First-year cadets and their training cadre complete the spring Caldwell March and return to Upper Quad, past the empty lots that once housed Monteith Hall, in the foreground, and Thomas Hall, in the background.
WELCOME TO OUR NEW ASSISTANT

In fall 2017, we welcomed Michele Messner as the new alumni director assistant for the VTCC.

She spent nearly 16 years as a stay-at-home to her two daughters, Olivia, 16, and Lilly, 14. During this time, she volunteered in their schools, in both the classroom and on the executive board of the parent-teacher organization.

Michele is a 1988 Radford University graduate and, after returning to the area in 2007, spent much time volunteering there. She is on the board of directors for the Radford University Alumni Association and enjoys supporting Highlander athletics.

Michele has been living the Virginia Tech motto, Ut Prosim, for years and is excited to continue doing so for the Corps alumni.

MEMORIES OF SKIPPER

U.S. Army Col. Chip Daniels ’93 reminisces about polishing the original Skipper, now housed in New Cadet Hall. Daniels was in town with his son, who participated in a Spend the Night recruiting event with the Corps. We hope to have another Daniels join our ranks!

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

David E. Lowe ’63 and Air Force Gen. Thomas C. Richards ’86 followed two different paths to successful careers and dedication to community service. Both were honored in April with our first-ever Distinguished Alumni Award.

The Distinguished Alumni Award formalizes the Corps’ long tradition of honoring men and women who graduated from its ranks and are the inspiration and mentors to current cadets. Corps alumni can make nominations to honor living alumni who were enrolled in the Corps for a minimum of two years (four semesters or eight quarters).

Lowe built a career with the C&P Telephone Company of West Virginia — which became Bell Atlantic and eventually, Verizon. Richards is the first four-star general among the Corps’ alumni and illuminates the idea of selfless service.

Lowe has a history of leading community, educational, and economic development efforts that bring untold benefits to the places he calls home. He champions long-range and strategic planning efforts and is a guiding force on the Corps alumni board of directors.

He is an honorary lifetime board member of the Virginia Tech Alumni Association. The Class of 2013 honored him as its class ring namesake, and he was awarded Virginia Tech’s Distinguished Alumni Award in 2013.

Richards amassed 4,700 flying hours, including 624 combat missions in Vietnam, and went on to command positions with the Air Force Academy, the Basic Military Training School, 8th Air Force, and Air University. He earned his fourth star as deputy commander in chief of the U.S. European Command in Germany and, after retirement from the military, went on to lead the Federal Aviation Administration.

In 1996, Virginia Tech awarded him the University Distinguished Achievement Award, and the Class of 1992 dedicated its class ring collection to him.

“These two recipients epitomize both the Military-Leader Track and Citizen-Leader Track that our Corps provides today’s generation of cadets as they become the kind of global, ethical leaders that are needed now, more than ever,” said Maj. Gen. Randal Fullhart, commandant of cadets.

FROM THE ALUMNI DIRECTOR

It has been a busy spring for the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets (VTCC) Alumni Office! We welcomed back alumni who shared their perspective and life lessons with the regiment this spring during the Gunfighter and Black Corps Alumni panels. Junior and senior cadets interacted with Corps alumni during the corps alumni during the annual Future Alumni Dinner and Social as we introduced the cadets to our program. Check out the upcoming alumni events calendar, and we will see you this fall!

U. Provine,
Col. Patience Larkin (retired) E-’87
patience@vt.edu

FALL CORPS ALUMNI EVENTS

- Sept. 13: Gunfighter Panel, 3:30 p.m. in Burruss Hall
- Sept. 14-15: Corps Reunion
  A new Friday event is Last Call at Lane Hall, a low-key social from 9 to 11 p.m. on the Lane Hall porch for a limited number of attendees. Register for Corps Reunion at alumni.vt.edu/events/2018/09/corps_of_cadets.html
- Nov. 2-3: Highty-Tighty Reunion
  Register at alumni.vt.edu/events/2018/11/highty-tighty-reunion.html. It’s also the Class of ’88’s 50th reunion.
- Note: Limited home football tickets for VT Alumni Row are on sale. Email Michele Messner at vtccalumni@vt.edu to order.

MEMORIES OF SKIPPER

U.S. Army Col. Chip Daniels ’93 reminisces about polishing the original Skipper, now housed in New Cadet Hall. Daniels was in town with his son, who participated in a Spend the Night recruiting event with the Corps. We hope to have another Daniels join our ranks!
I entered the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets in the fall of 1986, somewhat by accident. I applied to all the military academies but did not receive an appointment. I was, however, accepted to Virginia Tech and decided to follow my older brother, who was a junior there.

After my acceptance, I received an Air Force ROTC scholarship, which I honestly considered turning down. After a lengthy discussion with my father about tuition benefits and career opportunities, I decided to take advantage of at least one year of the scholarship and consider my options at that point. Accepting the scholarship and attending Virginia Tech meant that I had to be in the Corps. It turned out to be a pivotal decision from which I derived multiple life lessons and benefits that I enjoy to this day.

While not too excited about the prospect of being in the Corps, I decided to visit. When I did, Cadet Karl Schuetze ’87, a good friend of my brother’s, showed me around. I don’t remember too much of the visit except for Karl telling me that I should request his company, F-Troop, which I did.

I was assigned the room right across the hall from Karl, now a senior. Any time my door opened, Karl or his roommate was on me. This arrangement led to significant lessons for me.

Unbeknownst to me, Karl would periodically tell my brother how I was doing. In turn, my brother would relay my status to my folks, which led to encouragement when I’d call home to complain. This is where I learned an important lesson about taking care of each other. It isn’t simply making it easier, sometimes it’s about demanding more while being an unseen safety net.

The most significant lesson I learned is that there are worse things than failure; among them is quitting. The Corps instilled in me mental toughness to never quit. The upperclassmen certainly made it hard, but nothing could compare to the challenge my civilian classmates put on me.

I remember distinctly sitting in my 8 a.m. freshman English class on a particular Monday morning in the fall. A couple of civilians were talking about the party they went to on the previous Friday night. As I heard them discuss it, I reflected on my Friday evening of polishing brass, shining shoes, and getting brace up. Yep, I was having almost as much fun as they were! It forced me to commit to my goal and toughen up.

After graduation, I was commissioned into the Air Force with a pilot slot. Attending flight school didn’t work out, and I faced my first big career decision. The Air Force offered me an opportunity to walk away owing nothing on the scholarship or cross-train into another career field. It took much soul searching, but I decided to stick it out. I cross-trained into space operations, and the Air Force gave me a choice of two assignments: Falcon Air Force Base, Colorado, to fly satellites or Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico, and they couldn’t tell me what I’d be doing.

Life’s an adventure, so I took the latter.

After initial space training at Lowry Air Force Base in Denver, I made the trek to Holloman and the 4th Space Warning Squadron to execute mobile space-based missile warning. As it turned out, the 4th was a great finishing school for a young lieutenant. As a space operator, I was trained to process strategic missile launches, but I spent a majority of time as a deployment commander, leading a convoy of vehicles with 23 armed personnel into austere locations around the globe. The leadership lessons I learned in the Corps helped me advance into leadership roles as an instructor and evaluator in both missile warning and field commander duties. I was thrilled to lead airmen in multiple field exercises across the Southwest, on a deployment to the outback of Australia, and during a long-haul road trip to Georgia.

Most significant, however, I met my wife.

After three years, I was transferred to Falcon Air Force Base. Assigned to the 2nd Command and Control Squadron, I was responsible for executing a portion of the space surveillance network to track over 23,000 man-made objects in orbit.
Dorminey served as the 1990 regimental commander during his senior year in the Corps.

Dorminey was commissioned on Dec. 27, 1990, by Col. John Vanduy, who would also preside at his promotion to colonel.

A good friend of mine was the 22 SOPs operations officer and was picked up for command earlier than expected, leaving his position vacant. He suggested I replace him. As the operations officer, I was responsible for executing a global network of ground antennas, providing command and control for all Department of Defense satellite systems, as well as a number of weapon systems we operate. No two days were the same, but the work was impactful and the team of space professionals was impressive.

I expected to finish a full four-year tour but was selected at the three-year point to be the 21 Space Wing vice commander, where I currently sit. This job has truly been the pinnacle of my career. We are the second-largest wing in the Air Force with over 4,000 highly motivated personnel serving in 14 locations around the globe. We execute space control, global space surveillance, and strategic missile warning and missile defense of North America. We are responsible for six Air Force installations to include Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station; Thule Air Base, Greenland; and Peterson Air Force Base, home to NORAD, USNORTHCOM, and Air Force Space Command. The size of the wing takes the wing commander on the road a great deal, leaving me to run the ship in his absence.

I’ve got one more assignment left in my career and, as life comes full circle, I’m headed back to where it all started. I’ll be taking command of the Air Force ROTC at Virginia Tech this summer. I find it extremely poetic to end my career where it all began. I look forward to giving back to the two organizations that shaped my adult life — the Air Force and the Corps. I can’t think of a better way to wrap up a career than shaping the next generation of officers.

The time back at Tech will take me to a full 30 years on active duty and required retirement. I will certainly be tough to hang up the boots. It’s all I’ve known since graduation from high school, and it has been a great ride! The places I’ve seen, the people I’ve met and had the honor to serve with, the jobs I’ve been entrusted to do — I really can’t believe I got paid to do this!
Skipper Crew participated in performances of “The Nutcracker,” put on by Little Leapers, a children’s dance studio in Blacksburg, in December 2017. (Photo by Kate Clark Photography)

Cadets threw Growley II (call sign “Tank”) a luau-themed party to celebrate his fifth birthday on April 25.

The Highty-Tighties surprised their director, MUCS Jim Beam, with a 2019 Virginia Tech class ring at this year’s Ring Dance on March 23. (Photo by Cadet Natalie Rosas ’18)

Kristen Meister ’07, Maj. Susan Frank ’07, and Rachelle Orbio ’04 spoke during the spring Gunfighter Panel on Feb. 22.

Gen. Mark A. Welsh III spoke April 5 as the final guest of this year’s Cutchins Leadership Lecture Series.

Easley Smith ’45 talks with cadets at his table during the Future Alumni Dinner for the junior class on April 4.

Josh Miller ’17 and David Gardner ’17 of the Roanoke (Virginia) Police Department were among the alumni to help with career panels with the VPI Battalion/Citizen-Leader Track cadets on April 17.

SPRING EVENTS

Skipper appeared in a ballet, Growley turned 5, and alumni speakers and special guests gave cadets a lot to think about during the spring semester.
THE CASE FOR THE CORPS


Our Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets has always been reliant upon, and benefited from, the generosity of others, whether it be their time, their advocacy, or their financial support.

Even with that, I was recently challenged to make “the case for the Corps.”

It’s a good point. We shouldn’t take for granted that people know why the Corps is vital to our country.

Maybe people think it is just a quaint tradition worth continuing. After all, the Corps made up the entire study body when the school opened in 1872.

We know from our history that the Corps’ existence was not always a given, nor should we assume that it is secure for the future. Every day, to prospective families of future cadets, current families and cadets, and alumni — seasoned and new — we have to answer the question: “Why the Corps, and why should I support it?”

I recently came across some information that might be surprising to some, but certainly not to those who have served or are presently serving in the U.S. military. Since its inception in 1776, America has been at war 225 out of 241 years. That doesn’t even include the fact that our military forces also are fully engaged in humanitarian relief, training with allies, and deterring conflict from breaking out.

Wars come in many sizes and shapes. What they all have in common is the expectation that our military in general, and its officers in particular, will be of the highest caliber, professional, capable, and dedicated to the preservation of a country that is centered on a constitution.

When I speak to families and prospective cadets, I talk about the fact that those who are attracted to our Corps are sons and daughters who aspire to lead other people’s sons and daughters where ever our country calls upon them to go.

Let’s add in other statistics. A few years ago, Time magazine reported that about 71 percent of the 34 million 17-to-24-year-olds in the United States would not qualify for military service. Why? Reasons related to health, physical appearance, and educational background.

Of those remaining, only 1 percent are both eligible and inclined to even have a conversation with the military about possible service.

That makes our job a daunting challenge. We — Virginia Tech and the Corps — must be committed to this mission.

The Army and the Air Force have signaled that they are looking for our program to produce more officers. But if we don’t have the resources to recruit them — including Emerging Leadership Scholarships that offset the full cost of attendance and admissions policies at-tuned to recognize that four-year ROTC scholarships are given to those who have a high probability of success in college — we will not accomplish our mission.

That’s why we are committed to growing the endowments for our scholarships, imploring the Commonwealth of Virginia to appropriately resource our program, and working closely with university officials to admit students to fill our program with the same effort they give to other organizations, such as athletic teams.

Another part of the case for the Corps is the notion that we are creating “global” leaders. Our modern military is engaged around the world — in partnerships, in training, in humanitarian relief, and, when required, in conflict. Our businesses, industries, and communities are integrally tied to other countries through commerce, economics, and political agreements.

We are committed to helping our cadets gain experience both at home and abroad so they have the intellectual curiosity and expectation that they should be committed to this mission.

We’ve got work still to do!

Let’s add in other statistics. A few years ago, Time magazine reported that about 71 percent of the 34 million 17-to-24-year-olds in the United States would not qualify for military service. Why? Reasons related to health, physical appearance, and educational background.

I wish all this could be reliably and fully supported financially by the Commonwealth of Virginia and the nation, both of which collectively benefit from the leaders we produce, but that is presently not the case. Our programs and scholarships must come from donations.

With that, I also think there is a case to be made that all alumni of Virginia Tech, not just Corps alumni, have a stake in this.

We have proven through the generous donations of alumni and friends that we are ready to build our Corps Leadership and Military Science Building. Now the Commonwealth needs to do its part.

Current alumni have helped us establish a foundation for our scholarships, but more must be done, and we need all recent alumni to do what they can to help develop the next generation of leaders, too. It’s the best investment, with the greatest return, I think we can make.

The cadets recently added a sign by the Ranger Pit adjacent to Lane Hall. It reads, “The only easy day was yesterday.” We’ve got work still to do!
TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE

By Jason Oberoi ’09, assistant director of the Citizen-Leader Track/VPI Battalion

While many cadets in the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets spend Tuesday afternoons simulating battle drills, learning navigation, and marching, the Citizen-Leader Track cadets in VPI Battalion receive training to help them succeed in the workplace.

The cadets still learn about leadership, communication, and integrity, but they also receive training on ideas they can talk about during interviews with employers, such as Lean Six Sigma, Theory of Constraints, and project management. We want our cadets, many of whom end up going into business, to be exposed to these ideas prior to graduation so they are better job candidates and then better employees.

Theory of Constraints solves problems by identifying and reducing obstacles that stand in the way of mission accomplishment. In teaching the theory, Commandant of Cadets Maj. Gen. Randall Fullhart uses the example of how he stood up an Air Force wing in Egypt just before the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He attributed the unit’s success to the can-do attitude, to the professionalism of its men and women, and to the use of Theory of Constraints to inform work priorities each day.

Lean Six Sigma is a business efficiency methodology that reduces common inefficiencies through data analytics. This year, VPI seniors learned its fundamentals and the common sources of inefficiencies in business. Then they applied that knowledge to in-processing for New Cadet Week. Their recommendations to make it more efficient included asking new cadets to arrive with their hair already cut and having a survey that cadets can take to provide feedback.

If you have an internship or job opportunity for cadets, please email Jason Oberoi at joberoi@vt.edu.

had to complete in groups, and each group was new this year. Cadets are introduced to the fundamentals of project management, what project managers can do, and where cadets can go for more education. The cadets then choose a project to complete in groups, and each group

“Aside from learning the basic engineering problem-solving approach in my classes at Virginia Tech, the other most valuable skills and tools I have learned since graduation are project management and applying Lean Six Sigma concepts to a wide variety of challenges,” said Scott Pearl ’84, deputy chief of the Manufacturing and Industrial Technologies Division within the Air Force Research Lab’s Materials and Manufacturing Directorate. He’s also a member of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Alumni Inc. board.

“These tools have not just enhanced my job performance over the years, but I have also applied them to everyday life situations to better manage my time and my effectiveness to complete tasks well and on time,” Pearl said. “For the VPI Battalion cadets to learn these and to be able to experiment with them in an academic setting should be yet another factor that sets them apart from their peers. I trust they will find these tools to be as valuable to them as I have.”

If you have an internship or job opportunity for cadets, please email Jason Oberoi at joberoi@vt.edu.

“Training and learning from the Virginia Tech Police Department SWAT Team was an excellent opportunity for 3rd Battalion cadets,” said Cadet Jack Tully ’18, the spring semester’s 3rd Battalion executive officer. His job is to plan and execute training for the battalion, in addition to assisting the battalion commander in his duties.

“We had the chance to do hands-on riot control training to help prepare the officers for their missions. In addition, this allowed us to work with the officers that serve our community and keep us safe,” Tully said. “We hope we have an opportunity to train with them in the future.”

Virginia Tech Police always are willing to coordinate educational activities with cadets, such as offering tours of their facilities or speaking about their experiences in class settings. Most recently, an officer who also volunteers with Blacksburg Rescue briefed Kilo Battery on topics ranging from use of tear gas to quick medical care.

Cadets plan to help with similar police trainings in the future.
As a military, we can summarize our accomplishments, lessons learned, and, most importantly, our developments, both technically and tactically, throughout our history of conflicts.

Today though, we are faced with some of our most proficient, dynamic enemies that we’ve ever graced the battlefield with, and even that battlefield has been characterized by constant change, whether it be on the ground, sea, in the air, space, or now cyberspace.

Former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Martin Dempsey, once stated, “For the first time since the end of the Soviet Union, the United States is facing a near-peer threat, and that is unsettling to many in the services.”

For the first time in our lives, we need to be prepared to fight an enemy who is better outfitted than us and is more capable than us.

So what does this mean for us, the future military leaders of the greatest military in the world? This means we have some work to do. We need to improve technically and tactically at our jobs, learn to operate effectively in a joint environment, and develop ourselves ethically as sound leaders of soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines.

Bettering ourselves both technically and tactically is the easy part of that equation. The difficulty is bettering ourselves as ethical military leaders and operating in a joint environment. This is where our shared experience in the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets (VTCC) plays a vital role in our development as a leader.

As cadets in the VTCC, our day-to-day interactions with other cadets are an example of working effectively in a joint-service environment. The VTCC teaches us to understand the customs, courtesies, and traditions of the other branches; respect those values; and then realize we can use those relationships to build a better working environment in which each part of the whole is able to use its strengths to its advantage on the battlefield.

I was a cadre sergeant in Delta Company. We had two Army cadets, two Navy Cadets, one Marine cadet, and three Citizen-Leader Track cadets on our staff. We were able to train and indoctrinate freshman cadets into the VTCC with each cadre member having different experiences and training that made us valuable in different ways and stronger because of it.

During our time in the Corps, we are also immersed in experiences and opportunities that develop us as ethical leaders, as well. We participate in Corps Lab, where we use case studies to delve into the realm of strategic, operational, and tactical level leadership. We host Gunfighter Panels, where alumni return to share their experiences and how the Corps prepared them to be the leaders that we need today. We also have the Cutchins Lecture Series, where we have the opportunity to learn lessons of leadership and methods for success from various prominent figures in our nation.

The most important experience the VTCC gives us and develops in us is the opportunity to lead our peers. Leading peers is one of the most difficult tasks we face in the VTCC, but it is also one where we can hone our leadership characteristics, make mistakes, and correct them, moving forward as a stronger, more ethical leader because we were given the opportunity to lead.

These experiences will help guide us especially as junior officers and young professionals.

Our future conflicts will test us as leaders, more than we’ve ever been tested before and in the most dynamic environment that our military has ever found itself in.

We, as the leaders, may not always know what the exact right answer is either. But through our training and time spent learning leadership in the Corps, we will know what right and wrong look like, and we will have the confidence to make the right decision. We will also be fighting a tougher enemy than ever before, and it will be on us to outsmart them and defeat them, wherever the threat may be.

America’s sons and daughters need strong, ethical, educated, and proficient leaders to take them into the deepest valleys in the shadow of death and win. Will you be ready?

2nd Lt. John Peacock is a graduate of the Marine Corps Officer Candidates School in Quantico, Virginia, and of the Marine Corps Basic Officers Course at The Basic School. He is currently stationed at Naval Air Station Pensacola, training to become an aviator for the Marine Corps.
A team of Virginia Tech cadets won this year’s Association of Military Colleges & Schools of the United States National Fitness Challenge.

The challenge is designed to pursue ways to increase cadet resilience and wellness and to foster camaraderie through competition between member schools.

Colleges were asked to select up to 10 cadets to participate in the fitness challenge. Based on the U.S. Coast Guard’s Cadet Candidate Physical Fitness Examination, the challenge consisted of two minutes of push-ups, two minutes of sit-ups, and a 1.5-mile run with no more than five minutes between each event. All cadet scores were averaged to make up the college’s final score.

The Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets selected five cadets and posted the highest final score.

Participants were Harrison Barone ’19, Blaine Mainz ’21, Joshua McGuire ’18, Patrick Munro ’19, and Grant Phillips ’18.

Additionally, McGuire was the top individual finisher among all college cadets, and McGuire and Munro both achieved perfect scores of 300 on their tests.

The Association of Military Colleges & Schools of the United States represents 41 military colleges, junior colleges, and college preparatory schools. It serves as an advocate for those schools and as a liaison with the U.S. Department of Defense and Department of Education.

Hokies worth their salt know the history of the football rivalry between Virginia Polytechnic Institute and Virginia Military Institute.

Stretching from 1894 through 1984, the yearly skirmishes on Thanksgiving Day provided more stories of bravado than there was room to print. Even though Virginia Tech cadets no longer spar on the field with VMI Keydets, an underlying current of competition remains between the two schools.

As museum curator and advisor to the Corps of Cadets’ historians, I am privy to many renditions of these games. Whenever I exhibit old memorabilia from the games, anyone with a drop of Hokie blood can’t help reminisce about the days of football past.

But today’s cadets are not particularly familiar with the history of their VMI brothers and sisters, even though the campuses are just a bit more than an hour apart. The Keydets have a very proud and storied past in Virginia history, and the historians planned a group field trip to explore it.

On April 7, we set out in two passenger vans to visit VMI’s museum. Lt. Col. Dave Williams ’79 works at VMI and offered to take us on a tour of campus.

The first floor of the museum tells VMI’s story, complete with Stonewall Jackson’s preserved horse. Historians, impressed with the displays, intently took in the Keydets’ history.

VMI’s exhibits are very well done, and I appreciated showing the historians how important professional museum standards are for both preservation and exhibition.

The lowest floor in the museum is home to VMI’s world-renowned gun collection — everything from early Colts to guns disguised as walking canes. For the historians, this was a mesmerizing exhibit that added to their knowledge of the history of firearms.

Lt. Col. Williams escorted our group around the grounds, where he described statues and artillery that adorn VMI’s campus. We were treated to a tour of the exterior of the barracks by a young Keydet, a counterpart to our historians.

Then it was off to lunch at the mess hall. We did get some strange looks from the Keydets when we entered. It’s not often that a group of Virginia Tech cadets visit.

The trip was enjoyable and valuable. The historians now have a better grasp on the history of VMI and the Keydets. Thanks to Lt. Col. Williams for showing us around. I am sure we will be back!
A TRIBUTE TO OUR ALUMNI

By J. Pearson ’87, chairman, Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Alumni Inc.

We had a great junior dinner and senior social event on April 4. We serve our rising seniors in the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets a nice dinner at Owens Dining Hall. We position alumni at tables around the room to engage in dialog concerning life experiences and what it is like to be alumni. After dinner with the junior class, our soon-to-be graduates enjoy a reception with snacks and drinks. They are encouraged to socialize with alumni and each other.

Commandant of Cadets Maj. Gen. Randal Fullhart, Col. Patience Larkin ’87, David Lowe ’63, and I talked to both groups about giving back and staying engaged with the Corps.

This is our third year using this format. Each year, we ask both groups for feedback, and it is always positive. I would like to thank all the alumni who attended. I encourage you to think about coming back to campus next April and attend this fine event. You will have a great time and enjoy connecting with our future alumni.

This is our first year to formally recognize a distinguished alumnus. We received many applications of outstanding and deserving folks for the 2018 Distinguished Alumni Award. In fact, so much so, we chose two. Their accomplishments in serving our country, in business, and this university are off the charts. President Tim and Laura Sands attended, along with various university officials and family members.

Please join me in congratulating our two Distinguished Alumni: Thomas C. Richards ’56, and former Regimental Commander David Lowe for receiving our inaugural awards.

That was followed by a very busy spring, including our full board meeting, change of command, commissioning, and graduation just to name a few. I hope all of you can make it back to campus to see our wonderful Upper Quad and visit with our great team of professionals that is helping to guide our Corps into the future.

Go Hokies!

FOCUS ON PHILANTHROPY: RAY CARMINES ’51

As a student, Ray Carmines ’51 never served in a leadership role with the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets (VTCC). But his cadet experience continues to inspire him to seek out other opportunities.

“My time in the Corps gave me the feeling that I could become the leader in church, in business, and in life,” he said.

Carmines, a competitive figure skater, says philanthropy is an expression of leadership. He led the Class of 1951’s effort for its 50th reunion and has endowed the Ray Carmines, Jr. Scholarship for Virginia Tech athletics and the VTCC Ray Carmines, Jr. ’51 Endowed Scholarship for the Corps.

Q: Why did you decide to fund an Emerging Leader Scholarship (ELS)?
A: I drive 600 miles round trip to attend the annual fall ELS breakfast [for donors and cadet scholarship recipients] and associate with the outstanding members of the Corps. It’s a pleasure that I have that many people will never have. I love the time I spend with my cadet recipients and look forward to it each year.

Q: What leadership lessons from your time in the Corps of Cadets do you use the most today?
A: Learning to lead has enabled me to seek out leadership opportunities in clubs, my community, my alumni chapter, politically, and in business. I have served as vice mayor of Poquoson (Virginia), led city planning, and chaired the local Red Cross efforts. I am very proud to have chaired my class of 1951 toward their 50th reunion gift to raise money for the alumni association. At almost 91 years young, I still compete in ice skating, golf, and bowling. At the age of 89, I learned I was 10 years older than any other skater on international teams.

Q: What rewards do you get from participating with the ELS program?
A: I drove 600 miles round trip to attend the annual fall ELS breakfast [for donors and cadet scholarship recipients] and associate with the outstanding members of the Corps. It’s a pleasure that I have that many people will never have.
WHAT IS THE MISSION?

By Lt. Col. Dave Williams ’79, U.S. Army (retired)

It has been more than a few years since I wrote operations orders for a living, but if memory serves me correctly, paragraph one is situation and paragraph two is mission.

A good mission statement, at least back then, was short and to the point. For Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets (VTCC) recruiters, that mission paragraph could read “make contact and promote to high school students, and anybody who influences high school students, the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets.”

Sounds pretty simple but very broad — it is on both accounts. It has to be broad because it takes thousands of contacts to produce a freshman class of roughly 350 cadets each fall. The good news is the mission remains constant year to year; the bad news is the Virginia Tech admissions situation is constantly in a state of flux.

This good news/bad news conundrum is actually tied to two levels. More high school seniors are applying to Virginia Tech than ever before. The Corps — with its robust leader development program, to include the minor in leadership and sociology with minors in leadership, peace studies, and violence prevention and was a member of the VPI Battalion/Citizen-Leader Track. He has been accepted into Navy Officer Candidate School, where he will commission as a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps.

Cadet Lt. Col. Ian J. Campbell of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, earned a degree in economics and a minor in leadership studies. He commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps. Campbell joined the Corps of Cadets to challenge himself both physically and mentally. He served Delta Company as the commander and first sergeant in the 2017 and 2016 fall semesters, respectively. He is a recipient of a National Marine Corps ROTC Scholarship and an Emerging Leader Scholarship.

Cadet Lt. Col. Michael D’Avella of Glen Gardner, New Jersey, earned a degree in microbiology with a minor in leadership studies. He commissioned into the U.S. Air Force and will attend pilot training at Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas. D’Avella joined the Corps of Cadets to challenge himself as a leader and prepare for service in the military. D’Avella served as the Kilo Company first sergeant during the fall 2016 semester and the 3rd Battalion sergeant major in the spring. He is a recipient of an Emerging Leader Scholarship.

First-year cadets learn drill from their cadre during New Cadet Week 2017.
### Command Staff, Spring 2018

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CLASS NOTES

1950s

Don Sowder ’59 and wife, Mary, at right, meet Maj. Gen. Randall Fullhart and wife, Kathy, at a recent Ut Prosim Society event in Washington, D.C.

1980s


2000s

Kristen Meister ’07, at left, greeted cadets taking a tour of the White House. She has held a variety of assignments with the Department of Defense and is currently the senior duty officer in the White House Situation Room.

2010s

Lt. Jessica Laschis, ’10, at left, stands with Lt. Ashlee Goodwin VT’10 in Honduras during Operation Continuation Promise.

Lt. Ethan Yelverton ’13, at left, and Ensign Leland Remias VT’17 aboard the USS Forrest Sherman. Yelverton is the antisubmarine warfare officer, and Remias is the electrical officer.

Capt. Catherine Coyner ’13, at right, was named distinguished honor graduate of the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear School’s Captains Career Course on April 6. Coyner also received a Chemical Corps Regimental Association plaque and a certificate of achievement for excellence. Family and friends attending the graduation included her husband, Jesse Coyner ’12, and their daughter, Anna.

Tristan Davey ’14 graduated Air Force Officer Training School in spring 2017 and is stationed at the 28th Operational Weather Squadron at Shaw Air Force Base, South Carolina, as a weather officer.

Lt. Luke Forand ’15 ran into Maj. Erikson McCleary ’06 at Camp Dahlke, Afghanistan. McCleary was one of Forand’s Army ROTC instructors at Virginia Tech. Lesson learned from this: Always carry a Virginia Tech flag with you on deployment, just in case.

From left, Gregory Milhiser ’17, Nicholas Gude ’17, Benjamin Paddock ’17, and Zachery Scott ’17 complete the 5-month-long Army Armor Officer Basic Training Course at Fort Benning, Georgia.

Submit your deployments, job and rank changes, awards and honors, family announcements, photos, and other news at vtcc.vt.edu/classnotes.

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ARMY ROTC NEWS

Army ROTC cadets had plenty of opportunities to learn through experiences this semester.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ETHICS IN AMERICA
By Cadet Michael Marino ’19
My experience attending the National Conference on Ethics in America at West Point was both surprising and enlightening.

There were a variety of speakers who provided an even wider variety of ideas on questions ranging from what ethics actually are to their role in society. These speakers included renowned military leaders such as Gen. Raymond Odierno and Gen. Robert Caslen, as well as civilian leaders such as Christian Picciolini and Trisha Prabhu. Although I learned a great deal of life and leadership lessons, the one I would like to offer is the idea that ethics cannot be clearly defined or quantified.

Throughout the conference, we discussed definitions and approaches to ethics. Although many of them were strong definitions and held a great deal of truth, no one definition could deliver you the entire message in one sentence. I have come to believe, vague as it may seem, ethics are a commitment that must come from the heart and are rooted in the specific beliefs that each individual deems to be the most important. Ethics are the commitment to choose the harder right over the easier wrong in every situation, no matter the consequences.

GEORGE C. MARSHALL CONFERENCE
By Cadet Brian Kehs ’18
The George C. Marshall Conference took place over four days at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, at the Command and General Staff College.

Countless amazing Army leaders, including Maj. Gen. Christopher Hughes, Lt. Gen. Patricia Horoho, Lt. Gen. Mark Twitty, and Gen. David Perkins, spoke to a group of 300 cadets from across the nation about the many lessons they have learned over their careers in the Army. They shared advice they wish they had known when they first commissioned and gave tips on how to be successful second lieutenants.

We learned from first-hand accounts about the battles of Thunder Run and Najaf and the takeaways each leader had from both of those successful operations.

The focus of the conference was on emotional intelligence, which is the ability to recognize emotions in oneself and in others and to use them to guide behavior and influence others. The Army has realized the importance of this topic for leadership success, so as future Army leaders, we were taught ways to employ the concept of emotional intelligence during our careers.

The experience of attending the George C. Marshall Conference assisted me immensely in my professional development and made me eager for the opportunity to commission into the Army and lead soldiers in the very near future.

THE BIG EVENT AT VIRGINIA TECH
The Big Event is a student-run volunteer event that happens once a year, and this year’s took place April 8. This event allows the student body of Virginia Tech to connect with area residents and give back to the community by doing various service projects.

Fifty-five of our Army cadets volunteered with The Big Event at Virginia Tech this spring. The goal of the student-run community service effort is to say thank you to the community, and it is the second-largest of its kind in the nation.

Still going strong, Army ROTC proudly commissioned 76 new lieutenants this year, 68 of whom commissioned on May 11, three this past December, and five more will join the ranks this summer.
SENIOR DINING-IN
By Midshipman Hanna Kohejazi ’19
On April 13, the seniors and fifth-years in battalion held their annual Senior Dining-In at the German Club Manor. Senior Dining-In is designed to boost camaraderie within the senior and fifth-year classes, and it congratulates the midshipmen who are commissioning on all their hard work in a formal setting. Cocktail hour began at 5 p.m., and, during that time, many of the midshipmen had the opportunity to talk to the guest speaker, Vice Adm. David Architzel (retired).

The meal began at the end of cocktail hour, when everybody marched to their seats. Midshipman Quinton Cookis ’18 served as Mr. President and opened the floor for fining, once the food was served. Fining is an opportunity for midshipmen to roast each other and make each other pay their dues for prior actions by means of a drink from the grog. After the meal, they conducted a fining period. It was an opportunity for midshipmen to roast each other and make each other pay their dues for prior actions with a dollar fine and a drink from the grog.

After the toasts were completed, the Raiders were privileged to listen and ask questions to several excellent and inspiring leaders, including Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Steven Giordano, Sgt. Maj. Donna Dunbar, the mayor of South Bend, Indiana, and the co-founder of Keurig. At the end of the weekend, the Notre Dame midshipmen led discussions on ethics and featured a junior officer panel. After the weekend, the midshipmen were able to take the advice and suggestions from the speakers and bring them back to share with their fellow shipmates.

NAVY SEAL CANDIDATES FIND SUCCESS

Nearly 250 Virginia Tech midshipmen and cadets from the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets and the Naval ROTC served dinner and dessert.

Of the 18 ROTC students chosen to train as U.S. Navy SEALs this year, four are from the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets and the Naval ROTC. Another six Hokies are among the 53 men and women nationwide to begin the rigorous SEAL selection process.

The students’ success is a testament to their character and dedication to training and to a program that is growing stronger every year, said Capt. Michael Fisher, Commanding Officer of Naval ROTC.

SEALs (Sea, Air, and Land teams) are the Navy’s most elite special operations force. Candidates come from the Navy’s Officer Candidate School, the U.S. Naval Academy, the Navy’s ROTC programs at 166 colleges and universities across the country, and from applicants already serving with naval units.

Between 40 and 50 ROTC applicants are selected for SEAL Officer Assessment Selection each summer. From those candidates, only half will continue to the next year’s Basic Underwater Demolition School.

The 11 cadets selected for training are members of the Naval Special Preparatory Team, a small specialty group within the corps and the Naval ROTC.
AIR FORCE ROTC NEWS

By Cadet Sydney Tinker ’20

This past year has been an extremely rigorous but rewarding time for Air Force ROTC Detachment 875. This semester our wing commander, Cadet John Gogal ‘18, challenged the wing to achieve an average of a 97 on the physical fitness assessment taken in February. The wing proved itself by scoring a 96.1 which ranked us fifth out of 145 detachments across the nation, even though we are the sixth largest detachment in the country!

In addition, Detachment 875 was honored to have Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright speak to the cadets about the future of the Air Force. We have had an amazing opportunity this year to hear from many other outstanding speakers including, Gen. Carlton D. Everhart II ’83, Brig. Gen. Billy D. Thompson, and Brig. Gen. Stephen L. Davis.

Also, the cadets organized two major training events, Warrior Day and Air Force Training Exercise, the second being a two-day event at the nearby Radford Army Ammunition Plant. Both events were very successful, and the dedicated efforts of the upperclassmen have made sure the current sophomore class is ready to head to field training this summer and show the rest of the country that Detachment 875 is the best alive!

To wrap up the year, the detachment held a Combat Dining In underneath Lane Stadium, making a hanger-like atmosphere for this fun morale event. We were honored to have Air Force Lt. Col. Don Russell (retired), the Corps of Cadets’ Citizen-Leader Track deputy commandant, as our guest speaker.

Thanks to the support of the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Detachment 875 was able to send cadets to an array of leadership conferences at the Citadel, the Air Force Academy, the Virginia Military Institute, and the U.S. Naval Academy. These conferences allow our cadets the opportunity to hear from influential speakers, including former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, former Vice President Dick Cheney, and many more.

In addition, 10 cadets were able to attend the Air Warfare Symposium in Orlando, Florida, where they were able to hear the latest updates from the chief of staff of the Air Force, the secretary of the Air Force, as well as the commanders from multiple major commands. Finally, six cadets were able to represent our local Thomas C. Richards Squadron at the Arnold Air Society National Convention in New Orleans.

This year Detachment 875 commissioned 41 cadets. This exceptional group of individuals have worked diligently for this day. Cadet Michael Magill ’18 was selected for Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training, Cadet Michael Sherburne ’17 and Cadet Kavi Muraleetharan ’17 were selected for graduate school at the Air Force Institute of Technology.

Cadet Mary Claire Ragan ’18 was accepted into the Judge Advocate General’s Corps Education Delay program. This is an incredibly rare opportunity that only five cadets in the country earned. She will be attending law school after graduation.

As this year came to a close, we said a hard goodbye to many cadre members at Detachment 875, including Col. Cameron Torrens, Lt. Col. Rob Ward, and Capt. Saira McGan.

Torrens is retiring from the Air Force after 30 years of service and is currently enjoying his transition to retirement by hiking the Appalachian Trail.

Ward will be retiring as well after 25 years of service in the operations field. He’s not exactly sure what he’s going to do when he retires, but says, “I’m ready to figure out what I want to do when I grow up,” which he says could be anything from writing a mystery novel to helping with JROTC.

After serving with Detachment 875 for three years, McGan will be leaving to continue her logistics career in South Dakota at Ellsworth Air Force Base. She is primarily excited to “be around airmen again and to have a direct impact on the mission overseas.” Detachment 875 has taught her about teaching and the new generation of airman coming into the Air Force.

McGan leaves the cadets at Detachment 875 with one piece of advice before departing, “Take care of your airmen, and they will take care of you.”
You can also support the Corps in many other ways by donating:
- Securities such as stocks, bonds, and mutual funds
- Real estate, including both present and future interests
- Gifts-in-kind of tangible property, such as works of art or historic memorabilia

**IN MEMORY / IN HONOR**
Scholarships, endowed positions, Corps facilities, or programs may be named after special individuals. Gifts may be made to honor a loved one or someone who inspires you.

**EMPLOYER MATCHING GIFTS**
Many Corps donors are employed by companies that encourage donations to higher education. Donors who wish to support the Corps often can provide more substantial support with the assistance of a matching company gift. Before making your gift, please check to see if your company provides a matching contribution. Our web page at givingto.vt.edu/match can help you find out.

**GIFT PLANNING OPTIONS**
If you are 70 1/2 or older, consider using a charitable IRA rollover to make a gift that can count toward your required minimum distribution without it being taxed as income. There are many additional options for leaving a powerful, wisely arranged legacy through planned gifts to the Corps.

- Designating the Corps of Cadets as the beneficiary of a will, trust, retirement plan, or life insurance policy
- Utilizing a gift model such as a charitable gift annuity, charitable remainder unitrust, charitable remainder unitrust, charitable lead trust, or IRA rollover

**OTHER WAYS TO STAY INVOLVED**
- Become a Class Champion
- Help create a cadet internship opportunity
- Host an alumni event at your home or business
- Keep your contact information current

For more information about any of these opportunities, please contact us at 800-533-1144, 540-231-2892, or vtcc@vt.edu. More information is available at vtcc.vt.edu/give.

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**GIVING**
By Sandi R. Bliss, chief advancement officer

Partner with us to create more global, ethical leaders.

Whether you wish to make an annual contribution, establish an endowment, donate Corps memorabilia, or foster connections for a cadet seeking an internship or job, you can take on a powerful role.

**WAYS TO GIVE**
Endowments are an enduring investment in the future of the Corps. They provide a dependable, perpetual source of funding. Endowed gifts are invested and each year a percentage of the return is made available to the university to support critical Corps initiatives. The distribution amount is approved by the Virginia Tech Foundation board each year. Endowments can be created with a minimum gift of $100,000.

Annual gifts of any amount can make an immediate impact. They can be made one time or arranged to be made on a convenient, recurring basis. Gifts to the Commandant’s Priority Fund of $500 or greater automatically sponsor a first-year cadet on the fall or spring Caldwell March.

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**FOSTERING PHILANTHROPY**

Cadet Annie Ha ’19 talks with guests at the Ut Prosim Society Celebration on April 28.

By Sandi R. Bliss, chief advancement officer

**DOES THE DIFFERENCE THE VIRGINIA TECH CORPS OF CADETS MADE IN YOUR LIFE AND ITS ONGOING IMPACT ON TOMORROW’S LEADERS MAKE YOU WANT TO GIVE BACK?**

The Corps of Cadets Advancement Team includes, from left, Col. Patience Larkin ’87, Kerry Meier, Shay Barrhart, Michele Measner, Samantha Riggin, Col. Robert “Scott” Lyman ’84, and Sandi Bliss.

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**Keep In Touch**
As you move or change duty stations throughout your career, make sure you continue to get the Corps Review and other university and Corps information.

Update your contact information at alumni.vt.edu/gateway/index.html or by email to alumnidata@vt.edu.
Col. Thomas Owen “T.O.” Williams III ’59 died March 10. He was 80.

Williams led the Highty-Tighties as drum major in 1959, his senior year, and remained dedicated to Virginia Tech and Corps of Cadets throughout his life.

After graduation, he commissioned into the U.S. Air Force as a pilot. He served for 27 years, and his command positions included flying tours during the Vietnam War, as well as deputy commander for operations of the 1st Special Operations Wing in Hurlburt Field, Florida; the senior U.S. defense representative in Khartoum, Sudan; and commander at Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas.

In 2007, I was a member of the Virginia Corps of Cadets Alumni Association Inc. (VTCAA), but my participation was limited to attendance to the two meetings per year. One day, my phone rang at work at the Defense Logistics Agency and the conversation went something like this:

“Hello?”

“Gary Lerch, this is T.O. Williams!”

“Hi, T.O.”

“Gary, I am calling to inform that you are the unanimous choice of the VTCCA Executive Committee to be vice chairman!” Then he quickly added — almost under his breath – “Of course, you realize that this means that you soon become our next chairman.”

“T.O. – this is quite an honor, but I don’t think that most of those folks even know me.”

Pause.

“Well, that question did come up, but they said that if it is OK with me, then it is OK with them!”

And so began my close involvement with the VTCAA Inc., for which I am sincerely indebted to T.O. I had the great fortune to work closely with a host of great Corps alumni from many different classes and experiences. For this, I am forever grateful.

More importantly, the conversation is an example of his personality and his absolute enthusiasm for all things Virginia Tech and Corps of Cadets.

T.O. Williams first arrived in Blacksburg in the fall of 1955. A scrappy kid from Portsmouth, Virginia, he took offense to being called a rat by an upperclassman and unwisely responded with a much stronger epithet. Despite the rocky start, he excelled as a cadet, and especially as a member of the Highty-Tighties.

Upon retirement from the Air Force in 1986, like many of his peers, he considered becoming an airline pilot, but his wife, the late Frances Shealor Williams, being a native of Blacksburg, informed him that, after following him all over the world, it was her turn to pick their home. So, to the great fortune of Virginia Tech, they returned to Blacksburg.

Williams, having proven himself to be a highly skilled combat pilot and leader, was about to demonstrate skills in fund raising and service to others.

Williams became involved with the Corps staff and fellow alumni to save the Corps. A key element of that effort was raising funds for Emerging Leader Scholarships, which reversed the declining enrollment and ensured that the Corps would survive and grow.

He became a university employee and continued to fundraise for the Corps. He was also engaged in promotional efforts for both the Highty-Tighties and the German Club. His crowning achievement was to raise funds for a new alumni center. The Holtzman Alumni Center and Skelton Conference Center is a testimony to his fundraising talent and the generosity of numerous alumni. The facility is a living and lasting legacy to Williams.

Williams’ success can be attributed to his outgoing personality, his strength of character, his infectious love of Virginia Tech and the Corps, and his innate ability to make everyone feel special when talking to him.

His years of experience and network of friends and contacts made him an outstanding mentor to those who followed him. He was always very supportive and could provide gentle, but firm, guidance as to how to proceed.

His passing leaves us with sadness and a sense of loss; but we are also comforted by a richness of memories, jokes, stories, and sage advice. We will miss him but are extremely fortunate to have served with him.

In Memoriam

T.O. WILLIAMS III ’59
1937-2018

By Lt. Col. Gary Lerch ’72, U.S. Army Reserve (retired)
J. WILLIAM BRICKER ‘53
1931 - 2017
U.S. Army Lt. Col. J. William “Bill” Bricker (retired) died Dec. 19, 2017. Born and raised in Radford, Virginia, he was a distinguished military graduate of Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Following a proud Army career of 25 years, including two tours of duty in Vietnam, he entered civilian life and made Augusta, Georgia, his home. An avid gardener and organic pioneer, he embarked on a second career by founding Brinko Farms in 1977. He and his wife, Lou, enjoyed traveling together, and he was passionate about golf. He is survived by three sons.

JAMES F. BOONE ’37
1915 - 2018
James F. Boone died in Blacksburg, Virginia, on Feb. 6 at the age of 102. He graduated from Virginia Tech in 1937 with a degree in business administration. Afterward, he moved back to his hometown of Iaeger, Virginia, and took a bank job. In the early 1940s, he was elected mayor. He returned to Blacksburg and was the Virginia Tech treasurer from 1952 to 1982. He liked to tell tales of his days in the Corps of Cadets. His wife, Martha, preceded him in death. Survivors include a daughter and son.

ROBERT STANLEY PARROTT JR. ’56
1934 - 2017
Robert Parrott died Dec. 11, 2017. He graduated from Randolph-Macon Academy and received his bachelor of science degree from Virginia Tech in 1956. He was also an alumnus of the Graduate School of Education at the University of Virginia. He always considered one of his greatest achievements his service on Gov. Mills Godwin’s task force “Bonds for Education” that helped establish Virginia’s Community College System. He retired from Roy Wheeler Realty Company in 1991. Survivors include his wife of 61 years, LaVerne; a daughter; and son.

WILLARD GILLEY ‘43
1923 - 2018
Willard Gilley died Feb. 10. He was born near Williamsburg, Virginia. Upon graduating from Virginia Polytechnic Institute, he entered Officer Candidates School at Fort Benning, Georgia. He served in the 26th Army Infantry Division and was awarded the Purple Heart and Silver Star. After being wounded on the battlefield, he spent time at Valley Forge Army Hospital, where he met his first wife. They settled in Pennsylvania until returning to Williamsburg to enter the family dairy business. Survivors include his second wife, Elizabeth, five children; and two step-children.

JOHN MARSHALL TRIMBLE ’44
1922 - 2017
U.S. Army Reserve Lt. Col. John Trimble (retired) died Dec. 25, 2017. He studied dairy science at Virginia Tech in 1940 but went on active duty for 3 1/2 years during wartime in 1943. He continued his service in the Army Reserves, retiring in 1972. He received his degree in 1947 then spent 25 years as manager of the Homestead Farms & Dairy and 14 years as the Virginia Cooperative Extension agent in Bath County, Virginia. Survivors include his wife, Sue, and three children.

WILLIAM G. LLOYD JR. ’53
1931 - 2017
Lt. Gen. William “Bill” G. Lloyd (retired) died Nov. 26, 2017. He graduated from Virginia Tech in 1953 with a degree in mechanical engineering. Following a distinguished 35-year career, he retired as the Army’s senior judge advocate. He later served as Virginia Tech’s interim president and was inducted into the National Academy of Engineering. Survivors include his wife of 58 years, Carol; two sons; and two daughters.

DONALD LEE SAGE ’56
1935 - 2018
Don Sage died April 4. He was born in Palm Beach, Florida, but was raised in Richmond, Virginia. A dedicated Hokie, he graduated with a degree in industrial engineering. After a 38-year career with AT&T that earned him numerous professional accolades, including the Society of Manufacturing Engineers’ LEAD Award for Integrated Manufacturing, he retired in 1994. He gave generously of his time and talents to multiple organizations and causes, including the Telephone Pioneers and Virginia Tech. He is survived by his wife, Mary Etta Sage, and three children.

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ROBERT L. MOORE ’52
1930 - 2018
Lt. Gen. Robert “Bob” L. Moore (retired) died April 28. Moore was born July 6, 1930, in Bluefield, Virginia. He graduated from Virginia Polytechnic Institute with a degree in architecture in 1952 and commissioned into the U.S. Army. He commanded the 87th Engineer Battalion, Vietnam; the Division Support Command, 2nd Infantry Division Korea; the Army Missile Command, Redstone Arsenal, Alabama; and was deputy commanding general for RD&A at Army Materiel Command, Alexandria, Virginia. He was preceded in death by his wife, Carol Lee Montgomery. Survivors include their son and daughter.

J. WILLIAM BRICKER ’53
1931 - 2017
U.S. Army Lt. Col. J. William “Bill” Bricker (retired) died Dec. 19, 2017. Born and raised in Radford, Virginia, he was a distinguished military graduate of Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Following a proud Army career of 25 years, including two tours of duty in Vietnam, he entered civilian life and made Augusta, Georgia, his home. An avid gardener and organic pioneer, he embarked on a second career by founding Brinko Farms in 1977. He and his wife, Lou, enjoyed traveling together, and he was passionate about golf. He is survived by three sons.

ROBERT STANLEY PARROTT JR. ’56
1934 - 2017
Robert Parrott died Dec. 11, 2017. He graduated from Randolph-Macon Academy and received his bachelor of science degree from Virginia Tech in 1956. He was also an alumnus of the Graduate School of Education at the University of Virginia. He always considered one of his greatest achievements his service on Gov. Mills Godwin’s task force “Bonds for Education” that helped establish Virginia’s Community College System. He retired from Roy Wheeler Realty Company in 1991. Survivors include his wife of 61 years, LaVerne; a daughter; and son.

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RICHARD C. CHIN ’59
1935 - 2017
Richard Chin died Nov. 7, 2017. He was born in New York City but spent half the year on the family farm in New Jersey raising vegetables. While at Virginia Tech, he was in the Army ROTC program and the Pershing Rifles’ Drill Team. After graduating with a degree in construction management, he was commissioned and assigned to the 82nd Airborne. He qualified in helicopters, when he joined the 1st Armored Division. He attained the rank of captain, was certified as a paratrooper, and earned aviator wings. Following his military service, he joined the Honeywell Corporation from which he retired. He is survived by two brothers and a sister.
Richard Smith died on Feb. 12. He earned his degree in electrical engineering from VPI. He was commissioned in the U.S. Air Force, achieving the rank of captain. The next 34 years of his career were spent working in various engineering and scientific roles with both the Air Force and Army. He was a loving and devoted family man who enjoyed telling tales of his time at Virginia Tech, including such antics as rescuing the Hokie turkey from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He is survived by his wife, Jayne Myers Smith; four children; and two step-sons.

Richard E. Bass of Blacksburg, died on Feb. 10. He received a bachelor’s degree from Virginia Tech and was a proud member of the German Club and Highty-Tighties. Much of his life was devoted to public education, where he served in teaching and administrative positions. During his later years, he shared his deep knowledge of Virginia Tech history as a campus tour bus driver and chauffeur. Survivors include his two daughters.

Ballard Parker died Feb. 13. Raised in Lynchburg, Virginia, he graduated from Virginia Tech with a degree in business administration and was a member of C Squadron in the Corps of Cadets. He enjoyed a 43-year career as a senior vice president in charge of institutional trading for major financial institutions in Richmond, Virginia. He was active in his church, community, and civic organizations. Survivors include his childhood sweetheart and wife of 52 years, Betty Williams Parker, and two daughters.

Lawrence Eugene “Larry” Laughon died April 8, 2017. He was four days short of his 79th birthday. A native of Roanoke, Virginia, he graduated from Virginia Tech in 1960 and served in the U.S. Navy from 1961 to 1971 as a pilot, flight instructor, and test pilot for North American Rockwell. He served three tours in Vietnam. He later owned and managed restaurants for 20 years and completed his career in the insurance industry. He is survived by his wife of 45 years, a daughter, and a son.

Michael Joseph Hvozdovic (retired) died Nov. 21, 2017. Born in 1943 he was raised in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania. He entered Virginia Polytechnic Institute as a cadet and offensive/defensive guard for the Hokies. He graduated with a degree in industrial arts. Commissioned in 1966, he served as detachment commander, squadron commander, and communications electronic inspector for the Air Force Inspector General. He served in the White House Communications Agency under President Ronald Reagan and as executive officer for the secretary of the Air Force. Survivors include his wife of 50 years, Joan Hvozdovic, and three daughters.

William A. Steiger III (retired) died March 2. He attended Virginia Tech on a ROTC scholarship, where he was a member of the Gregory Guard, Cotillion Club, and, as a senior, the Regimental S-3 of the Corps of Cadets. Upon graduation, he was commissioned as an infantry officer. He saw action in both Cambodia and Vietnam. Survivors include his wife of 47 years, Wendy Ostertag Steiger, and a son and a daughter.

Peggy Conway Reed, of Waynesboro, Virginia, died Jan. 14. She was a devoted friend and supporter of the Corps of Cadets and the widow of Highty-Tighty alumnus, Ray Reed ’57. She had worked at E.I. DuPont Co. for more than 38 years. She served her community, church, and civic organizations in many leadership roles. She will be sorely missed by the Corps and the many cadets who received the Reeds’ Emerging Leader Scholarship. The Reeds also supported the annual trip of all first-year cadets to the D-Day Memorial in Bedford, Virginia. She is survived by their daughter.
Medal of Honor recipient, U.S. Marine, and former deputy commandant for the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Col. Wesley L. Fox died Nov. 24, 2017, in Blacksburg, Virginia. He was 86.

Fox enlisted in the U.S. Marines in 1950 at the start of the Korean War. Months later he deployed to Korea as a rifleman, the first of many deployments in his 43-year career in the military. He spent the first 16 years as a noncommissioned officer, and, in addition to his combat assignments, he worked as a drill instructor, a recruiter, and as a military police officer.

In 1966, he was commissioned as a second lieutenant.

On Feb. 22, 1969, while serving as the commanding officer of Company A, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, 3rd Marine Division in the A Shau Valley, Vietnam, Fox’s unit was attacked. Despite injury, Fox led his men as they advanced through heavy fire. They eventually forced the North Vietnamese troops to retreat. Wounded again in a final assault, Fox continued to refuse medical attention and instead ensured that other wounded Marines were tended to and evacuated.

“His indomitable courage, inspiring initiative, and unwavering devotion to duty in the face of grave personal danger inspired his Marines to such aggressive actions that they overcame all enemy resistance and destroyed a large bunker complex,” according to the Medal of Honor citation read by President Richard Nixon.

I will always remember that whenever he spoke of the honor, Wes always said there were those under his command who were more deserving and he was humbled to represent the sacrifices they made on that day.

He retired from the military in 1993 as a colonel and came to Virginia Tech, where he served as the deputy commandant of the corps’ 1st Battalion from 1993 to 2001. I had the privilege of working with him from 1994 until his retirement and being his friend from the day we met until his death.

Fond memories I have of Wes Fox, the man, are how he could still leave me in the dust on a staff run when he was 70 and him “cutting a rug” with his beloved Dottie Lu at countless Military Balls over the years to the joy and amusement of everyone there.

After his retirement from the university, he remained a fixture within the Corps through leadership advice and mentorship to hundreds of cadets. A highlight of every cadet’s time at Virginia Tech between 2001 and 2016 was hearing Fox speak during their first year.

The life and leadership lessons Fox spoke of in those sessions exemplified what the aspiring young leader should strive for. He described Marines he worked under during his early years, comparing the authoritarian “leader,” who wielded power in a way that only produced fear and intimidation in his followers, with the true leader, who put the needs of his followers first and inspires his Marines to live up to his expectations.

“Colonel Fox will long be remembered for his love of country, the U.S. Marine Corps, and the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets,” said Maj. Gen. Ran-dal Fullhart, commandant of cadets.

“Through his books and presence, he continued to touch every class that came through the corps. His friendship and mentorship will be greatly missed.”

Fox also traveled tirelessly as the living embodiment of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, acting as its regional director from 1999 to 2003 and again from 2007 to 2011.


Fox’s impact on a generation of Corps graduates is immeasurable, and I have never known a more exemplary symbol of the Semper Fi concept of honor and service.
Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets alumni return to campus to celebrate our annual Corps Reunion! This is a great opportunity to reconnect with old friends who shared the cadet experience.

This year, registration opens at 3 p.m. Friday. After the Friday night Cadet Leadership Dinner we will hold a new, informal gathering, Last Call at Lane Hall.

Saturday will feature a reunion meal at The Inn at Virginia Tech (time TBD). This casual-dress event will include the opportunity to hear from Commandant of Cadets Maj. Gen. Randy Fullhart, as well as guest speaker David Lowe ’63. Plus, participate in a special annual tradition, the alumni regiment march-on into Lane Stadium before kickoff.

Please register online for Corps Reunion. You can choose the specific events you want to join and hats and polo shirts to be worn during the march-on. Prices for all events and merchandise can be found on the registration site.

If you have any questions, please contact the VTCC Alumni office at 540-231-7431.

Corps Reunion • Sept. 14-15, 2018
Virginia Tech vs. East Carolina

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Corps Reunion Registration Website