



December 2014

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## Chapter Team

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## Don't Forget

You are REQUIRED to have a Virginia Tech PID (vt.edu email address) to access the Chapter Forms database.

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The Chapter Newsletter is a communications tool between the Virginia Tech Alumni Association and its chapters.

If you have any comments or suggestions, please send them to your chapter liaison. If you have problems viewing the newsletter, please contact [Ginny Ritenour](#), Chapter Program Coordinator.

## Dear Chapter Volunteers,

The holiday season marks the halfway point for our alumni chapter programming year and what a busy and exciting fall we've had! Alumni chapters across the country have hosted football game watching parties and tailgates, community service projects, speaker programs, young alumni mixers, and Hokie holiday parties. We're thrilled to see chapters taking advantage of our new email template and postcard mailers to get the word out, as well as increasing their own use of social media to share upcoming programs and highlights (including Facebook, Twitter, and local email lists). Be sure to ask your chapter liaison for more information or assistance to maximize your marketing efforts.

We hosted our first Chapter Chat earlier this month, focusing on Hokie Nation Networking. More information and some helpful downloads on this topic can be found on our [Chapter Resources webpage](#). Our next Chat will be on Saturday, January 10, 2015 at 12 PM (Eastern), focusing on planning spring speaker events.

With the holidays quickly approaching, please take note of the alumni office closings and university schedule listed below. We will have limited staff for some periods throughout the holiday season and the university will be closed for several days.

Let us take this opportunity to thank each of you for your contributions to the Alumni Association and Virginia Tech and wish you and yours a happy holiday season and a successful and joyful new year. We are truly blessed to have such an outstanding group of volunteers who care so deeply for our alma mater and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

*Debbie, Jack, Greg, Gwen, Kelly, Ginny, Jordan, and Katie*



## Chapter Event Highlight: Football Away Game Tailgates

The Virginia Tech Alumni Association and our chapters host tailgate celebrations at all of Virginia Tech's away games throughout the football season. Alumni traveling for these games enjoy the opportunity to gather with fellow Hokies to socialize and mingle prior to the game while they're away from Blacksburg.

This year was no exception! Beginning with the Ohio State game in September, a pre-game tailgate was hosted by the Alumni Association in conjunction with the Cincinnati, Columbus, Dayton, and Northeast Ohio Chapters. The tailgate took place at the Fawcett Center on the Ohio State campus and included raffles, munchies, a cash bar, and pep rally with the Virginia Tech cheerleaders. About 400 Hokie fans joined the celebration.

The Pittsburgh Chapter hosted more than 100 alumni and friends for the Virginia Tech vs. Pittsburgh game at McFadden's Restaurant and Saloon, a venue within walking distance of Heinz Field. Ashley Roth, chapter president, and her husband attended, as well as alumna and former Alumni Association employee Mara Barker. Corbin DiMeglio, former SGA president, was also in attendance for the festive event. The DJ got the group ready for the game with "Enter Sandman."

The rest of this season's away games all took place in North Carolina and the Triangle Chapter was host to two successful events. For the

University of North Carolina game in early October, the chapter held a pre-game party at the Carolina Brewery in Chapel Hill prior to the Hokie victory over the Tarheels. More than 40 alumni and guests enjoyed a buffet, beer, wine, and soft drinks before taking a bus over to the stadium. Decked out in orange and maroon, participants had a good time preparing to cheer on the Hokies. In addition, a portion of the ticket sales went to the chapter's scholarship fund.

For the Duke game, the chapter was able to work with the university to secure event space on campus, close to the stadium. Their package tailgate deal included a game ticket, cookout food, beer, and soft drinks. More than 100 alumni enjoyed a visit from Athletic Director Whit Babcock, who was joined by Desiree Reed Francois, Executive Associate Athletic Director, Kevin Jones, former Virginia Tech football player and Special Assistant to the Athletic Director, as well as HokieBird and the Virginia Tech cheerleaders.

The NC Triad Chapter hosted our final away game of the season at Wake Forest. In collaboration with the Triangle Hokie Club, the chapter hosted 350 cars, RV's and a bus for a parking lot tailgate at the game. The event also included several food trucks and a live band to cater to the "Hokie exclusive" group.

When you're traveling for Virginia Tech football, be sure to check out the latest information on the Football Events page of our website and join us as we cheer on the Hokies!



*"The Tribe" from the Triangle Chapter enjoys the UNC pre-game celebration at Carolina Brewery*



*Traveling alumni enjoy the Pittsburgh pre-game event on the patio at McFadden's Restaurant and Saloon*





*More than 100 alumni, friends, and guests joined the Triangle Chapter for a tailgate on the Duke campus*



*The Triangle Chapter provided ticket sales for the Duke event, allowing Hokies to enjoy the game together*



*NC Triad Chapter volunteers take time out for a photo opportunity at the Wake Forest game tailgate*



*More than 350 Hokie fans gathered together for the Wake Forest game tailgate in the stadium parking lot*

## **Share your Networking success stories!**

Calling all chapters! The Virginia Tech Alumni Association is in search of success stories from your chapter networking events.

If you know of any job offers, promotions, professional connections or anything else that has helped another Hokie from the networking efforts, please send the information to Katie Marquis at [kmarquis@alumni.vt.edu](mailto:kmarquis@alumni.vt.edu).

We've been asked to present our program to other alumni professionals at the University of Maryland and we want to showcase the success of our chapters. Thank you!

## Chapter Volunteer Highlight: Outstanding Chapter Volunteer Jina Gaines '03, Tidewater Chapter



*Jina Gaines '03 (left), pictured with fellow chapter officers  
Chris Jennings '96, President, and Kate Petti '10,  
Community Service Chair*

Alumni are nominated for the Outstanding Chapter Volunteer Award by members of their local chapter. We had many terrific nominations this year and selected TWO young alumni to receive the award, including Tidewater volunteer Jina Gaines '03.

Jina is the chapter's Communications and Marketing Chair and has flourished in this role. She is responsible for the chapter's much needed website update, Facebook ads, and chapter giveaways. She has been responsible for designing and ordering materials and working with a web designer to create a more attractive and user-friendly website. In addition, she gets the word out to local alumni about all of the chapter's events via Facebook, email blasts, and flyers. She has been instrumental in the chapter's Gold Level Outstanding Chapter Award success.

The Virginia Tech Alumni Association was pleased to award Jina the 2014 Outstanding Chapter Volunteer Award. Please join us in congratulating Jina and the Tidewater Chapter!

## Communications Corner: December 2014

From [Dave Hunt](#), [Denise Crawford](#), and [Matt Dowdy](#)

### Communications Requests Updates

We are now two months into using our new email and print request templates. Thank you for the seamless transition.

Just a reminder, email submissions *only* are sent out within five business days. For print requests, the postcard is mailed out first and the email is treated as a follow-up/reminder notice.

In response to feedback we heard this fall, email reminders for print requests will be sent out a week prior to the event RSVP date, or event date if no RSVP date is listed.

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### Dates to Remember:

- December 19: [Fall Commencement](#)
- December 24 (12 PM)-January 2:  
All university offices closed
- January 5: Alumni Association offices re-open
- January 10 at 12 PM (Eastern): January Chapter Chat – Planning Speaker Events
- February 10 (Time TBD): February Chapter Chat – Community Service Projects
- February 20-21: [Drillfield Series: Food for Thought](#)
- March 20-21: [Drillfield Series: What Fuels Our Planet?](#)
- April 11: The Big Event 2015



## Community Service Highlight: Chapter Holiday Service Projects

Although April is the month when we traditionally focus our community service efforts, many of our chapters support the Virginia Tech Alumni Association's "Hokie Nation Serves" initiative throughout the year. In keeping with the generous spirit of the holiday season, many community service projects are carried out as special events or as part of the chapters' annual holiday parties. This year was no exception, with a wide variety of service projects and donation opportunities for Hokies across the country.

The [Marine Toys for Tots Foundation](#) is a national organization that collects new toys to deliver to economically disadvantaged children at Christmas. The Foundation provides collection boxes to local groups and several of our chapters took advantage of this easy opportunity to participate in a worthy cause. The Baltimore, Chicago, Greenville, NC, and Orange County Chapters also collected toys at their annual holiday parties and delivered them to their local Toys for Tots offices.

Canned food drives are another easy way to incorporate a community service project into your regularly scheduled holiday events. To support the HokieBird Fights Hunger campaign, the NC Triad Chapter collected food at their holiday party to deliver to their local Second Harvest Food Bank. The Chattanooga Chapter collected canned food all season at their football game watching parties and delivered their annual donation this month to the Chattanooga Community Kitchen. The Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter also participated in HokieBird Fights Hunger this holiday season by holding a raffle at their annual ACC Holiday Party to benefit a local food bank.



*The Greenville, NC Chapter collected new toys for their local Marine Toys for Tots organization*



*Baltimore Chapter volunteers presented the Marine Toys for Tots organization with their donations*



*Central Virginia Chapter volunteers gathered to help out with a local Habitat for Humanity build*

Another popular community service opportunity is with the Salvation Army as bell ringers for their [Red Kettle Campaign](#). The campaign enables the Salvation Army to provide food, toys, and clothing to needy people in local communities during the Christmas season. Several chapters participated as bell ringers this year, including the Minnesota Chapter, who filled several shifts at the famous Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota. The Tidewater and Alleghany Highland Chapters participated in their local communities, as well.

Many chapters participate with their local Habitat for Humanity organizations throughout the year, but the colder weather provides opportunities to assist with builds when volunteers can be harder to find. The Central Virginia Chapter worked on a build this season at a project in their area.

There are also service opportunities that are unique to local chapter areas; many chapters have found organizations that they choose to support year after year. The National Capital Region Chapter participates in the annual

[Wreaths Across America](#) event at Arlington National Cemetery. Volunteers place wreaths throughout the entire cemetery for the holidays.

The Charlotte Chapter volunteers at their local Charlotte Crisis Assistance Ministry Free Store to sort clothes and prepare store displays of coats, clothes, and household items for needy families.

The Denver Chapter has a holiday tradition of selecting a local family (two families this year!) to sponsor, providing toys and other gifts, household goods, and even Christmas dinner.

The Villages Chapter collects donations to make an annual gift to their local [All One Family](#) organization, which provides aid to needy families and sponsors tuition aid to deserving high school graduates in their area.

We encourage you to be on the lookout for ways to incorporate community service projects into your holiday season chapter events. Contact your chapter liaison for help in determining what might work best for your chapter next year!



*Chapter president Mark Gingrich and Lauren Gardner from the Minnesota Chapter ring Salvation Army bells*



*National Capital Region Chapter volunteers at the 2015 Wreaths Across America at Arlington National Cemetery*



*The Denver Chapter delivers goodies to local families*



*The Villages Chapter makes their All One Family donation*



## New Chapter Initiative: Hokie Nation Networking

The Virginia Tech Alumni Association launched a new program, Hokie Nation Networking, to encourage Hokies to professionally network with fellow alums. A new requirement to become an outstanding chapter, this initiative is designed to connect alumni who can help each other in meaningful and positive ways. As a reminder, there are three components of the program including professional networking, general networking and the Hokie Nation Network.

Professional networking events target specific professions and bring in those with expertise in the same or similar field (i.e. real estate, finance, hospitality, energy, etc.) The goal is to connect Hokies who work in the same profession who may be able to help one another. We encourage Chapters to make suggestions on professions and locations to spotlight. In some cases, the VT Alumni Association can assist with these types of professional networking events.

For example, the Alumni Association recently hosted a professional networking event focused on Finance in Arlington, Virginia. More than 100 Hokies came out to visit with each other and exchange contact information. Finance Department Head Vijay Singal attended the event and enjoyed mingling with alums. Previous events centered on Hospitality & Tourism, Technology, Real Estate and Legal, Financial Services, Insurance & Banking. Future networking events are being planned in the areas of cybersecurity/defense, start-ups and aerospace engineering. Also, if you are planning to attend the South by Southwest conference, mark your calendar for a networking event focused on Technology on March 16<sup>th</sup> at the Capital Factory.

General networking events are geared toward all alumni who are interested in professionally

networking with members of the Hokie Nation. All professions are included and the goal is to make connections with alumni who have expertise in a wide range of areas. These events are ideal for Chapters to hold and there are many approaches to take. Some examples are hosting a short panel, speed networking, an after-work cocktail reception or breakfast round tables before work. Additionally, the Denver Chapter recently held a networking event where they provided a LinkedIn presentation on how to effectively use this professional tool. Therefore, there are a host of ways to create your networking event and we hope you will network with one another about the events your Chapter plans to hold.

Lastly, the Hokie Nation Network is a supplement to Chapter networking events. It includes a suite of electronic resources for alumni to access at [alumni.vt.edu/hnn](http://alumni.vt.edu/hnn). This comprehensive networking community provides links to LinkedIn, the Alumni Directory, a job listing for employees, a posting for employers, along with additional career resources such as information about resume writing, who's hiring Hokies, tips for interviewing and much more.

If you have any questions or would like to talk through your networking event, contact Katie Marquis at [kmarquis@vt.edu](mailto:kmarquis@vt.edu).

## New Officer Training Feature: Monthly Chapter Chats!

In December, we hosted the first of our newest chapter officer training feature: Chapter Chats! This hour long webinar will be hosted on the 10<sup>th</sup> of every month (at various times) and will feature current campus and Alumni Association initiatives, as well as provide an opportunity for you to chat with chapter liaisons and other chapter officers.

Mark your calendars for **January 10<sup>th</sup> at 12 PM** (Eastern) and watch for more details!

# HOKIES on FACEBOOK



*Bob '72 and Linda '74 Allen compete for "Tackiest Hat" at the NC Triad Chapter holiday party*



*Megan Harrell '09 from the North Alabama Chapter represents Virginia Tech at a local college fair*



*Los Angeles Hokies celebrate on the beach following a chapter football game watching party*



*The Orange County Chapter gathers together for a football game watching party at Baja Sharkeez in Huntington Beach*



*The New England Chapter cheers on the Hokies at their football game watching party earlier this month*



*The National Capital Region Chapter hosted another successful Young Alumni event in Arlington, VA*