU's roster. Following his breakout summer of 2018 playing AAU, recruiters began to notice Clark's skill. During his senior year in Covington, Georgia, playing at Newton High School, he averaged 20 points, six rebounds, and three steals. He led his team to a 22-8 record and a run in the State Tournament.



MALIK CROWFIELD
13 - SENIOR G

Last year, Crowfield averaged 3.7 points and 1.6 rebounds and shot a team-best 37.6% from 3-point range. He posted double figures on four occasions, including his best game against cross-town rival Richmond, where he finished with 14 points. His development over the past three seasons has seen an already gifted shooter expand his skillset. His biggest asset is the sneaky athleticism he poses at 6-foot-4 and his ability to drive to the basket at any time.



MARCUS SANTOS-SILVA
14 - JUNIOR F

In 2018 Santos-Silva proved to be the Rams' most improved player. Starting all 33 games, he also posted double-double numbers a team-high six times. One of the most skilled left-handed players in the nation, Silva's rebounding ability and his excellent passing make him one of VCU's key players.

EVANS

After adversities, the Rhoades-Evans duo begins their final chapter

Continued from front page

"When you have adversities like that, you have to lean on something," Rhoades said. "For him to be ready and be even stronger this year it's just an acknowledgement for him to know that hey, 'I got through a lot of stuff, we can do this and now we can do it together.'"

Evans played in all 33 games last season despite being in recovery from the Achilles injury for most of it. Just when he was almost 100%, he got injured again, and this time it was his knee.

In the Atlantic 10 tournament against Rhode Island, Evans rose up to attempt a layup and came crashing down to the court. His screams silenced the Barclays Center in Brooklyn as training staff tended to him.

The injury was diagnosed as a deep bone bruise and hyperextension, but it was painful for Evans to put weight on his knee.

Less than a week after he sustained the injury, Evans suited up and played in the NCAA tournament against UCF.

"In the A-10 tournament when he went down, I really thought it was a major knee issue," Rhoades said. "He wasn't 100% in the tournament, but just to see him fight back and say 'We're going to play in the tournament together, coach' was a tribute to him."

Evans wore a padded knee brace in the game he worked toward his entire collegiate career, playing 26 minutes and recording 6 points.

"It was hurting from the jump, damn near every step I was taking," Evans told The Commonwealth Times in March. "But we worked so hard to get to this point, I wanted to try to give whatever I had to help this team win."

**'TO BEAT MARCUS EVANS,
YOU'VE GOT TO KILL HIM'**

If nothing else, Evans and Rhoades have one thing in common: competitiveness, as individuals and with one another.

For Evans, it's winning every play at practice like it's a game, Rhoades said. For Rhoades, it's his persistence and dedication with everything he does, Evans said.

"Everything he does, he wants to win — he wants to beat you," Rhoades said. "I always say to beat Marcus Evans, you've got to kill him because he's going to keep coming at you."

Rhoades' dedication is just like the players' on the court, Evans said. It's easy for them to connect with Rhoades because he has the "fight in him" like the players do.

"He's a guy you kind of have to give some respect for because in his way, he's not going to be told no, he can't do it or his way doesn't work," Evans said. "In his mind, if he believes in his team and the system he has, it doesn't matter what the media says."

Rhoades has not kept Evans on a leash

at all during their time together. Instead, he allows him freedom on the court, which Evans said helped him grow as a player.

"I think after that it was kind of understanding," Evans said. "I knew the level of trust he had for me, and I knew what he expected from me."

The trust and freedom that Rhoades bestowed to Evans in their first two years together resulted in Evans scoring 1,000 points before coming to Richmond.

Although Evans suffered multiple injuries last season, he fought through both and accomplished the goal of making the NCAA tournament that he and Rhoades set for themselves years ago. For Rhoades, it demonstrated his attitude and coaching philosophy of not making excuses for anything.

"You go through a lot of tough ups and downs, and we did it at Rice and we did it at VCU," Rhoades said. "But we're going to make no excuses, don't complain about it, just keep finding a way — and we made it."



MARCUS EVANS
2 - REDSHIRT-SENIOR G

The comeback story of 2018, Evans bounced back from two Achilles tendon tears — barely a year apart — to lead the Rams to the Atlantic 10 tournament and an NCAA tournament berth. Evans was named to the All-A-10 Conference First Team, averaging 13.6 points, 3.2 assists and 1.9 steals last season. He drained at least 20 points five times on the season and had four or more steals three times. Keep an eye on that No. 2 jersey. Fans will be seeing a lot of it this year.



COREY DOUGLAS
4 - JUNIOR F

The 6-foot-8 Louisville, Kentucky, native is the second-tallest player on the roster, and he makes the most of his height advantage. A prolific shot blocker — he led the team with 51 last year — Douglas made 10 starts in 33 appearances, shooting .511 from the field. He continues to play under Mike Rhoades after beginning his college hoops stint with Rhoades at Rice. Douglas produces well off the bench and is a quality starter. Expect him to start more games on the floor in 2019-20.



NAH'SHON "BONES" HYLAND
5- FRESHMAN G

Hyland is a four-star recruit who arrived in Richmond electing to play for VCU over suitors such as UConn and Boston College. The Wilmington, Delaware, native averaged almost 30 points in his junior and senior years at St. Georges Tech and led his team to the DIAA Boys Basketball Tournament semifinals. Hyland's impressive resume also features his title of 2019 Delaware Player of the Year and two selections to First Team All-State.



VINCE WILLIAMS
10 - SOPHOMORE F

A southpaw sophomore from Toledo, Ohio, made an immediate impact last season. Williams' 34 steals ranked third among all VCU players, and he drained a season-best 13 points against Charleston in December. Three of those steals came against rival Richmond in March, and Williams added 6 points, five assists and five rebounds for an impressive slash line. The three-time Toledo Blade Boys Player of the Year led St. John's Jesuit to a 90-17 record during his high school career.



ARNOLD HENDERSON VI
15 - FRESHMAN

Henderson didn't have to travel far to find a good collegiate fit for his skill set. A Richmond native, Henderson averaged 10 points as a senior at St. Christopher's and made 34 3-pointers for the Saints. He converted on 88% of his free throws. As a preferred walk-on, Henderson will add depth to VCU's skilled guard corps.



HASON WARD
20 - FRESHMAN F

Another freshman, Ward, brings two high school state championship titles to Richmond all the way from Massachusetts. Last year as a senior at Springfield Central, Ward averaged 10.5 points, 6.3 rebounds and 2.2 blocks. His 7-foot-4 wingspan allows for an excellent set of skills on both sides of the ball. His elite shot-blocking ability will be one of the best attributes he brings to the Rams.



JARREN MCALLISTER
21 - FRESHMAN F

As a three-star recruit in 2018, McAllister was known for his high motor and athleticism. McAllister chose VCU over the likes of Virginia Tech, Wake Forest and others. Along with being a two-time all-state selection and 1,000-point scorer, he led Massanutten Military Academy to a state championship game appearance in 2017. His skills will fit in well with VCU's up-tempo system.



ISSAC VANN
23 - REDSHIRT-SENIOR F

As a 33 game starter for VCU last season, Vann posted 10.8 points, third-best on the team, along with about four rebounds per game and swiping 40 steals. He also posted double figures on 16 occasions. His physical style of play makes him a huge asset for VCU's rebounding ability. He also can connect from long range, making him someone every opposing team will have to plan for.

Rams in the Pros

ANDY RIDDLER

Contributing Writer

TROY DANIELS

Daniels enters his seventh season in the NBA and his first with the Los Angeles Lakers. He just finished a two-year stint with the Phoenix Suns where he averaged 8 points and shot almost 40% from 3-point range. He appeared in two preseason games this season and looked sharp for the new-look Lakers, averaging 9 points with two 3-pointers.

TREVEON GRAHAM

This offseason, Graham was part of a slew of deals that sent him to the Golden State Warriors and then to his current team, the Minnesota Timberwolves, the next day. Graham has a chance to start for the

Timberwolves on opening day after averaging 10 points and shooting 50% from 3-point range.

BRIANTE WEBER

After working out with NBA teams this summer, Weber opted to head overseas and sign with the Boulogne-Levallois Metropolitans in France. Through four games, he is bringing to them what he brought to VCU every time he put on the black and gold — hounding defense. Weber is averaging more than four steals per game so far, including two games in which he recorded five steals.

JUSTIN TILLMAN

In January, Tillman signed with the Memphis Grizzlies G-league affiliate, the Memphis Hustle. He appeared in eight games for them and averaged al-

most 9 points. Then, Tillman took his talents overseas this summer and signed with Hapoel Galil Gilboa in Israel. They have only played one game, but Tillman helped carry the team to victory by scoring 24 points on 12-15 shooting and 11 rebounds. He looks to be a key piece for them this season.

MICHAEL GILMORE

This summer, Gilmore found a new home to take his talents to after his return to VCU for his senior year: German professional team Phoenix Hagen. Gilmore is already making an impact for his new team with 11 points in 20 minutes against the PS Karlsruhe Lions on Sept. 28.

JEQUAN LEWIS

Lewis started for the Goyang Orions in the Korean league last year, where he averaged 14.5 points and 5.8 assists. He then

moved to Greece to play for Kymis where he averaged almost 13 points and 5.7 assists. At the end of August, it was announced that he was going to be joining his third team in less than a year when he joined PAOK in the same Greek league he was previously in. He is averaging 8 points and six assists so far with a game-high 10 assists in their first win of the season.

MO ALIE-COX

The continued growth of Alie-Cox is apparent with every snap he plays. He has become a dynamic run-blocking tight end for the Indianapolis Colts in his third year with the organization. Last year, he saw his first snaps during a regular-season game and was quickly making highlight-reel grabs, including a one-handed touchdown catch against the Oakland Raiders in his fourth career game. This year, he has logged four catches as the third-string tight end for the Colts.

Rams gear up for 2019-20 campaign

JOE DODSON
Contributing Writer

After posting the biggest turnaround in D-I last season, women's basketball is still hunting for more.

Last season, the focus for the Rams was defense as they ranked nationally in multiple categories. But this offseason, the focus was on something else: offense.

"We always want to be really solid defensively," coach Beth O'Boyle said. "We talk about wanting to be able to create chaos on the defensive side, and really play at a high intense pace on the offensive side."

O'Boyle wanted her team to focus on raising their offensive numbers while maintaining their intensity on the defensive end. VCU ranked fourth in the nation in scoring defense, limiting opponents to just 51.1 points per game last season.

The Rams also held opponents to an average of 32.8% from the field, and just 25.5% from beyond the 3-point point line.

O'Boyle laid out a goal to have the most free-throw attempts in the league after the Rams shot 68% from the line.

"That's something we've been working on a lot, from summer into the fall and now practice," said O'Boyle. "Hopefully we see some improvement in the numbers on the offensive side."

O'Boyle said another goal for the team this year is to work on developing a self-designed culture for the team. She also said the program is player-driven, meaning the players lead the team and its expectations.

Those expectations include winning the A-10 in both the regular and post-season, along with earning a trip to the NCAA tournament.

Last season, Tera Reed earned First Team All-A-10 honors after leading the team in scoring, averaging 12.5 points. O'Boyle has seen Reed benefit the team in other ways, too.

"She's a player that has led us in scoring, but then can also rebound for us and help us a great deal on the defensive end," O'Boyle said. "She's just a multilayered player. She's just gonna fill that stat sheet because she can do a little bit of everything."

Despite having the best season offensively for the Rams in terms of scoring, Reed believes she has even more to offer this season.

"This year, I want to make all-defensive team, and all-conference first team again," Reed said. "I want to get my average up scoring. ... And my rebounding has to get up."

VCU struggled several seasons ago when it had one of the youngest teams in the conference. Now, the group is older and more experienced.

Senior center Danielle Hammond had the highest field goal percentage in the conference last year while averaging 10 points for the Rams. Junior guard Taya Robinson received A-10 Defensive Team honors last year, made the Third team All-A-10 and led the team in rebounds.

VCU only lost one home game last season, for which O'Boyle credits the fans and the Peppas. Reed feels an advantage when playing at the Siegel Center, which she has seen grow during her career.

"It's home," Reed said. "We're used to it, we love it. ... Our fanbase is growing, it gives us confidence."

That confidence will be necessary as VCU heads into a tough non-conference schedule that includes matchups against Seton Hall and Cincinnati. Reed views these games as a way to prepare for a potential NCAA tournament bid.

"It's gonna be a real challenge, and we're definitely looking forward to it," Reed said. "It'll help us in getting to the tournament."

O'Boyle looks forward to conference matchups against Dayton, George Washington and Fordham, which beat VCU in the A-10 championship game last season.

"Every week, I love the idea of competing," O'Boyle said. "In the A-10 we have some great natural rivals. When we play that school right down the street that's always a big one for us."



Senior guard Nyra Williams logged 134 points last season. CT file photo

Women's basketball prepares to replicate last year's success

RYAN GRUBE
Staff Writer

When women's basketball entered the start of last season, no one knew what to expect from the 2018-19 Rams.

VCU was fresh off a mere seven-win season, but the squad was picked to finish sixth in the 2018 Atlantic 10 preseason poll.

While the Rams returned key pieces from a young 2017-18 team — including five returning freshmen — expectations were tempered for the black and gold prior to last season.

Now, as VCU heads into its 2019-20 campaign, all eyes are on head coach Beth O'Boyle's crew.

The black and gold unleashed a 17-win improvement in 2018-19, earning the resilient bunch a share of the conference regular-season title with Fordham.

Junior forward Sydnei Archie says she and the rest of the team welcome this season's high expectations.

"I feel really good about the direction the team is headed," Archie said. "I think we had a good end of the season last season, and I think everyone is coming in hungry and ready to go."

Archie and company will be looking to avenge a disappointing end to their 2018 conference tournament run — a journey that ended with a loss to Fordham in the A-10 Championship game.

O'Boyle, who was named A-10 Coach of the Year last season, said while their season was historic, they would have liked one more win to get to the NCAA Tournament.

"We had a great run, got all the way to the championship game, and then unfortunately came up short against Fordham to get that bid," O'Boyle said. "It was an exciting year, and I was really proud of our team effort."

Archie said the team is taking cautious measures to ensure they don't replicate last year's A-10 tournament finish.



Junior guard Taya Robinson averaged 9.9 points last season. CT file photo

"We're just focusing on making sure our conditioning is up there, so we're not burning out towards the end of the season," Archie said. "Just remain strong so when that tough game comes at the end of the season, we're all going to be ready."

Archie is one of several juniors and seniors who make up a veteran-oriented roster for VCU this year. The Rams didn't graduate any players after last season.

O'Boyle said the veteran leadership is essential for her squad, given what they would like to accomplish this season.

"It's great all of a sudden to have juniors and seniors, the pace and the competitiveness that you have to come into practice

with," O'Boyle said. "To accomplish anything great, we have to make sure that we're being very consistent with that, and I think they're really motivated to do that."

The black and gold have been a popular pick to equal last year's success. O'Boyle said her staff is working hard to make sure their win total carries over from last season.

"I think it's really just a focus for us about our culture, and our players getting ready to practice really hard and intense so when we get to games, they're easier," O'Boyle said. "We just keep trying to put them in a position to make sure that we're being really competitive."

Archie says she has high hopes for the squad in 2019. The junior said she would like to see the Rams capture the A-10 title and advance to the NCAA Tournament.

As for anyone who says last season was VCU's ceiling, Archie says the team is prepared to silence the naysayers.

"Just wait on it because this season, we're not coming to lose," Archie said. "We're coming to go in and take whatever we lost last year."

The Rams open the season at home against Appalachian State on Nov. 5 at 11 a.m.

A walk down the street:

How Hason Ward was introduced to basketball

BEN MALAKOFF
Contributing Writer

He was walking down the street in a country he had never been to, basketball in tow. That's when freshman forward Hason Ward was spotted by someone in a white Lexus rolling past him down the Massachusetts road.

The car came to a stop after passing the 6-foot-9 Ward, and slowly moved into reverse.

The driver was Darryl Denson, Springfield Central High School's basketball coach. Denson asked Ward who he played for and what experience he had. Ward was never on a team in his home country of Barbados. The family vacation to the U.S. ignited his basketball career.

"[Denson and my father] were just talking and talking and he came to the house a couple of times he got turned down," Ward said. "And then he just kept coming back. Everything just went from there."

Ward returned the following year, moving from Barbados to live with his aunt in Springfield, Massachusetts.

The idea of basketball stuck out to Ward, but he had never played on an organized basketball team growing up.

"When I first moved here, I basically didn't even know what basketball was," Ward said. "I just knew that I wanted to play basketball."

Ward played for Central Springfield High School during his sophomore season, competing in the starting five.

The first practice was a shock for Ward. The drills made him tired, and Ward was not accustomed to being pushed this hard.

But Denson continued to make him work harder.

"He [kept] telling me 'run to the court,'" Ward said. "'Get the ball.' I was surprised myself that I ran there. 'Dunk it. Go back again. Dunk it.' Coach looked at one of the players and said, 'You think he will get accustomed to it?'"

Ward did, and he was known on the team as the dunker and shot-blocker, a title he earned after he blocked 22 shots in a single game during his junior year.

"That was an out of city game too, so they didn't know who I was," Ward said. "When they kept putting up the shots, I kept swatting it. And they just keep going and going, so I just keep swatting it."

A career night for Ward started to put him on the map for D-I college recruiters. But he was still unsure about how the college recruitment process worked. When his first college scholarship was extended to him, Ward said he did not understand what the offer was.

"I was on the phone with the coach and he was just talking to me," Ward said. "He's like, 'Yeah, so I'm offering you a full scholarship.' I was like, 'OK, thank you.' And it just happened."

It was Ward's mom who helped him do the research and pick VCU from other offers, which included Georgia, Virginia Tech and Rutgers. She researched what each school had to offer, Ward said.

With the college basketball season right around the corner, Ward has settled into Richmond and has become close with his



Freshman forward Hason Ward moved from Barbados to the U.S. before his sophomore year of high school. Photo by Jon Mirador

teammates. Whatever they do, they do as a group, Ward said.

"[They] try to help me feel at home," Ward said. "And I do feel at home, I feel like this is the place I was supposed to be at."

Just over three years after picking up a ball and dribbling down the street in Massachusetts, Ward still has to do some walking down the road. Only now, it's walking down Broad Street to the Siegel Center.

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Crowds celebrate the Democratic victory at the Virginia joint Democratic watch party, which was held at the Hilton in Downtown Richmond. Photo by Jon Mirador

Dems to control house, senate, governor's mansion

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Democrats secured control of the Virginia General Assembly in Tuesday's elections, marking the first time since 1993 that the party will hold the state Senate, the House of Delegates and the governor's mansion.

The Virginia House will have a Democratic majority with 55 representatives, compared to 45 Republicans. Democrats won 21 seats in the Senate, compared to 19 for Republicans.

Prior to the election, Republicans had a majority in the Senate 20 to 19 with one

vacancy. The House was Republican-led 51 to 48, also with a vacancy.

VCU political science professor Deirdre Condit said 2018's "blue wave" of Democratic victories may have continued into Virginia's statehouse elections this year.

"The nation took the cue from Virginia and followed on as well," Condit said. "I think it's possible that there's a serious continuation of what we have now branded the Democratic blue wave. If that wave is not crested — and if it continues to swell — that may tell us a lot about the 2020 election."

Condit said many of the Democratic votes were rooted in dissatisfaction with the Trump administration.

"Democratic voters were very clearly

there to express their anger at the Trump administration," Condit said. "Several voters who said they were going to vote Democrat talked about this as their way to shout back at the President."

DEMOCRATIC MAJORITIES

Democrats gained a majority in the state Senate by flipping two seats.

Senate Districts that flipped Democrat:

- District 10
- District 13

One of the key races in the Virginia Senate was District 10, which Ghazala Hashmi

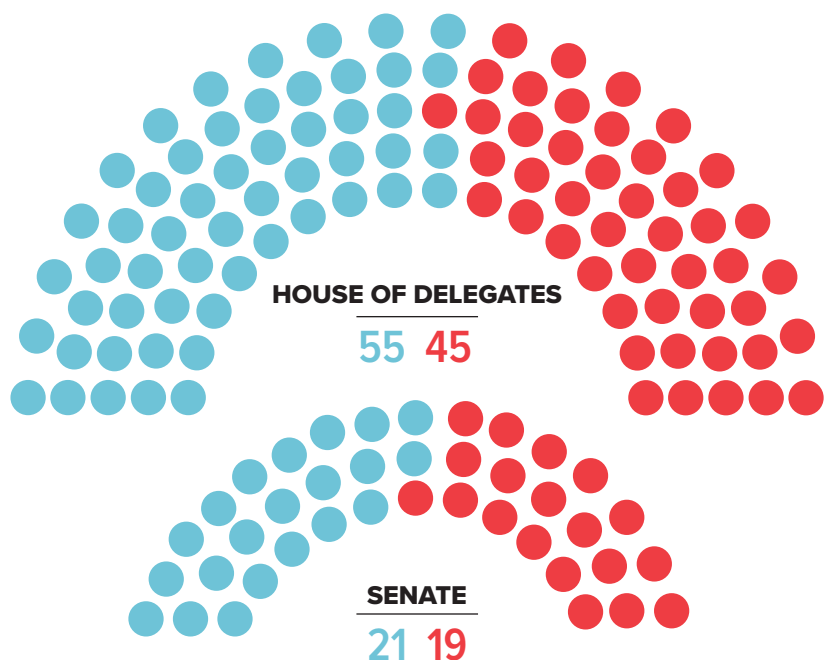
won against Republican incumbent Glen Sturtevant with 55% of the vote. The district covers parts of Richmond City, Chesterfield County and Powhatan County.

Hashmi attended the Virginia joint Democratic watch party at the Hilton in Downtown Richmond and thanked those who voted for her.

"Is Ghazala Hashmi truly an American name? You've helped so many young people, boys and girls, who feel like they don't have a voice, they don't have a place, they don't have a part in this community, and you said yes, you do belong here," Hashmi said. "Thank you for sharing that message."

See **DEM MAJORITY** on page 5

House and Senate breakdown by party following General Assembly elections



● DEMOCRAT ● REPUBLICAN

Information compiled by Hannah Eason
Infographic by Jeffrey Pohanka



Democrat Ghazala Hashmi, the first Muslim American to be elected into the Virginia Senate, gained a seat for the Democrats in Tuesday's election. Photo by Jon Mirador

Stories of the week

NATIONAL: In Kentucky, the Democratic Attorney General Andy Beshear won the governorship against the Republican incumbent.

INTERNATIONAL: CNN reports at least 13 were killed in a car bomb explosion in Tal Abyad, a Syrian town that Turkey took control of last month.



Left, Akaylia Rose said she wanted to see Democrats in office. Middle, Eden Gordley said she has a personal goal to never miss a local or state election. Right, president of the VCU chapter of Virginia21, Adam Lockett, encouraged students to vote in the Compass. Photos by Raelyn Fines

Students sense importance of state elections

KATHARINE DEROSA
Contributing Writer

Adam Lockett, president of the VCU chapter of Virginia21, was standing in the Compass to spread the word on Election Day as students headed to their polling places.

“I don’t think it’s been emphasized enough how important this election is,” said Lockett, a junior graphic design major. “Going into 2020 as well, we have a chance to let our politicians know how we’re shaping the commonwealth.”

Virginia21 provides students with information on college affordability, student rights, election access, campus safety and economic opportunity policies.

Many students said they were excited to exercise their right to vote. VCU junior David Baker said that it was his duty.

“There’s no reason for me, someone who is not doing a lot today, who has the full capability to vote, to not vote,” the English major said.

Polling locations for VCU students living on or near campus included the University Student Commons, George Washington

Carver Elementary School, Dominion Place and Tabernacle Baptist Church.

Louis Ackerman, a VCU sophomore majoring in communication arts, expressed distaste for current political leadership and said they wanted a change.

“I’m voting because I think we need to start from the bottom line and work up from there,” Ackerman said.

Taylor Easley, a senior majoring in social work, said in recent elections “big things have happened.”

“I think that there should be a big change in government,” Easley said. “Even if the candidate I voted for doesn’t get into office, I know I did my part.”

Madeline Doane is the leader of VCU Votes, an organization that promotes voter engagement on campus. Doane said the organization registered 3,000 new voters on campus this semester alone.

Doane, a senior double majoring in political science and international studies with a Latin American concentration, said she voted Nicholas Da Silva for the open 5th District City Council seat because of his “dedication to the Richmond community.”

“I voted for Nicholas Da Silva because it seems like he’s been an activist in the

Richmond community for a really long time and is a working class individual,” Doane said. “He’s been super active in the redistricting and making sure that we are protecting the vulnerable people in our communities.”

“

Our local politicians have so much to say about what we hear at the national level. And in reality, our local politicians have the power to be influencing the legislation surrounding those matters.”

Madeline Doane,
VCU Votes leader

Doane said this election holds weight because all the seats in the Virginia Senate and the House of Delegates are up for grabs.

“I think that’s often a big disconnect that people have regarding local elections,” Doane said. “Our local politicians have so much to say about what we hear at the national level. And in reality, our local politicians have the power to be influencing the legislation surrounding those matters.”

Fashion merchandising major Madeline McElgunn said that local elections affect constituents “most strongly,” and that voting was a family tradition for her.

“I always go to Chesterfield and vote with the rest of my family,” McElgunn said. “We usually wake up early, have coffee and then walk to our polling place together and talk about the issues on the way.”

McElgunn said she was hoping to unseat her current representative in Senate District 10 — Republican Glen Sturtevant — and that she was hoping for a Democrat majority in the General Assembly.

“Glen Sturtevant has been our state representative, and he is very much against women’s bodily autonomy and a right to an abortion,” McElgunn said. “I am voting for Ghazala Hashmi because she is a supporter of legalizing marijuana and a woman’s right to choose.”



Left, student Taylor Easley said getting the “right people” in office motivates her to vote. Right, VCU Votes’ Madeline Doane encourages students to vote. Photos by Raelyn Fines

Fundraising frontrunner wins the 5th

Stephanie Lynch won about 27% of the vote in the City Council special election



Stephanie Lynch



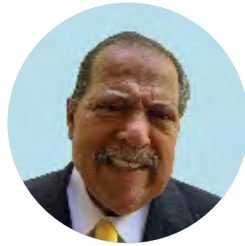
Mamie Taylor



Thad Williamson



Nicholas Da Silva



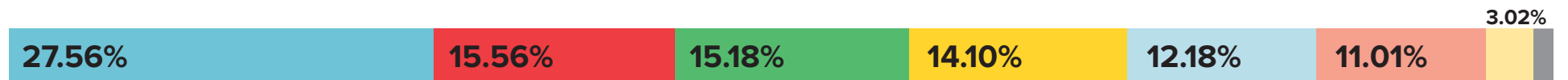
Chuck Richardson



Jer'Mykeal McCoy



Robin Mines



Information compiled by Andrew Ringle
Infographic by Jeffrey Pohanka

LIBBY DOZIER
Contributing Writer

Stephanie Lynch won the 5th District City Council race Tuesday, winning not only the most votes but some of the highest campaign contributions in the election.

Former 5th District City Councilman Parker Agelasto resigned earlier this year after lawsuits were filed concerning his decision to move out of the district. Here is what each of the candidates raised throughout their campaigns:

- Thad Williamson: \$30,073
- Stephanie Lynch: \$29,257
- Jer'Mykeal McCoy: \$22,223
- Nicholas Da Silva: \$8,761
- Graham Sturm: \$6,365
- Chuck Richardson: \$5,318
- Mamie Taylor: \$2,800
- Robin Mines: \$925

The candidates raised more than \$100,000 over the course of the election, and three candidates accounted for over half of that number. Jer'Mykeal McCoy, Thad Williamson and Stephanie Lynch each raised between \$20,000 and \$30,000 as of Oct. 24, according to the Virginia Public Access Project, or VPAP. Da Silva was fourth in donations and raised \$8,761.

The three candidates who raised the most money in the 5th District received more than half of their funds from fewer than 50 individual donors.

Williamson spent the most in the race with almost \$22,000 as of Oct. 24. Lynch came in second with \$13,506 and McCoy in third with \$6,667.

"Campaigns need budgets and resources to reach voters, so certainly campaign contributions matter in helping a campaign be competitive," Williamson said. "While I'm proud our campaign has the largest base of donors in the race, in the end it's about the votes, not the dollars."

Williamson teaches at the University of Richmond. He previously served as co-chair of the Maggie Walker Initiative for Expanding Opportunity and Fighting Poverty and worked to create the Office of Community Wealth Building. As the senior policy advisor for Mayor Levar Stoney, he contributed to the development of the RVA Education Compact.

Lynch received her bachelor's degree from VCU in psychology and gender studies, and a master's degree in social work administration and policy. She's worked for the Virginia Department of Social Services and the Special Appointee on Health and Human Resource Integration, where she assisted in the implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

Lynch said her own fundraising strategy was to get large donations first so she could

then spend more time knocking on doors and talking to voters.

"The last of our time and treasure will be spent engaging as many 5th district residents before November 5th as we can," Lynch said in a Facebook post. "It would be a true blessing to get to work for and with the 5th District community."

McCoy is originally from Tennessee and is the son of a Navy veteran. He is a business development manager with Schutt Sports and a capstone advisor at Georgetown University. McCoy is also the president of the Urban League Greater Richmond Young Professionals.

Da Silva is a recent VCU graduate with a degree in political science. During his time there, he was the head of the Young Democratic Socialists of America chapter at the university. He was inspired to run for office after witnessing the "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville last summer where a white nationalist drove a car into a group of protestors.

"Locally, in my experience, it matters

more whether a candidate has a good volunteer team, a message which connects to voters, and whether they spend time at doors, which may be helped by having large donors but can't be bought," Da Silva said.

District 5 resident Daniel Coakley said he cast his vote for Da Silva.

"He [Da Silva] has a history of activism and fighting for the community," Coakley said. "Thad Williamson is just a stooley of the mayor, he won't be an independent voice on the council."

One key issue among voters in the 5th District is the Navy Hill development project — which would redevelop 10 blocks in downtown Richmond near the Coliseum — that was announced earlier this year.

Christina Ramirez, who lives in the 5th District, voted for Da Silva and said opposition to the Navy Hill plan was her top priority.

"No Navy Hill magic plan is my top issue," Ramirez said.

Leslie Rubio, a 5th District resident, also

planned to vote for Lynch. She said her opposition to Navy Hill and "focus on community" made her an appealing candidate.

"She's smart and community-oriented," Rubio said of Lynch. "She will keep Amy Robins if she wins."

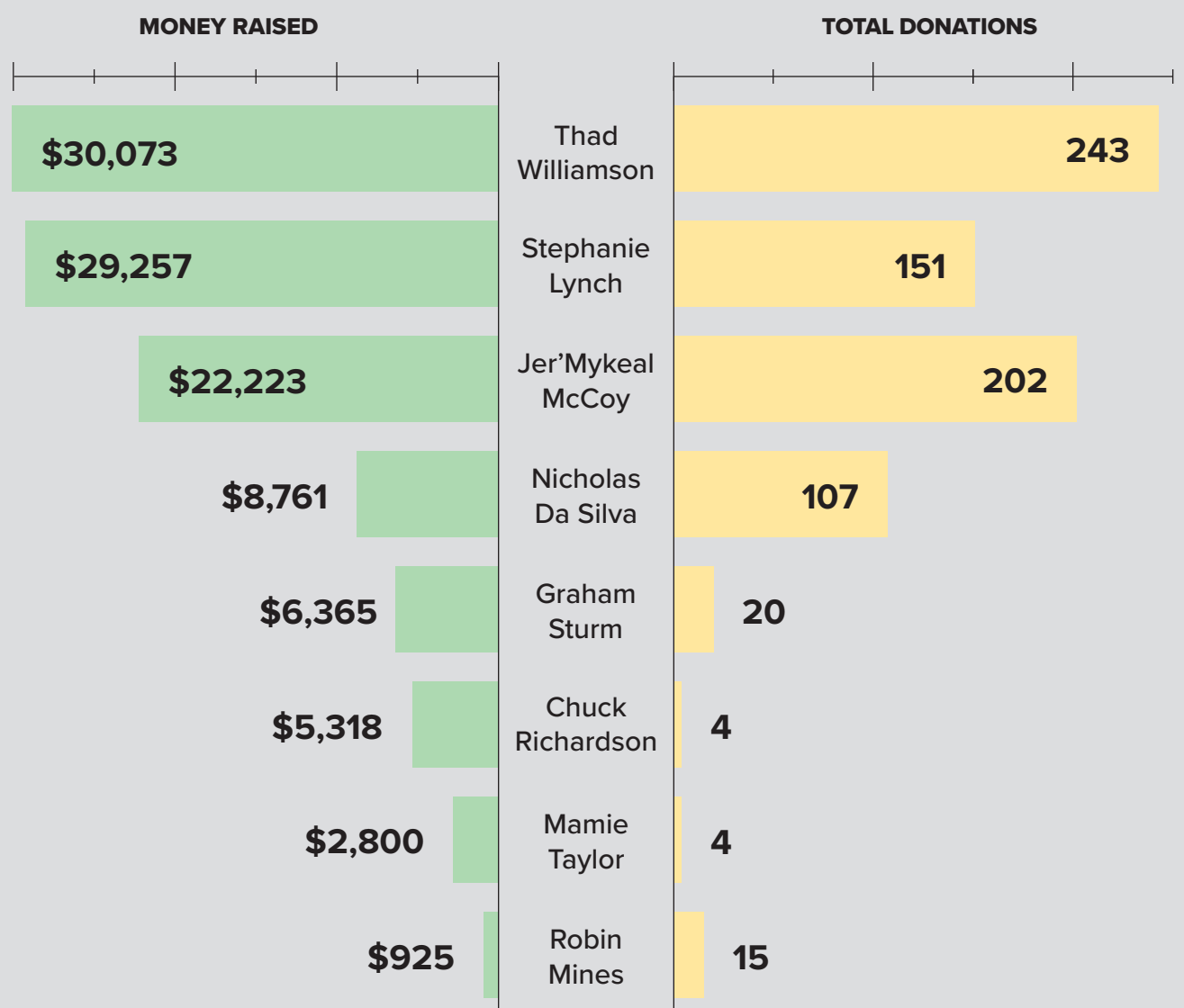
Amy Robins is the City Council liaison for the 5th District and an organizer for RVA Clean Sweep.

"I've been told that Stephanie Lynch opposes the Navy Hill," 5th District resident James Sties said via Facebook. "Also her concerns seem to be more about the average citizen's needs rather than to have the City take on her personal philosophy about societal needs."

Mamie Taylor, who raised \$2,800, campaigned to prioritize Richmond Public Schools.

"I'm voting for Mamie Taylor," said Jameson Price, a resident of the 5th district, via Facebook. "She is a former RPS teacher and board member will prioritize school and against the Navy Hill development."

5th District City Council campaign donations



Information compiled by Hannah Eason
Infographic by Jeffrey Pohanka

LOCAL HOUSE RACES

House Speaker Kirk Cox wins House District 66



KIRK COX (R)
INCUMBENT

ANYA SCZERZENIE
Contributing Writer

SARAH ELSON
Contributing Writer

Incumbent Republican Kirk Cox will keep his delegate seat in House District 66 after defeating VCU alumna Sheila Bynum-Coleman in the House of Delegates race.

Bynum-Coleman received 45% of the district's votes, while Cox received 54%.

"I had so many volunteers, and we won strictly because of grassroots," Cox said at his watch party in Colonial Heights. "As a 30-year government teacher, my love is representing democracy."

Cox, who was elected in District 66 in 1989, has served as House Speaker since 2018 and previously served as the House

majority leader from 2010 to 2018.

According to his website, his priorities were creating Virginia jobs, helping veterans, reducing "unnecessary" government spending and supporting those with disabilities. As a former teacher, Cox's website lists access and availability to higher education as a prominent issue.

Bynum-Coleman is a graduate of the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs with a background in real estate and construction.

In 2016, her daughter was shot at a house party, which placed gun reform as a top priority for her campaign.

The 66th District includes Chesterfield County, Colonial Heights and a small part of Richmond.

"We all know that God's got a plan for Kirk. He's got a plan for me and he's got a

plan for you," said Colonial Heights Mayor T. Gregory Kochuba at Cox's watch party. "God's plan was to keep Kirk in office."

Kochuba introduced Cox at his watch party, which was held at the Keystone Antique Truck & Tractor Museum in Colonial Heights.

Cox's son Cameron said he was proud of his father's win and that he didn't think "anybody deserves it more than him."

"He's been a great dad, a great coach, great campaigner, great politician, but at the end of the day, he's just always served his people because that's what he cares about," Cameron Cox said.

House District 66 was one of the 11 House districts found to be illegally racially gerrymandered and was redrawn in February.

54% Kirk
Cox

45% Sheila
Bynum-Coleman

Incumbent Adams retains House District 68 seat



DAWN ADAMS (D)
INCUMBENT

LIBBY DOZIER
Contributing Writer

Incumbent Democrat Dawn Adams will keep her seat in the House of Delegates after defeating Republican Garrison Coward with 57% of the vote. Coward received 43% of the vote.

Adams is the first openly lesbian lawmaker to be elected to the Virginia House of Delegates. She was elected initially in 2017 after defeating Republican Del. Manoli Loupassi by less than one percentage point. Loupassi had represented the district for 10 years prior to losing his seat.

Adams is a nurse practitioner with a doctorate in nursing practice from Old

Dominion University. She has campaigned on affordable health care and protecting the environment.

Coward, 29, received a degree in economics from Hampden-Sydney College in 2012 and a master's degree in political management from George Washington University in 2017. He is the chief operating officer of BizCents, a Richmond based analytics firm.

According to his website, Coward campaigned on competitive teacher pay, prioritizing crime and safety, economic growth and affordable healthcare.

House District 68 was one of the 11 districts found to be illegally racially gerrymandered and was redrawn in February.

Since the presidential election in 2016, the Democrats have managed to hang on to the majority. However, due to court-ordered redistricting, the district includes slightly more Republicans than in preceding years, according to the Virginia Public Access Project, or VPAP.

Over the course of her campaign, Adams raised \$377,291, while Coward raised \$183,917.

The 68th District includes portions of Richmond, Henrico and Chesterfield. The majority of the district is divided between Chesterfield and Richmond.

Over the course of their campaigns, Adams raised \$377,291, while Coward raised \$183,917 according to VPAP.

57% Dawn
Adams

43% Garrison
Coward

VanValkenburg keeps seat in House District 72



**SCHUYLER
VANVALKENBURG (D)**
INCUMBENT

TAYLOR TOBEN
Contributing Writer

Democrat incumbent Schuyler VanValkenburg won the state House District 72 seat by 54% against Republican GayDonna Vandergriff.

Vandergriff received 46% of the vote.

VanValkenburg won the election in 2017 to replace Republican Del. Jimmie Massie. On his website, he outlined access to affordable healthcare, increased funding for public schools and women's choice over reproductive rights as important issues.

On her website, Vandergriff's priorities included creating jobs in District 72,

access to quality and affordable healthcare, increased funding for public schools and lower higher education costs.

District 72 covers Henrico County and voted Democrat in the 2017 governor and 2018 U.S. Senate races, electing Gov. Ralph Northam and Sen. Tim Kaine.

House District 72 was one of the 11 House districts found to be illegally racially gerrymandered and was redrawn in February. The current district is 1.9 points less Republican after the redistricting, but still leans 0.6 points toward Democrats.

The redistricting eliminated eastern parts of the district such as parts of Lakeside and Laurel near the Lewis Ginter

Botanical Gardens. It added eastern parts of Glen Allen.

According to the most recent financial file from Jan. 1 to Sept. 30, Vandergriff's campaign raised \$374,349 and VanValkenburg raised \$568,638.

Vandergriff's largest donations were from the Republican State Leadership Committee, which donated \$167,500 and Colonial Leadership Trust PAC, which donated \$133,657.

VanValkenburg's largest donations were from Democratic Party of Virginia, which donated \$219,275 and Planned Parenthood of Virginia, which donated \$76,849.

54% Schuyler
VanValkenburg

46% GayDonna
Vandergriff

LOCAL SENATE RACES

Hashmi ousts Sturtevant in Senate District 10



GHAZALA HASHMI (D)

KATHARINE DEROSA
Contributing Writer

Democrat Ghazala Hashmi unseated Republican incumbent Sen. Glen Sturtevant and won Virginia District 10. Hashmi is the first Muslim American to be elected into the Virginia Senate.

The Democrat claimed the seat with 55% of the vote. Sturtevant received 45% of the vote.

Hashmi, 57, is a community college administrator and resides in Chesterfield.

She aims to increase funding for public schools, provide better access to affordable health care and create affordable college

tuition. A few of her aspirations for office include background checks for gun sales, environmental regulations, expanding internet access and adding paid family and medical leave.

Sturtevant served in Senate District 10 for 4 years. In 2015, he narrowly beat out Dan Gecker with 49.8% of the vote. Sturtevant, 37, is an attorney and resides in Midlothian.

Sturtevant's main goals in office were to increase funding for public schools, a freeze on college tuition, increased access to affordable health care and lower taxes.

District 10 has been a consistently Republican district since 1998. When the district was redrawn in 2011, the Democratic

party gained 15.1 points, but the Republicans still hold the majority by 18.6 points.

Senate District 10 includes western parts of Richmond and extends west into Powhatan. Chesterfield County contains 46.56% of the district, Richmond contains 39.98% of the district, and Powhatan County holds the remaining 14.07% of the district.

According to the Virginia Public Access Project, the eastern end of the district near Richmond tends to vote Democrat. The district is 69% white, 23% black, 6% Hispanic or Latino and 4% Asian.

The district is compiled by a majority of middle-aged people, with only 32% of the population under the age of 35.

55% Ghazala Hashmi

45% Glen Sturtevant

Dunnivant maintains spot in Senate District 12



SIOBHAN DUNNAVANT (R)
INCUMBENT

KATHARINE DEROSA
Contributing Writer

Republican incumbent Siobhan Dunnivant won the state Senate seat in District 12 over Del. Debra Rodman.

Dunnivant currently serves on the Senate Finance subcommittee and works as an OB-GYN in Henrico. According to her website, she is a free market and limited-government conservative. In 2018, she was awarded Senate Legislature of the Year by the Virginia Chamber of Commerce.

"I'm so thankful that the 12th District is giving me another four years to get the work done. I will keep delivering results for the

12th District and all of Virginia," Dunnivant said. "It's a little hard to be overzealous tonight. We have a lot of fellow Republicans that didn't succeed."

Dunnivant won 50.8% of the district, and Rodman received votes from 48.5%.

Rodman, who currently serves in House District 73, campaigned on gun violence prevention, including background checks, higher teacher pay and paid family and medical leave for Virginians. As a member of the House's Agriculture Committee, Rodman's website says she advocates for cleaner energy sources. She teaches anthropology at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland.

According to the Virginia Public Access

Project, or VPAP, Rodman and Dunnivant have each raised more than \$2 million. Before Oct. 24, Dunnivant raised \$2,531,059 and Rodman raised \$2,764,712.

Dunnivant spent more than a \$1 million on media advertising and Rodman used just under \$965,000.

District 12 has historically been conservative with Dunnivant winning in 2015, and Walter Stosch holding the seat between 1999 and 2015. Henrico County covers 92.44% of the district and Hanover County covers 7.56%.

VPAP considers the district to be competitive, but in recent years it leaned Democratic in recent elections.

51% Siobhan Dunnivant

49% Debra Rodman

DEM MAJORITY

'The sky is the limit': Experts says majority could lead to passed legislation

Continued from front page

VCU public relations student Joshua Briere came to the watch party as a Hashmi supporter.

"Now we actually have a Democratic governor, and both houses are blue, so who knows what we can do?" Briere said. "The sky's the limit."

Senate District 13 — which covers Loudoun County and Prince William County — also flipped Democrat with John Bell beating incumbent Geary Higgins with 54% of the vote.

In the Richmond area, the Democrats lost one of the most competitive races in the Senate: District 12 between Republican incumbent Sen. Siobhan Dunnivant and Del. Debra Rodman.

The Randolph-Macon College professor was first elected to the House of Delegates in 2017.

Dunnivant upset Rodman with 50.8% of the vote.

Come January, the House will have a Democratic majority, with six districts having flipped blue.

House Districts that flipped Democrat:

- District 28
- District 40
- District 76
- District 80
- District 91
- District 94

In House District 28 — which covers part of Stafford County and Fredericksburg City — Democrat Joshua Cole unseated Republican Paul Milde with 52%.

In House District 40 — which covers most of Fairfax County and part of Prince William County — Democrat Dan Helmer won 54% of the vote and unseated Republican Tim Hugo.

Clinton Jenkins will represent House District 76 after beating Republican Chris Jones with 54% of the vote. His district covers most of Suffolk City and part of Chesapeake City.

House District 91 is Democrat-led by Martha Mugler, who beat Republican Colleen Holcomb with 55% of the vote. The district covers part of Hampton City,

Poquoson City and York County.

Democrat Shelly Simonds unseated Republican David Yancey and received 58% of the vote in District 94, which covers Newport News city.

In House District 80, Democrat Don Scott filled the vacant seat, beating Republican Jim Evans and independent Ryan Collins Benton.

Democrats lost in the redistricted House District 66, which was ranked by the Virginia Public Access Project as highly competitive. Sheila Bynum-Coleman lost the race against House Speaker Kirk Cox.

LOOKING AHEAD

Kathryn Gilley, communications director for Virginia House Democrats, said the Democratic majority means the party will have a chance to push its policy priorities.

"We push for a higher minimum wage, we push for gun violence prevention. We've pushed for family-friendly policies like paid sick [leave]," Gilley said. "The list goes on and on, civil rights and LGBT-anti discrimination, and it's been consistently blocked

by Republican majorities. ... This is not going to exist anymore."

Republicans had control of the governor's mansion, House and Senate in 2012 and 2013 until Terry McAuliffe was elected in 2014. In 2018, the results of the Congressional election were coined a "blue wave," as Democrats won three seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, gaining a Democratic majority in the House.

House District 63 incumbent Democrat Lashrecse Aird said the party's majority will help the General Assembly pass legislation.

"We get so close to passing policies," Aird said. "This year, we're going to get close enough."

In the House, eight Republican-held districts were uncontested by Democratic candidates. Twenty-nine Democrat-led districts were uncontested by Republicans. In the state Senate, fewer were uncontested. There were four districts uncontested by Democrats, and 14 were uncontested by Republicans.

Capital News Service reporter Christopher Brown contributed to this report.

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'KEEP GRINDING'

Sophomore guard KeShawn Curry logged 12 minutes against North Texas. Photo by Jon Mirador

See **BASKETBALL PREVIEW** on page 5



Former VCU coach Will Wade made two NCAA tournament appearances at VCU. CT file photo

Now a foe, former coach returns to Siegel Center

NOAH FLEISCHMAN
Sports Editor

When No. 23 LSU takes the floor Wednesday night at the Siegel Center, a few men's basketball players will notice a familiar face at the helm of the Tigers: coach Will Wade.

Wade, who coached the Rams from 2015-2017, is returning to Broad Street for the first time since leaving for Baton Rouge.

Three players on the Rams' roster during the 2016-17 season remain

from Wade's tenure: senior guards De'Riante Jenkins and Malik Crowfield, and redshirt-senior Issac Vann. Wade recruited junior forward Marcus Santos-Silva to Richmond before his departure.

"You don't like playing familiar foes all the time or familiar faces all the time," Wade said in a press conference Monday at LSU. "But, that's how it goes in college basketball."

See **WADE** on page 5

NEWS

Annual crime report shows increase in student referrals for drugs, alcohol

HANNAH EASON
News Editor

What started as a party in his Rhoads dorm room ended with the cops banging on his door because of a noise complaint. After telling an officer that he drank one beer, Brian was given a court summons and a student conduct referral.

Brian, who asked to remain anonymous to speak openly about his experience, was charged with drinking underage in a dorm during his freshman year.

"I was told that if I had one more mess up, then I would have been kicked out at VCU," said Brian, who was on VCU probation for a year and was "hesitant to go out afterward."

The number of student referrals for drug and alcohol offenses increased between 2017 and 2018 while arrests went down, according to the VCU Annual Security Report released earlier this semester.

Liquor law referrals went up slightly on campus and in residential facilities. On Monroe Park campus, there was an increase from 97 to 118 referrals on campus, and all but one were in residential facilities. Drug abuse referrals had a larger increase, from 44 on campus in 2017 to 111 on campus in 2018. Almost all occurred in residential facilities.

Brian, who is a junior psychology major, said he was more angry at himself throughout the process than anything.

He remembered his dad telling him, "you better not make all this tuition money be for nothing."

“

I was told that if I had one more mess up, then I would have been kicked out at VCU."

Brian, VCU student

"Being put on probation really didn't hit home like my dad telling me to not like mess this shit up," Brian said.

Police do not process student referrals, but every student who is arrested goes through a conduct process through the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity. A liquor law arrest is considered any possession of an open container of alcohol, underage possession of alcohol or possession of alcohol by an interdicted person. Under Virginia statute, an interdicted person is one who is considered to be a "habitual drunkard."

Drug abuse arrests, which include citations for paraphernalia, went down on campus and on public property but increased slightly in residential housing.

See **REFERRALS** on page 3

Stories of the week

NATIONAL: The country's largest milk producer, Dean Foods, is filing for bankruptcy. The company told CNN it blames sale declines on the decreased popularity of the "conventional white milk category."

INTERNATIONAL: Following weeks of protest, former Bolivian president Evo Morales has been given political asylum in Mexico following his resignation earlier this week.

State grant to replicate VCU recovery program

KATIE HOLLOWELL
Contributing Writer

Giving those in need a "safe place" is the most important aspect of developing substance use recovery programs, said Rams in Recovery members as it was announced their program would be modeled at eight Virginia colleges beginning this year, thanks to \$675,000 in grant money.

VCU's Rams in Recovery is being allocated more state funding due to the opioid epidemic. About 1,500 people died last year from drug overdoses in Virginia according to the Virginia Department of Health. Addiction and the opioid epidemic have become the state's largest challenges, Gov. Ralph Northam told the Richmond-Times Dispatch.

The grant will cover two years of support through site visits, daylong retreats and monthly calls "to help implement programming and outreach strategies and coordinate on-campus services," according to a VCU news release.

VCU's Rams in Recovery received the grant money from the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services. It was first announced by Northam on Oct. 31.

"Young people who are often living away from home for the first time can be particularly vulnerable, and college campuses can be difficult places if you're trying to avoid drinking or using substances," Northam said in a news release. "Collegiate recovery programs provide critical resources to help students in recovery have a successful college experience and give them the tools they need to be healthy and thriving well beyond graduation."



Rams in Recovery program coordinator Tom Bannard spoke about the \$675,000 grant, which will develop recovery programs at eight Virginia colleges, at the governor's mansion. Photo courtesy of Lauren Powell

The eight other schools that will receive a portion of the grant money and mentorship from Rams in Recovery staffers for the next two years are Longwood University, Radford University, University of Mary Washington, University of Richmond, University of Virginia, Virginia Tech, Virginia Union University, and Washington and Lee University.

Rams in Recovery hired an assistant program coordinator, Lauren Powell, with the grant in order to maintain consistent support for Rams in Recovery members, since program coordinator Tom Bannard will be traveling frequently to mentor colleges across the state.

Powell said Rams in Recovery hopes to continue increasing its accessibility by considering intersectionality and underrepresented populations, such as racial minorities. The grant will include ally trainings across the state for people who want better knowledge about what to say and do to help a person in recovery.

"Just a little tweak of language here and there, like 'person in recovery,' rather than 'addict' or 'alcoholic,'" Powell said. "If this new language helps people talk about it and say look, 'I'm recovering' and gets the conversation going, it's a definite impactful way to be on the front lines of trying to stop this awful epidemic that's happening with opioids and addiction in general."

Rams in Recovery member and social work major Shauntelle Hammond said having the recovery support at the on-campus house helped her.

"That's a very big thing for myself personally is having that recovery support," Hammond said. "Having a community, being able to go to meetings on campus and in between classes with having a safe place to go when I need some help."

Hammond says every person in recovery has different needs, which will depend on each college. She said it would be difficult for Rams in Recovery to replicate everything, and different programs would be more beneficial depending on the campus.

There is a constant need for naloxone training courses in every college recovery program, Hammond said. That way, people are aware of opioid overdoses and how to reverse them.

"[It's important to] have people prepared, to help them react in that situation if they need to," Hammond said.

Photos courtesy of Lauren Powell



Left, the Free Hot Coffee Bike made an appearance at the governor's mansion when the Rams in Recovery grant was announced. The project was started by artist John Freyer and Rams in Recovery to provide an outlet for conversation about addiction and recovery. Right, Pam Northam poses with DeVo'na Spencer, a recovery ally with Rams in Recovery. Photos courtesy of Lauren Powell



Spike in on-campus students may have caused increase in drug, alcohol referrals in 2017-2018 crime report

Continued from front page

In 2018, out of 165 drug abuse arrests, 88 were on campus. Of those 88 arrests, 75 were in on-campus housing.

When GRC Phases I and II reopened in August 2018, the number of on-campus, first-year students increased by almost 1,500.

“

We're kind of looking at GRC reopening, increasing that population of on-campus students. So we believe that that is what that number is tied to.”

Corey Byers,
VCU police spokeswoman

“We're kind of looking at GRC reopening, increasing that population of on-campus students,” said VCU police spokeswoman Corey Byers. “So we believe that that is what that number is tied to.”

Byers said the numbers are not double counted, and if a student receives an arrest and a referral, they would only be counted as an arrest in the crime report numbers.

VCU has a zero-tolerance policy against

alcohol, which VCU Police Captain Jonathan Siok says is largely to prevent sexual assault and alcohol poisoning.

“It's not because we want to come out here and arrest students or anything like that,” Siok said. “Honestly, most of our officers don't want to do that anyway. We know that it can affect their academic career.”

VCU Police operates in concurrent jurisdiction with Richmond Police, which means both forces can make arrests on campus.

“Since we have such a great relationship with the city, a lot of times when they come in contact with a student, they call us,” Siok said. “Now that's not just in our jurisdiction, but maybe

outside just a little bit since we've expanded our jurisdiction, into more of an internal jurisdiction.”

Karen Belanger, director of student conduct and academic integrity, said much of the student conduct process is meant to be educational.

“Disciplinary probation at the university is very different than criminal probation,” Belanger said. “We're not applying supervision to the probation, we're not applying drug testing to probation. It's not monitored in the same way the courts may with a student.”



The increase in drug and alcohol referrals was likely due to the increase in students after GRC reopened, according to VCU Police spokeswoman Corey Byers. Photos by Jon Mirador

Student Conduct decides punishments — which can range from censure to expulsion — on a case by case basis. Belanger says when dealing with drugs and alcohol, this can include variables like quantity, behavior at the time of arrest, the type of drug and if there was an intent to distribute.

“Students are entitled to due process. So just because somebody is documented in a report either by a staff member or the university police doesn't necessarily mean that they violated the policy,” Belanger said. “So we don't go into the conversation assuming that they have.”

On the MCV campus, liquor law arrests and referrals saw almost no change. In 2018, there were fewer than 10 liquor law arrests and referrals combined.

There were six drug abuse referrals at MCV in 2018, all of which occurred in residential facilities. There was a decrease in drug abuse arrests between 2017 and 2018, from 90 to 59, including arrests in MCV hospitals.

Numbers listed in the VCU Annual Crime Report do not include public intoxication or DUIs.

Schools discipline black students more often, Virginia study finds

KATHARINE DEROSA
Contributing Writer

A recent study found that black children in Virginia are disproportionately charged with disorderly conduct in schools when compared to their white counterparts.

The report from the Legal Aid Justice Center, which has offices across Virginia, found that the law is often brought down upon school children who do something to disturb the peace of a school day — whether it was intentional or not.

According to the report, actions such as interrupting class qualify as disorderly conduct and have the potential to lead to punishments such as curfew, monetary fines, community service and occasionally time in a juvenile detention center.

The report defines disorderly conduct as “vague, overbroad, catch-all law that criminalizes low-level public disruption that does not rise to the level of physical harm, property damage, or even threat,” and asserts that the law is consistently used against minority groups.

The report on the study was compiled by Amy Woolard, Rachael Deane and Shannon Ellis.

“We gathered data from the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice on Disorderly Conduct complaints and data from the Virginia Department of Education on student membership counts,” Woolard said in an email, “all disaggregated by race and gender.”

The report stated that between 2016 and 2019, black students accounted for 22% of the school population in Virginia, but on average received 62% of the school-based disorderly conduct criminal complaints.

VCU sociology professor Travis Williams said he believes institutional racism plays a role in these findings, and that they were consistent with other reports he had read from across the country.

“I would say it doesn't surprise me,” Williams said. “It's definitely kind of bewildering and upsetting. I do think that it's for a lot of different complicated reasons that result in institutionally unequal outcomes.”

“

My students have told me that in high schools, black girls were more likely to be targeted as being dressed inappropriately.”

Travis Williams,
sociology professor

The report found that black girls in particular were subject to charges of disorderly conduct in class. The number of black girls charged with disorderly conduct increased by 60% between 2016 and 2019.

“I've heard that black girls are often perceived to be older and physically stronger than their white counterparts, whether that is or is not true,” Williams said.

Williams also spoke of interactions with black female students who shared their high school experiences with him.

“My students have told me that in high schools, black girls were more likely to be targeted as being dressed inappropriately,” Williams said. “They said that there were other girls in the schools dressed similarly, who were not targeted as quickly or directly.”

The increase in disorderly conduct charges against young black women was noticed by Monique Morris, an author and filmmaker who recently published a documentary titled, “Push-out: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools.”

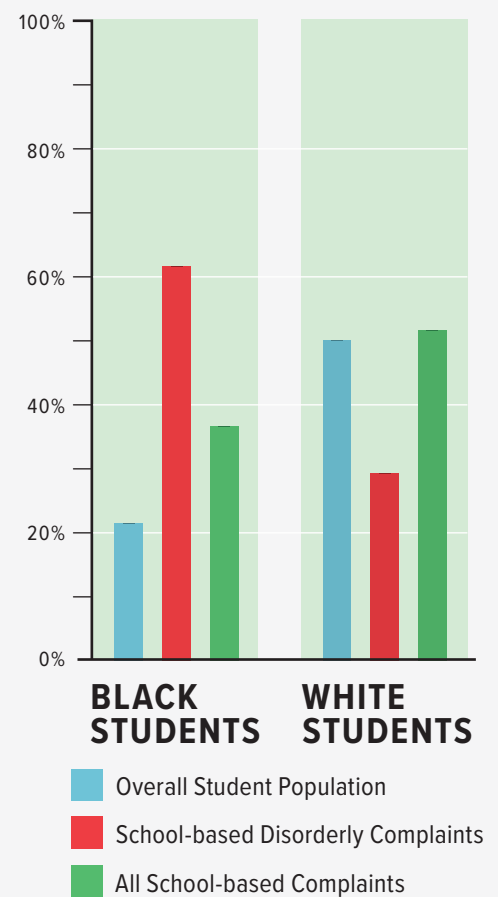
In an interview with Style Weekly, Morris said black girls are often targeted for their hairstyles, specifically for wearing headscarves in schools, which takes away their bodily autonomy.

“Look at the control and regulation of hair,” she said, “Girls are being told they can't be who they are. It's not even about a threat they could pose to the learning environment.”

These charges of misconduct are not specific to adolescence; the report found that 19% of the charges were filed against children ages 13 and younger.

According to the report, disorderly conduct charges can lead to court involvement, with disorderly conduct as the sole charge

Misconduct from black and white students, 2016 - 2019



Information compiled by Katharine DeRosa

Infographic by Andrew Caress

in two-thirds of the cases. The report contends that this sends children to court at a young age and has the potential to harm these children in the future if they ever end up in court again.

The full report from the Legal Aid Justice Center can be found at justice4all.org.

Homecoming recognition ‘more than just a crown’

CHRISTINE AMANO DOLAN
Contributing Writer

QUEEN

After a week of anticipation, the name “Jalia Jeffreys” rang through the Siegel Center’s speakers on Friday evening. As she waved to the crowd and a Homecoming Queen sash was placed over her shoulder, Jeffreys said she was overjoyed and stunned.

“I was nervous,” Jeffreys said, “but I wasn’t really focused on winning throughout the whole campaign. I just wanted to just enjoy myself and make this experience enjoyable for everyone else around me.”

As the newly crowned queen, Jeffreys returns to her busy schedule as a health, physical education and exercise science major. Originally from South Boston, Virginia, Jeffreys says she was initially drawn to VCU by its exceptional medical program and dynamic city life.

“[South Boston] is a very small area. Everyone knows everyone, your parents went to the same high school as you,” Jeffreys said. “In Richmond, it’s very diverse and has lots of different sites to see, and you never meet the same person twice.”

As both her father and aunt are involved in the medical field, she always knew she wanted to pursue a similar career. After aiding in her grandmother’s recovery for two knee replacement surgeries, she found her passion for occupational therapy.

After interning at a rehabilitation center over the summer, Jeffreys plans to take a year away from studies to work at another rehabilitation center post-graduation.

“My overall goal is to get accepted into an occupational therapy program and become an occupational therapist,” Jeffreys said.

Outside of her studies, Jeffreys says she finds ways to stay involved on campus. She uses her dancing and cheerleading skills that she learned in high school as a



Left, Homecoming Queen Jalia Jeffreys sports her crown on campus. The health, physical education and exercise science major hopes to become an occupational therapist. Right, Homecoming King Spencer Vincent is an interdisciplinary studies major in charge of new member presentations for fraternity Eta Xi. Photos by Raelyn Fines

member of the newly founded Elite Rams Stomp N Shake team. Jeffreys says the organization focuses more on the movement — rather than the competitiveness — of cheerleading. She is also a member of the pre-occupational therapy club.

As she prepares for her pending graduation in the spring, Jeffreys says she looks back on past Homecoming week events with fond memories.

“For me, I wasn’t very outgoing. I was afraid to get out there and try something new,” Jeffreys said. “It helps you get out of your comfort zone, form new friendships and create a new ‘RAMily’ to stay connected with others.”

KING

Amid a crowd of roaring Rams fans, Spencer Vincent waited along with the



rest of the Homecoming Court for the halftime mark. Vincent, after anxiously waiting for the results during Friday’s basketball game, said he was happily surprised to be announced as the 2019 Homecoming King.

He felt nervous. After a long week of fun activities including lip-synching, social media challenges and other campaigning activities, it was a “toss-up” of who would claim the crown.

Vincent says Homecoming week was more than just a crown to him. He has been involved with the Activities Programming Board, or APB, since his arrival at VCU and has since found a passion for student affairs.

He envisioned a different life for himself when first transferring to VCU in the fall of 2016. After growing up in Tacoma, Washington, Vincent was initially drawn to

the Richmond campus due to its unique but familiar city life.

“I picked VCU because I really liked the city of Richmond,” Vincent said. “It reminds me of a little version of Seattle in a sense.”

After transferring from Thomas Nelson Community College, he searched for ways to acquaint himself quickly with his new school. He soon discovered the activities the APB held for Homecoming week, applied for Homecoming Court and was named the 2016 Homecoming Lord for his freshman class. After his first crowning, Vincent fell in love with VCU and found a new career path.

“When I first did Homecoming Court I met a lot of different people,” Vincent said. “They were involved in student affairs and telling me ‘You can have this as a job,’ and I really liked it.”

First arriving at VCU with a focus in pharmaceutical studies, Vincent changed his major to interdisciplinary studies with a concentration in business communications. He says he hopes to one day become the dean of student affairs for a university.

“I just like how you are able to really change students’ lives for the better,” Vincent said. “I feel like college is a very trying time in students’ lives, and I want to be someone to lean on for students.”

Vincent is on the board of trustees for the Association of College Unions International, which represents student activity centers and student unions in the U.S. He is also a member of the Eta Xi Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi and is in charge of its new member presentation.

Keeping up with a busy schedule as he works through his senior year, Vincent said he looks back on his involvement over the years with the APB’s Homecoming Court with gratitude.

“APB is really amazing at what they do, and I made the best of friends in Homecoming Court from the first year of doing it,” Vincent said. “I feel like everyone should apply for it because this is what helped me find what I was passionate about.”

Former FDA commissioner examines 1990s tobacco regulation in ICA talk

HANNAH EASON
News Editor

Tobacco regulations during the 1990s were an uphill battle, said David Kessler, who was commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration from 1990 to 1997, during his talk at the Institute for Contemporary Arts on Monday evening.

While commissioner, Kessler was involved in the implementation of the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act — which required labeling on packaged foods — and the regulation of the tobacco industry. The event was presented by VCU’s Center for the Study of Tobacco Products and the College of Humanities and Sciences.

Here are highlights from the talk. Excerpts have been edited for length and clarity, and historical context has been added.

ON TOBACCO REGULATION IN THE EARLY 1990S:

Where do you start to look, and what’s the question? It took us two years just to frame the question the right way. You don’t know if you have jurisdiction over tobacco. No one had ever assumed jurisdiction.

We asked our colleagues at the Federal Trade Commission, who said that they had been regulating tar and nicotine levels for decades, and said they had data back to the 1980s. We said, “Send us all your data.” And you see that on the sales with nicotine and tar levels and smoke as of 1982. Something I didn’t understand is that tar levels would

drop, but nicotine levels had increased. How can that happen?

ON THE LATE-’90S FDA ATTEMPT TO REGULATE TOBACCO:

We weren’t as lucky in the Supreme Court. First question from Justice Sandra O’Connor: “Nicotine is no more addictive than a horror movie, is it Solicitor General?” My heart sank. I know it was a generational thing, and they don’t quite understand. We lost 5-4 in the Supreme Court. Normally, Supreme Court looks to the words of the statue, right? Certainly that’s the conservative temperature — looking at the intent of nicotine on the structure and function of the body. We had all this evidence, and they didn’t want to look at any of it.

(In March 2000, the Supreme Court ruled that the FDA did not have the authority to regulate tobacco in Food and Drug Administration v. Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation. The FDA argued that it had the authority to regulate via the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, which gave the administration jurisdiction over “drugs” and “devices.” The tobacco industry argued that nicotine was not a drug.)

ON THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY’S MARKETING TOWARD WOMEN IN THE 1920S:

The real progress came out of the second part of our investigation. Who smoked cigarettes in the early 1900s? Men. Who

did the industry target to in the 1920s and 1930s? For women, they were forces of liberty, symbols of freedom. They were granted with emancipation and liberation and the right to vote. There’s always that march down 5th Avenue which convinced women to smoke.

(After World War II, public relations expert Edward Bernays was hired by the American Tobacco Company to open the tobacco market to women. Bernays organized a public display of women smoking cigarettes during the 1929 Easter Parade in New York City. The cigarettes were coined “torches of freedom” and symbolized the advancement of women’s rights in the U.S.)

ON YOUTH TOBACCO USE AND FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS:

We got up and said nicotine addiction is a pediatric disease, with 3,000 children

“

Young smokers have been a critical factor in the growth and decline in every major brand and company over the last 50 years.”

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, 1984

beginning to smoke every day, and 1,000 will go on to die. That’s an issue about free will. It was an issue about choice.



Former FDA commissioner David Kessler said the administration “wasn’t as lucky” in the late-’90s court case against the tobacco industry. Photo by Marlena Artis