

Valley Business

# FRONT

THE SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEUR  
CHAMPION IN VIRGINIA'S BLUE RIDGE  
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[vbFRONT.com](http://vbFRONT.com)

## The Negotiator

Allan Tsang,  
[88Owls.com](http://88Owls.com)



*Monica Monday  
Managing Partner*

*All kinds of suits.*

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# WELCOME to the FRONT

It's that time of year. If you notice the quotes placed below this welcome, taken from separate stories in this month's issue, we all start thinking about self-improvement at the end—and beginning—of a year. From hitting the gym to getting out and about more in our business efforts (as suggested below), we start thinking with a little increased intensity and purpose in December that should be our practice all year long.

It's a good time of reflection and projection for FRONT, too.

You'll see 99 magazine covers in our center spread this edition. (Well, 98 plus today's cover.) That signifies a milestone for January! Maybe you'll notice the FRONT hitting the gym as we enter the new year. Perhaps you'll see the FRONT out in the community even more.

As our region's longest running and only locally owned and operated business journal, we are so fortunate to have access to the best advice, the most proven expertise, and our informative case studies. We'd be silly not report this. In better and better ways.

Particularly since it is our honor to improve—to serve you.



**Tom Field**

““

Effective leaders do not hole themselves up in their office — Page 23

““

He's a real gym rat — Page 27

1983 . . . 2016 . . . tomorrow



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# CARILIONCLINIC

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The art of negotiation, by Allan Tsang



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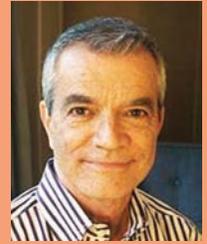
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# DECEMBER



Ashlyn Davidson



Dan Dowdy



Alice Kassens



Mike Leigh



Kathy Surace



Nicholas Vaassen

## Editorial Advisory Board

Valley Business FRONT has organized an Editorial Advisory Board in order to help direct coverage. FRONT selected a group of 14 diverse business professionals, who will serve as a sounding board throughout the 18 month rotational term that will turn over every year and a half.

This board has been given the task of helping FRONT understand the issues and develop coverage. "Members essentially have a red telephone at their hand," says publisher Tom Field. "They can inform us best on what is important, what is new, what impacts the greater community. Of course, our red phone reaches right back to them as well, for assignments and insight on our coverage. Although the members are encouraged to keep FRONT updated on their own industries and the key players, they aren't limited to their area of specialty, as all commercial enterprises ultimately collaborate to impact our quality of life here in this part of Virginia." An additional contribution by the Editorial Advisory Board involves direct input on the various FRONTLists we present throughout the year.

# CONTRIBUTORS



Tom Field



Keith Finch



Rachael Garrity



Kathleen Harshberger



Ariel Lev



Christine Liana



Caitlyn Scaggs



Anne Sampson



These attitudes began to melt away

— Page 37

Biographies and contact information on each contributor are provided on Page 38.

## 2016 Members

- Nancy Agee** Carilion (Wellness)
- Laura Bradford** ClaireV (Retail)
- Nicholas C. Conte** Carilion (Legal)
- Warner Dalhouse** Retired (Seniors)
- John Garland** Garland Properties (Development)
- Nancy Gray** Hollins University (Education)
- Nanci Hardwick** Aeroprobe (Tech/Industry)
- George Kegley** Retired (Seniors)
- John D. Long** National D-Day Memorial (Culture)
- Nancy May** LewisGale Regional Health System (Wellness)
- Stuart Mease** Virginia Tech (Education)
- Mary Miller** ACI (Tech/Industry)
- Ed Walker** Regeneration Partners (Development)

You will note that the Board is comprised of experts in many different business / industry “fronts.” This is intentional, as we are reporting on all the areas that affect our regional economy and are important to you. In keeping with our policy of being “the voice of business in the valleys” we ask each reader to join us as an editorial partner by calling or e-mailing us your ideas. You know more than we know about your business—or you certainly should—and that inside knowledge shared with our readers will make us all better at what we do.



This is a closet!  
It’s an amazing  
invention  
where you  
store all your  
clothing and  
shoes...

— Page 16

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“ ”

I am not trying to get you to do what I want, but instead trying to help you get what you want.

# When Win-Win Loses, and Respect Trumps Trust

*The art of negotiation,  
by Allan Tsang*



"Legacy" is a word that Allan Tsang most probably rarely uses, but understands a good bit better than most of us. As he explains it, "When people ask me why I choose to do what I do, my answer is all about what I've learned. It began with my father, who as part of his job consulting for the textiles industry in Ghana figured out that putting one person to work could end up saving not just a family but an entire village."

Then, there is his brother, a Fulbright scholar, who helped establish 23 vocational schools for migrant students in China to fight poverty.

Clearly, there is a family focus on change, but in this case it is one framed by the kind of fierce determination that stares squarely in the face of any supposed obstacle. Allan readily admits, for example, that he only went to college (first at Radford University and then at Virginia Tech) because his parents insisted. "The chair of the interior design department told me I'd need to change majors, because I am color blind," he remembers. "Naturally, to me, that meant I had to get the degree, and then do something worthwhile with it."

Originally, "worthwhile" was work for an interior design firm on projects for clients such as the Andy Warhol Walker Art Center in New York, where he saw and embraced innovative constructions and materials in a real world setting. Bent on finding a way to help people within the world of design, he then worked

**88Owls: a consultancy specializing in negotiating >**

**Executive Summary:**  
*Allan Tsang is an independent business consultant operating out of the New River Valley, teaching how to negotiate.*

**By Rachael Garrity**



“ ”

When executed properly, negotiation can solve most problems, providing two or more parties are willing to suspend their spat to understand each other's position.

—from *The Breaking Point* blog

“ ”

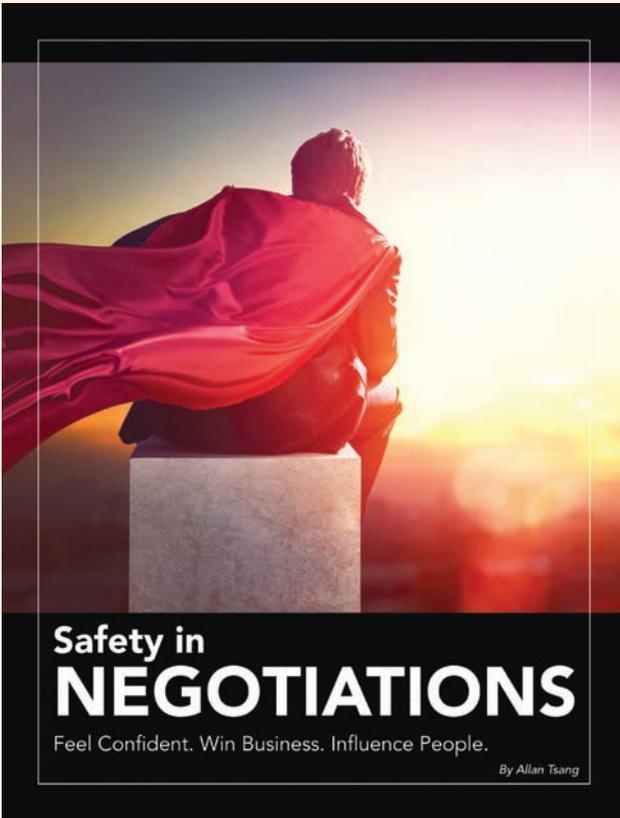
In what most people call a win-win, both sides are required to give up something. Exactly the opposite of the term.

on a masters in Industrial Design with a focus on designing and developing chairs for people with health and/or mobility issues. But, eventually, that, too, failed to salve his taste for innovation. “There were too many people trying to solve the same problem,” he explains.

Allan refined and expanded his taste for problem-solving and strategy during the next couple of decades, first as an entrepreneur and then as a business advisor for companies in a wide variety of fields. Over time, he began to see a pattern. “It was, for me, a life-changing insight,” he says. “Companies often fail because they fail in negotiation — with customers, suppliers, partners and teams.”

That insight opened the door to a collaborative windfall when he was coaching one of the founders of Rackspace in Blacksburg. Acting in a similar role for a Rackspace executive in Austin, TX, was Jim Camp. When they met online, Camp asked Tsang to join his negotiation team.”

Once he incorporated Camp's system of negotiation into



“ ”

To help the other party feel safe, you can also use your voice to speak slowly, to speak in a low pitch, and to use a downward inflection at the end of your sentences, statements or questions.

—from *Safety in Negotiations*

## Safe space >

“Negotiation is serious business,” says Allan Tsang. “Apply the wrong strategy, and you’ll miss out on an opportunity. Take the wrong tack, and you can forever alter important relationships.”

He recently wrote a short e-book detailing some of the ins and outs of successful negotiations, including the concept of achieving safety in negotiations.

*Safety in Negotiations* is available for download at [www.88owls.com/negotiation-ebook](http://www.88owls.com/negotiation-ebook)

his own coaching practice, Allan began to streamline it into an idea that has since become the crux of his very successful consulting business. Invariably candid, and refreshingly free of the jargon that so often fills the corporate consulting arena, he boils it down to one question: “How can I help you get what you want?”

Notably, he is ferocious when he insists that negotiation has nothing to do with what is usually called a “win-win” solution. “There is no such thing, and it’s an idea that sorely needs to be demystified,” he elaborates. “In what



Oversized chess board located at Mountain Lake Lodge

“ ”

Gathering a comprehensive understanding of what both you and the other side can and cannot see, know and do not know, is vital to creating and maintaining safety in negotiations.

—from *Safety in Negotiations*

most people call a win-win, both sides are required to give up something. Exactly the opposite of the term.

“Successful negotiation begins and ends with respect. I need to find out what is really bothering you, what you are running away from and what you are moving toward. I am not trying to get you to do what I want, but instead trying to help you get what you want. But first, we both have to know what that is. That way, there is no coercion at all.”

So respect means trust, right? Tsang is patient, but adamant. “Think about it. Does Pakistan trust India, or vice versa? Not at all. Do they do business with each other? Of course, because both of them see that business as critical. You can say the same about this country and China.”

One can also apply the principles he teaches his clients in non-business settings. As an example, Tsang chuckles when he recalls that his son had no interest in going to college. “I’d been there with my parents, remember. So I asked him what he planned to do. His answer had to do with meeting people and chatting with them. He thought any job entry-level job that put him in front of different people on a daily basis—in retail, in food

# What they're saying >

**FRONT** obtained letters of reference about Allan Tsang and his 88Owls consultancy. Here are excerpts.

We were growing steadily but knew that we needed someone to help teach and guide our management team on how to negotiate effectively in order to scale our growth. We originally had Allan execute a planning workshop for our leadership team, however we quickly realized that with Allan's support and guidance, we could learn a very effective and repeatable negotiation strategy.

Often Allan is the first person we turn to in order to build his signature checklist, a key part of the negotiation process. One example of Allan's impact on our business is when he worked with our proposal team on presenting what we knew was likely the most expensive option. Using Allan's coaching and advice, we won the project even though the client admitted that our cost was double the lowest bid but the value we presented was highest.

Allan has an incredible calmness to his teaching and coaching style. He is patient and zen-like in his approach to difficult situations.

—SL

Sometimes having a third party to be able to generate a concentrated channel to listening of skillset improvements is necessary when dealing with the complexity of a sales team. Allan was able to not only navigate through these challenges, but also convey extremely valuable information to each individual in a format that allowed them to bring it into their daily business practices. This strategy and resource helped individuals achieve the goals they were tasked to produce and allow the company and management to focus on an area that would drive sales and performance globally. This was a priceless tool to allow a fast paced company to be able to achieve multiple goals at one time.

—NH

My company was in the midst of a major market repositioning... The change was extreme for our affected sales team who not only had to learn new products and positioning, but also had to sell products with an enterprise cost 5 to 10 times higher than they were previously selling.

Allan's direct support on actual (not simulated) negotiations proved to be incredibly effective. He brought great insight into the perspective of the other party and helped our salespeople avoid being "needy" and maintain their discipline in each negotiation.

Allan's coaching jumpstarted our business contributing to a 500% increase in sales backlog within 12 months of initial launch and pushed our annual recurring revenue from \$2.9MM to \$8.6MM in 27 months.

—JS



“ ”

Inability to see the real challenge or issue will result in solving the wrong problem, ultimately leading to failure.

—from *Safety in Negotiations*

service, whatever—might work just fine. It was my job to help him see what he really wanted in life, not to convince him of what I wanted for him. It is all about vision. There is no valid action without vision. Working on short-term answers all too often creates victims. Long-term solutions derive from and also create partnerships.”

And, what if even with sustained effort, there is no way toward such a partnership. Again, Tsang is candid. “No deal is better than a bad deal. But very rarely is that the result, once you’ve learned what to say, how to say it and when to say it. The ‘secret sauce’ is a system of preparing, executing and debriefing that is driven by a valid mission.”

One of Tsang’s recent clients saw that secret sauce nearly triple annual recurring revenue in 27 months. And, with his trademark candor, Allan resolved a decades-old adversarial relationship between the company and a one-time supplier.

Perhaps, when all is said and done, William Shakespeare made the strongest case for Allan Tsang and his work. The bard wrote: “No legacy is so rich as honesty.” 🦉



An individual who has learned negotiation knows how to avoid falling into the trap of choosing only between the given options, which are often zero-sum.

—from *Safety in Negotiations*



## Who, 88Owls?

It is no surprise that Allan incorporated multiple meanings when he named his consultancy “88Owls.” His firsthand experience with various cultures and languages comes to the fore with the numerals. He notes that in Chinese, the word “eight” sounds like wealth, and in other cultures it means rebirth. Plus, of course, turning the numeral sideways creates the symbol for infinity. The word “owls” similarly swirls with various meanings and allusions (plus some illusions). With a tinge of satire, he points out, “I often work in the dark, and I like to work alone. Plus, I need to have and know when to exercise keen vision, acute listening skills, and the ability to move with precision and speed to solve client problems.



## Business Dress

By Kathy Surace

**Executive Summary:**

*Arranging your wardrobe or closet to take advantage of space not only improves efficiency but is better for your belongings when done properly.*

## Closet issues >

When my kids were young, I fought a losing battle to get them to store their belongings in the closet. One day, in desperation, I pointed to the closet and said, "I forgot to explain – this is a closet! It's an amazing invention where you store all your clothing and shoes, so when you want them, you don't have to ask me where they are!"

Regardless of our income, one concern we all share is where to put our clothing and how to store it. We all need a system to avoid clutter.

I have a friend who owned a home with miniscule closets, so she converted her smallest bedroom into a closet – problem solved! Suddenly she had space for everything and actually enjoyed arranging her belongings. Whether we have a tiny closet or a whole room dedicated to storage, we need a plan so we can dress or pack quickly.

Lately our culture is moving toward owning less clothing, but we're feeling better about the clothing we do own and how it makes us feel. That's progress.

That being said, if we own less, we should be able to store all our clothing in our home and not use a 3rd party storage service – except for specialty items like furs.

Determining the space we need for closet storage is the most important step. Decide what you absolutely need to keep and hang it or fold it as you plan to store it. Then measure the space those items use so you can calculate exactly how much space you'll need in your closet.

Hanging versus folding clothing is important to consider.

Fold sweaters and other knits since they'll stretch out and get shoulder bumps from hangers. Store them in a drawer or a closet shelf. I stand mine on end in a drawer by color so I can see all my sweaters when I open the drawer. Permanent press casual clothing can also be folded.

Hang dress pants, skirts, dresses, jackets, shirts and blouses to avoid wrinkling. Avoid thin wire dry cleaner hangers for home storage; switch to more supportive hangers immediately upon pickup. Recycle the wire hangers so you're not tempted to use them!

A service like Closet Storage Organizers in Salem can design a closet storage system for all your storage needs once you purge unnecessary items.

More closet storage tips to come in future columns! 

*Comments or questions? Email [Kathy@peacockimage.com](mailto:Kathy@peacockimage.com)*

## Etiquette in the Airport >

In the last twelve months I have spent many hours in airports, traveling for both business and pleasure. Believe me, I have seen “the good, the bad, and the ugly” when it comes to human behavior in airports!

During the holiday seasons, hundreds of thousands of us will travel by air to celebrate with family and friends. In an earlier column, I talked about civility while flying on the plane. Now let’s talk about behavior in the airport, going through security, boarding the plane, taking one’s seat, and deplaning.

An airport can be an abysmal place to be during the holidays, and things can become frustrating. Flights get overbooked, delayed, or cancelled. Let’s face it, there is really nothing one can do about it except to understand that the airline’s staff is doing its best to accommodate passengers. Here is the time to remember that a little grace and good manners can go a long way.

Savvy travelers:

- Make sure they have an app on their smart phone to rebook a flight fast if theirs is cancelled.
- Dress well – oh, yes, it makes a difference in the way you’re treated!
- Arrive early.
- Respect the carts that are ferrying passengers. Are aware of the beep warning of an approach, and avoids walking in front of them.
- Are prepared for security by having the boarding pass and I.D. in hand.
- If not TSA Pre-checked, are ready to remove coats, shoes, belts, has the computer ready to take out, along with liquids stored in a clear, plastic, zip-top bag.
- Are courteous to the screening employees, complies with their instructions, and thanks them.
- Once through security – move away from the conveyor belt! Take possessions to a bench or table to get out of people’s way for reassembly, which keeps the lines moving.
- Respect the carryon luggage rules. If wearing a back pack, don’t whack others while turning around. Not nice!
- Wait patiently at the gate until their group is called, without bucking the line. That causes anger, and that in turn causes bad behavior.
- If seated on the aisle, wait until fellow row passengers are seated before buckling their seat belts.
- Respect the flight attendants, and the job they do.
- Wait their turn to deplane.
- Allow those with a tight connection to deplane first.

Air travel can be frustrating and exhausting. Acting out, complaining and griping never helps. The next time you fly, take the high road, and bring your good manners along! 



## Etiquette & Protocol

By Kathleen Harvey Harshberger

**Executive Summary:**  
*For many of us who fly a lot, it seems manners have been left far behind, before arrival, for a number of our fellow passengers.*



Vinton town clock



Vinton Library

## Vinton's vibrancy >

### Executive Summary:

*The town of Vinton is developing its potential; overcoming economic and physical blight with a revitalization plan that started with the new library.*

### By Christine Liana

November 18 is a special day in the Town of Vinton. This year it marked the one-year anniversary of the new library at 300 South Pollard Street. And there's another reason to celebrate that's connected with the library: it kick-started a much-needed revitalization in the Town.

In an area of 3.1 square miles, the Town of Vinton has a mixture of business and residential areas. With proximity to Roanoke, it has bus service. The annual Dogwood Festival and the Vinton War Memorial attract many visitors. But Vinton's downtown has experienced economic and physical blight. Unsightly hardscape of vacant buildings and parking lots, minimal visual buffer between the downtown and industrial buildings, and congested traffic patterns discouraging pedestrian accessibility all called out for

a do-over. As an affiliate member of the Virginia Main Street program, what would it take to turn the blight into an attractive, economically viable walking and green space community?

### The Plan

The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) initially awarded the Town of Vinton a \$35,000 Business District Revitalization Planning grant. In 2010, local residents and members of the Downtown Revitalization Management Team met in a three-day design meeting. Working with Town staff, they developed ideas for revitalizing the downtown.

The Town of Vinton and Roanoke County purchased the former Dunman and Peters properties that would become the site of the new library. Through this demonstration of a commitment to revitalization, the DHCD awarded a \$700,000 Community Block Development Grant in 2012.

"Not much had really changed in Vinton in more than 20 years," said Richard Peters, Assistant Town Manager and Director of Economic Development. "However, with Roanoke County and Town leadership making the shrewd decision to locate

EAT  
SHOP  
PLAY  
LIVE  
VINTON

HomeTrust  
Bank

RED  
JASPER  
ALL DAY

the new Vinton Branch Library on Pollard Street, they set in motion the dominoes of an economic resurgence and the revitalization of our downtown district. These are exciting days for the residents and business owners within the Town, and Vinton is suddenly blossoming with redevelopment projects in all directions”.

## The Transformation

Vinton’s beautification plan includes landscaping, green spaces, and trees to provide shade and relief from barren, heat-reflecting paved surfaces. Storefronts are being restored to their original designs to preserve their historic character. Aesthetic improvements of gateway signs, signpost banners, and flower baskets welcome visitors to the downtown. Functional improvements of sidewalk upgrades and brick crosswalks encourage a walking community.

## Developing Residences the Old School Way... Literally

Students and teachers who remember their days at the former William Byrd High School and the former Roland E. Cook High School and Elementary School will be pleased that their schools live on, not just in memory, but in reality. These community landmarks are seeing new life as residential apartments.

The former William Byrd High School (circa 1930) on Highland Avenue got the attention of Dave McCormack, president of Waukeshaw Development, Inc. Zoning approval was granted in late September 2016. With an investment of around \$9.2 million, Waukeshaw plans to create up to 90 apartments that are expected to open in spring 2018.

The former Roland E. Cook School (circa 1915) at the corner of Jefferson Avenue and Poplar Street will be transformed into the Roland E. Cook Lofts by a group of local businessmen. Architect David Hill of Hill Studio, developer Dale Wilkinson, builder

Greg Rhodes, and attorney David Spigle formed Old School Partners, LLC for this development. Plans call for a \$3.1 million investment in this project for 21 apartments that are expected to open in spring 2017.

## Burgers, Brew, and Books

Other redevelopments:

Twin Creeks Brewing Company purchased their building at 111 South Pollard Street in April 2016. November marked another grand opening, this time with the brewery. The owners were initially approached by the Town of Vinton and found the Town staff excellent to work with. “The people of Vinton have been so welcoming to us. Vinton is a great place to do business and to be,” said co-owner Jason Bishop.

Richard Macher, owner of Macado’s restaurant, purchased the former library building on Washington Avenue and plans to invest approximately \$700,000 to transform it into a new Macado’s restaurant. The eatery is expected to open in late summer 2017.

And of course, there’s the new Vinton Library on South Pollard Street. With 23,000 square feet, it replaces its previous 9,400 square-foot facility on Washington Avenue. This modern library is about more than just books - it’s a community place. Technology services, public computers, meeting rooms, study rooms, books and media are provided in a comfortable, welcoming setting. When it’s time for a coffee break, head upstairs to the Land of a Thousand Hills Coffee cafe. Now is the season to cozy up near the fireplaces with a good book and a cup of coffee. In nice weather, enjoy the outdoor views and a breath of fresh air on the rooftop patio.

The library symbolizes the revitalization of a community reclaiming its identity in the Roanoke Valley. And thanks to the commitment of Town staff, community, and business owners, the Town of Vinton is doing just that. 



## Young Professionals

By Ariel Lev

### Executive Summary:

*We should be careful and think twice before generalizing and using shorthand terms when describing individuals or groups belonging to specific demographics.*

## Age-related shorthands >

For the life of me, I can never figure out what people mean when they say “Roanoke has so many hipsters,” or, “the Grandin Village is full of hipsters.” Are hipsters trend-followers, or trend-setters? Are they young people, or does age not a hipster define? Are they hippies, but with a modern flair? These are the questions I ask myself when people talk to me about “all these darn hipsters” (assuming I am not a hipster), or talk about “all my hipster friends” (assuming that I am one). I am not typically offended, but I am always confused: what do you mean? What are you calling me, or not calling me?

The same exact thing happens when people group millennials, digital natives or twenty-somethings together, as if this is a commonly-understood designator of person type. This frequently happens with “young professional,” as well, to the continued confusion of of professionals who are unsure the qualifications for self-selecting into this undefined club.

As a millennial, a fairweather (depending on the speaker) hipster, a young professional twenty-something and a digital native, when people use these terms to cast a vague insult or judgment on a group of people they cannot otherwise define, it just comes across as short-sighted and lazy, especially in the workplace.

When it comes to working and collaborating with people who happen to be younger, here are some tips when attempting to discuss who they are and what they are like:

- Don’t assume every early-career person identifies as the aforementioned term. Ask them before just using it to describe them.
- Bring it up as a question, rather than a decided-upon descriptor. “I’ve heard the new restaurant downtown is super hip and is attracting lots of young people. What do you think? Have you been?” is much more appropriate than “Do you and your hipster friends like the new restaurant downtown?”
- If you are trying to formulate a way to express your disinterest, dislike or confusion about the choices of a group of people, hesitate before lumping them together under a word like “millennial.” Those of us who are, technically, millennials, cannot change our age. Think hard before you cast a judgment on an entire generation.
- Work hard to understand words before using them to make sweeping claims. “I know it when I see it” is not appropriate or fair. 🙄

## Go to the gemba >

I remember my first management job. My company had recently bought a new business and asked me to relocate as part of the initial management team. It was exciting because I could use more of my strategic planning and leadership skills...and I had an office!

We worked long hours transforming this new factory, and I became comfortable working at my desk and managing the “big picture”. I thought that’s what managers did.

One of my peers (let’s call him John), was never around his office. John was horrible at answering my emails or providing me the information I needed. I thought to myself “He’s not a team player and is not setting us up for future success.” So imagine my surprise one day when my boss commented, “Mike, you need to be more like John and solve our problems out on the floor.” Ouch.

I learned a valuable leadership lesson that day. Effective leaders do not hole themselves up in their office looking at spreadsheets and making PowerPoint slides. Strong leaders hang out where the action is.

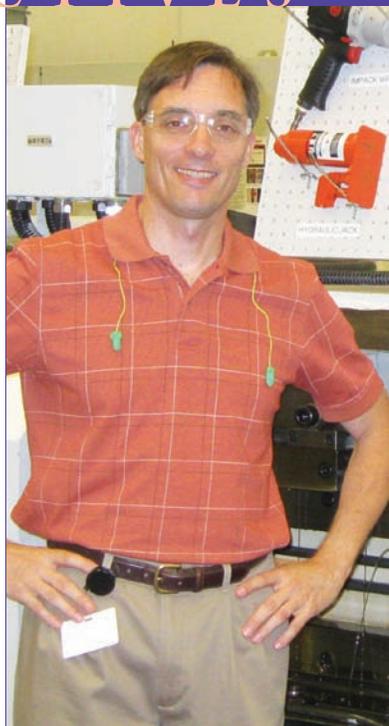
In organizations that pursue Lean process improvement, a commonly heard phrase is “Go to the gemba.” Gemba is a Japanese word that roughly means “the actual place.” The meaning is to emphasize to leaders the importance of spending time at the actual location where business processes are occurring. In manufacturing, that would be on the factory floor where the product is being built. For service organizations, the gemba is where front-line employees are supporting the customers or working on key processes.

All leaders should consider this a high-payoff activity — one that is critical to being an effective leader. Without going to the gemba, you cannot fully understand the effectiveness of your processes, the needs of your team, or the level of service to your customers. If your employees are telling each other, “our manager doesn’t understand what we do”, then you are not spending enough time on the gemba.

To fully understand the impact of this concept, I challenge you to schedule 30-60 minutes of time to observe one or more of your team members as they carry out a key process or service. Pick a process that needs improvement. Your observation time should have a single purpose – to understand. You need only to watch and listen. I guarantee you will be enlightened by what you learn. If you do this well, (don’t judge and truly seek to understand), don’t be surprised when you say, “I never knew that...”

Now get out of your office and go to the gemba! 

Send your questions or comments to [Mike@OpXSolutionsllc.com](mailto:Mike@OpXSolutionsllc.com)



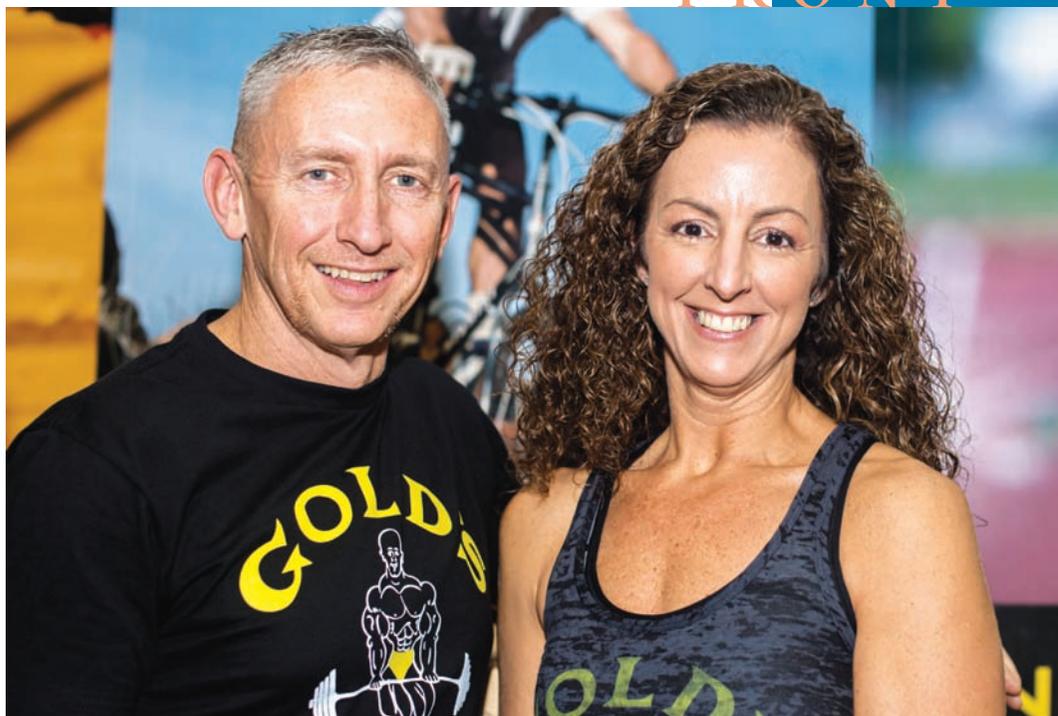
## Business Operations

By Mike Leigh

### Executive Summary:

*Are you where the action is or holed up somewhere doing busy work?*





## Fitness that's functional >

### Executive Summary:

*The Little Black Dress Boot Camp is one of several physical workout programs planned by Shane and Cindy Schubert—for the busy, working professional.*

By Anne Sampson

Sometimes things just fall into place.

Shane Schubert was a medic in the Army Airborne Rangers and a medical device salesman in civilian life. His wife, Cindy, was an accountant and a teaching assistant. Together they've turned a passion for fitness into a more-than-full-time-gig at Gold's Gym on Electric Road, with the intention of making a difference in people's lives.

"We have wanted to do something like this together," says Cindy. "Everything fell into place."

Shane, whose title is Community Relations Director, collaborates with Cindy to develop

and run a crossfit-style "Little Black Dress Boot Camp," targeting women who want to get in shape for the holidays. And they are taking this show on the road, with a class starting soon at LewisGale Physicians Ob-Gyn, and a similar arrangement with the staff at Pebble Creek Apartments in the works.

"People are intimidated about coming to the gym, especially if they haven't worked out," says Cindy, "so we'll help them jump-start. Then we'll move it into the gym. Functional fitness is the key."

Functional fitness means training the body "to perform the activities of daily life more easily and without injury," Shane explains. "When we teach the proper way to squat down and pick up the slam ball, we're also trying to train your body to do that same movement if you need to pick up a bag of fertilizer."

Shane and Cindy are both certified as crossfit instructors, personal trainers and in youth fitness. Shane was teaching crossfit at Railyard Crossfit in Salem, and had developed a youth program when he approached Gold's. They were interested, and everything else slotted into place. Shane stopped driving 1400 miles a week





in sales, Cindy left Franklin County Schools, and their dream became a reality. Sometimes 14 hour days are tempered with flexible schedules that allow Cindy to pick up their youngest at school.

"He's a real gym rat," she jokes.

Although they've always shared an interest in sports and fitness, it was Cindy's lupus diagnosis that pushed them into lifestyle changes, exercise and better nutrition. The result is that both of them no longer take medication and Cindy's lupus is dormant.

In the Little Black Dress Boot Camp, participants combine weight training with aerobic exercise. Working together,

but at their own speed, they perform sets of moves that work large muscle groups, strengthen their core muscles and challenge their cardiovascular systems.

"You can see them gain confidence," says Cindy. "They have common goals. And there's a lot of trash talk out there."

Shane regularly visits local businesses to promote the boot camps and discuss corporate membership, which includes child care. Boot camps are open to non-Gold's Gym members, and any business could form a group for on-site training.

"We're exactly where we want to be," says Shane. "This is our way of paying back and doing a little something for others." 





## Shark Patrol

By Keith Finch

### Executive Summary:

*You can use a business's name to refer to that business itself, if you don't do it in an untruthful or misleading way. However, usually you can't use a business's logo without its permission.*

## No-go logo >

Our client does business with colleges and universities across Virginia, and also throughout that fabled state known as "The Carolinas." He called me one day with a bit of hysteria in his voice.

"I got a cease-and-desist letter," he said. "The University of the Carolinas says that I can't use their name in my brochure, to say that I've done work for them."

"That can't be right," I said. Can you send me the letter? And a copy of your brochure too?"

The letter was from the Athletic Department of the University of the Carolinas, and it said:

"Please remove our name and logo from your brochure. There is no signed agreement that allows you to use University trademarks. Failure to remove our name and logo may result in legal action against you."

The entire back panel of our client's brochure was devoted to showcasing his various college and university clients. Two dozen logos were spread across the page under the heading "Some Of Our Clients!" There was the Hokie Bird and the Virginia Cavalier. There was the Duke Blue Devil and the South Carolina Gamecock. And right in the middle was the Silver Sun logo of the University of the Carolinas.

"Am I not allowed to list my customers?" our client said. "Everyone in our industry lists their customers."

"You certainly are allowed to list your customers," I said. "But you have to use their names, not their logos."

"What's the difference?" he said.

"You have the right to use another business's name to refer to that business," I said. "In your brochure, you're not trying to confuse people into thinking that your name is 'University of the Carolinas.' You're also not implying that the University has endorsed you. You're just saying that the University is one of your clients, which is true. It's freedom of speech, essentially. It's the same rule that allows you to use a competitor's name in your ads without the competitor's permission."

"So why does this cease-and-desist letter say that I have to take the University name off of my brochure?" he said.

"The person who wrote the letter was just wrong about that part," I said. "University administrators get confused sometimes. You have every right to use the University

name when you're listing your customers."

"But not the logo?" he said.

"Nope, not the logo," I said. "The logo is different for two reasons. First, trademark law allows you to use enough of a trademark as is necessary to identify the business that owns the trademark, but no more. Usually using the business's name alone is enough to identify it, so there is no need to use its logo too."

"That's too bad," he said. "The logos make the brochure so much more interesting and colorful."

"And that relates directly to the other reason why you can't use the logos," I said. "Each logo is a creative work of the visual arts. This means that each logo is protected by copyright, and so using it without permission can be copyright infringement. Legally it's the same as using a photo without the permission of the photographer, or using a drawing without the permission of the artist."

In the end our client revised his brochure to use only his customers' names (and not their logos). He also hired an artist to create some original graphics to make the page more visually interesting. Then he sent out his new brochure—guaranteed 100% free of trademark infringement and copyright infringement. 

**Note:** *facts have been changed to preserve confidentiality. Oh, and this isn't legal advice—you should consult a lawyer when deciding whether and how to use someone else's trademarks in your marketing materials, etc.*

“”

You have the right to use another business's name to refer to that business. . . . It's freedom of speech, essentially.

“”

Each logo is protected by copyright, and so using it without permission can be copyright infringement. Legally it's the same as using a photo without the permission of the photographer, or using a drawing without the permission of the artist.

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# What our business leaders think >

## Executive Summary:

Roanoke College polled business leaders in Virginia to measure their views on the current business climate.

## Submitted by

Dr. Alice Louise Kassens

The Roanoke College Institute for Policy and Opinion Research (IPOR) conducted its first Virginia Business Leaders Poll in which 310 Virginia CEOs companies with sales of at least \$5 million in the last year were asked a variety of questions pertaining to the local and national economy and business climate.

As a whole, business owners express more optimism than pessimism, particularly concerning the business climate in the near future. Optimism varies by business size, industry, and region. CEOs are cautious and anticipate expansions to largely be within rather than seeking new markets and products.

Business owners are particularly concerned about health care costs, taxes, and government regulation. Federal legislation is a concern to many, particularly the impact of health care legislation. A wide skills gap exists between job openings and applicants.

## Business leaders cautiously optimistic about the future

Thirty-six percent of respondents report current business and economic conditions are better today than six months ago while 20% say things are worse [Figure 1.] When asked about their industry specifically, there is little difference reported regarding own-industry vs. the national economy.

Looking ahead to the rest of 2016 optimism, ticks up while pessimism

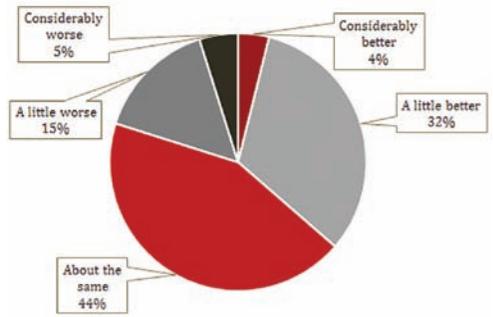


Figure 1. CEO beliefs about business and economic conditions today compared to 6-months ago

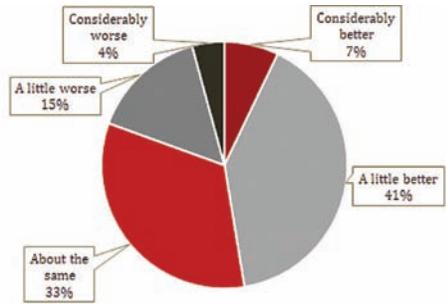


Figure 2. CEO beliefs about business conditions and economy over rest of 2016

remains unchanged. Forty-eight percent believe things will improve; nineteen percent anticipate that things will worsen, statistically no different from the year prior [Figure 2.]

Fifty-one percent of CEOs anticipate revenue growth and 72% project increases in profits for their companies, suggesting cost reductions for many businesses. Additionally, business owners expect increased demand and rising prices to enhance profit growth. Fifty-three percent plan to invest in fixed assets to meet increased demand, reduce costs, and increase productivity. Funds for these investments will largely (63%) come from internally generated funds; twenty-nine percent plan to borrow from a financial institution.

CEO rankings of major areas of concentration for their company for the rest of 2016 are shown in Figure 3. Focusing within appears to dominate as 66% plan to expand within existing markets and 57% look to grow existing product lines. Only 11% and 12% anticipate construction of new

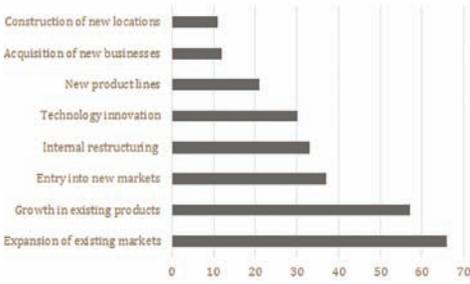


Figure 3. Areas of concentration for 2016, %

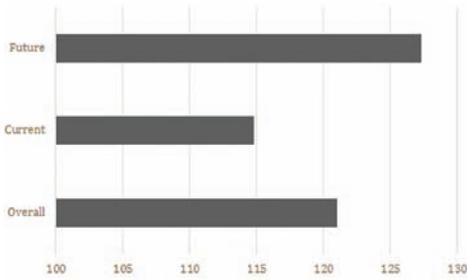


Figure 4. CEO Indexes

locations or acquisition of new businesses, respectively. To meet these areas of growth, 36% plan to increase their workforce while 58% expect no change. Figure 4 shows the 2016 CEO Index values where 100 indicates a balance of positive and negative beliefs. Overall, 21% more business owners believe that business conditions are positive than negative. There is a significant difference between sentiment about the past six months (current) and the rest of 2016 (future.) The future CEO index is 12.5 points higher than the current index, suggesting growing optimism about the future months. The top three concerns for business owners are health care costs, government regulation, and taxes.

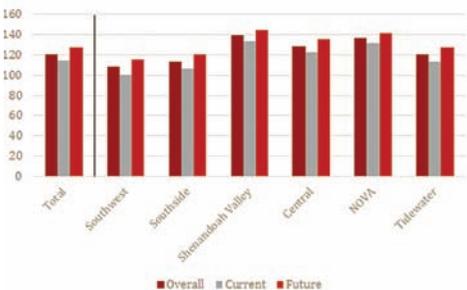


Figure 5. CEO Index by Region

## Regional and Industry analysis

Figure 5 illustrates the CEO Index for the Commonwealth as a whole (total) and by region. All regions are above the breakeven value (100), although Southwest Virginia just barely so. Some regions are above the state level (Shenandoah Valley and Northern Virginia), but the distribution is fairly compact.

Figure 6 shows the CEO Index by industry. Several industries are below the breakeven level, the balance of positive and negative beliefs (black line.) Optimism is strongest within service, food & beverage, and engineering & construction, particularly with respect to the rest of 2016. Business owners in manufacturing and retail express concern, especially about the past six months. It should be noted that the sample size in each industry is small, and caution should be taken when drawing any conclusions.

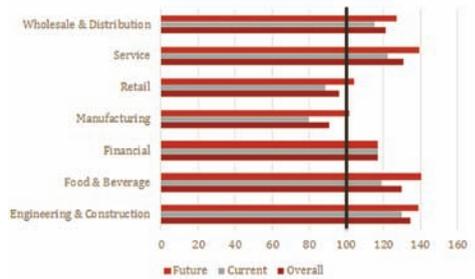


Figure 6. CEO Index by Industry

## Business climate

Virginia business leaders report a general lack of confidence in the ability of government at all levels to improve business climate. However, 88% report that if they had to do it all again, they would choose Virginia over another state for their business.

## State

Business leaders do not have a strong opinion of state government with respect to the Virginia economy and business climate. Sixty-three percent believe Richmond is doing a fair or poor job of creating a business climate for





companies like theirs to succeed. Additionally, 64% are not confident that the state government will improve that climate in the next year. The top three items business owners would like the Governor and the General Assembly to address are business development incentives, income tax reform, and infrastructure development.

### Federal

Less confidence exists in the federal government's ability to improve business climate. Figure 7 shows CEO confidence for both state and federal regulators to improve climate. Almost 90% of business leaders report lack of confidence in the federal government to improve the business climate for businesses like theirs in the coming year. Ninety-two percent say that Washington is doing a fair or poor job in that arena.

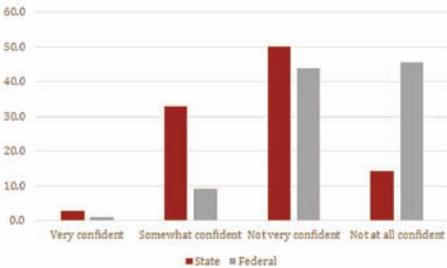


Figure 7. CEO confidence in government to improve business climate (%)

Virginia CEOs strongly support passing a balanced budget amendment and reducing the corporate income tax rate (77.2% and 78.4%, respectively.) The majority also support repealing the health care reform legislation (66.5%) and increasing federal spending on infrastructure (59.7%).

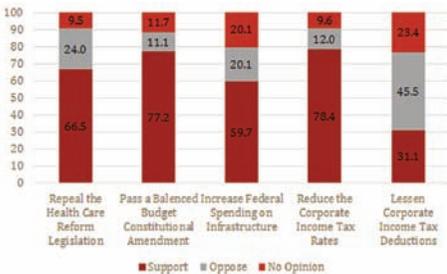


Figure 8. CEO opinion on various national proposals (%)

These opinions are shown in Figure 8.

The 2013 sequestration impacted the Virginia economy more than other states due, in part, to the heavy reliance on government contracts and employment in Northern Virginia and the Tidewater, two of the most populated regions of the state. Thirty-one percent of CEO's reported some negative impact from sequestration while 68% said they experienced very little to no impact. Looking ahead, 70% anticipate little to no impact from sequestration on their business; 29% anticipate some negative impact through the rest of 2016.

### Local

Only 21% of CEO's believe that the general business climate in their immediate vicinity is improving; 18% report it is worsening. Business leaders anticipate a positive impact on the economic vitality of their geographic region primarily from the technology, education, and medical industries.

Virginia business leaders rated their local area highly as a place where customers want to live. They were critical of local government support for business and transportation infrastructure. Figure 9 shows these area ratings and more.

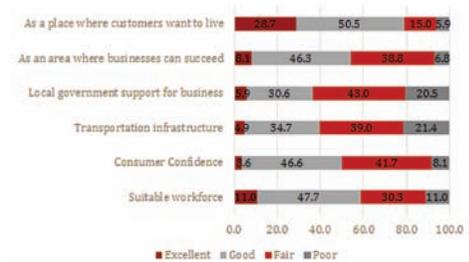


Figure 9. Local area ratings (%)

### Workforce

Fifty-nine percent of CEOs rank their local area workforce as good or excellent (Figure 9.) Fifty-eight percent report that there is not an ample supply of workers appropriately trained for their employment.

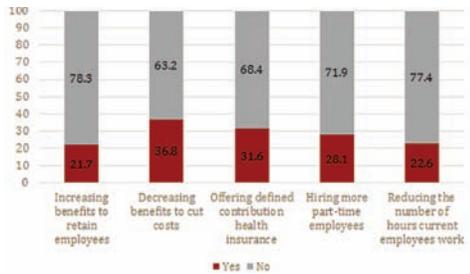


**Figure 10. CEO rating of recent applicant skills**

Figure 10 shows CEO ratings of recent job applicant skills. Applicants are deficient in all skills (majority rated fair or poor), particularly in writing and initiative. The most highly rated is technical skills, although only 38.5% of business leaders rated applicants as excellent or good for this attribute. This suggests a structural problem with Virginia's workforce as skills are widely lacking for job openings.

## Impact of the ACA

Virginia business leaders report numerous changes in business practices made due to the Affordable Care Act. Figure 11 illustrates these modifications. The most common change is the reduction of benefits to workers to cut costs (36.8%). In part to avoid the employer mandate, firms are hiring more part-time employees and reducing the number of hours current employees work. 



**Figure 11. Changes made due to the ACA**



all of us at the FRONT  
wish each of you a joyous  
holiday season and a  
most prosperous new year



## On Tap from the Pub

By Tom Field

### Executive Summary:

*A review of "A Chip On Her Shoulder: A Documentary Play About Women In Engineering."*

## Chips are in >

So there's this.

I attended a docudrama on women in engineering.

I can't tell you how many years I have been looking for a docudrama about women in engineering. I mean, it seems like it was just yesterday I was talking with a friend, and I said, "I wish there was a docudrama on women in engineering I could go to," but that conversation occurred years, ago. It might have been somewhere during the infamous dot com bubble between 1995 and 2001. That's a long time waiting for a docudrama on women in engineering.

Almost as long as a rock opera production of "The Man Who Would Be Seamstress—Except That's A Feminine Word, So He's A Seamster—Though That Perfectly Fine Word Is Never Used—And The Word 'Sewer,' When Used In Written Form With The Word 'Man,' Makes It Sound Like He's Working Under The Municipal Streets, Rather Than Actually Sewing With Needle And Thread."

And before you suggest it, no, "tailor" is not the masculine equivalent of seamstress. While all tailors are also seamsters / seamstresses, not all seamsters / seamstresses are tailors.

I'm just glad the word engineer crosses the gender distinction.

It's funny how some occupations allow that (any actor can be called an actor and not necessarily an actress; but don't mix up your stewards / stewardesses, please). And often, we just defer to the root word whenever we can (host instead of hostess; chair instead of chairman or chairwoman). "Stew, can you get me a pillow?" just doesn't cut it, regardless of the airline.

It can be a bit confusing.

But that part—what to call each other—is just the tip of a very big iceberg when it comes to exploring gender and sexuality... an activity Kristin Rose Kelly enjoys most in her creative endeavors as a Virginia Tech student working for her MFA in Directing and Public Dialogue.

The docudrama I attended was entitled "A Chip On Her Shoulder."

I'm glad it finally arrived. It was worth the wait.

Kristin Rose Kelly directed a play that's going to stick with me.

The amazing thing is, "A Chip On Her Shoulder" is something we've been doing as a business journal for almost three decades. It's essentially a compilation of interviews from professionals in our region who happen to be in the technology field and who happen to be female. We've done that, like many others. But Kristin took all that input and, with the help of her production team, gave it a lyrical quality, threw some song and dance in there, and hit her audience with a message squarely in the face.

We got it.

This docudrama delivers a powerful message that many people would never comprehend by simply reading a report. And if you're especially thick headed, you only need to recall the oft-repeated refrain:

"She's right."

But less you think this production was merely a hippie-gypsy-bra-burning-flower-loving-girl-power political advocacy project for the supra feminist, I'll just tell you how a middle aged white guy and father of three daughters received it. (I can vouch for his authenticity as he lives right here in Southwest Virginia and I know him fairly well.)

*I'll admit it. I was skeptical about this play. Not that I figured it wouldn't be interesting (who doesn't believe a theatrical performance about women engineers wouldn't be unique?). It's just that I knew it would be all about the unfair treatment of women in this field. A 'woe is me' thing, where women experience harassment and discrimination in terrifying and extreme ways. Men can be harsh, especially when they're already part of an entrenched group when someone from the outside walks in. And put their designing and inventing abilities in the mix... who knows what treachery and evil devices they could build against the female intruder? Frankly, I also expected hypocrisy. There was one part where a female character lamented about the use of the word "girl" while later in the play, the female called her workmates "boys." I almost jumped up to shout—there you go! You did the very same thing you accused others of doing! But you know what happened? These attitudes... began to melt away. With each string of words, with each parodied song, with each choreographed step... I started to understand the dilemma. In our current American culture, it's not a "please let us in, we're just as capable and only want to contribute," cry from women.*



The amazing thing is, 'A Chip On Her Shoulder' is something we've been doing as a business journal for almost three decades. It's essentially a compilation of interviews from professionals in our region who happen to be in the technology field and who happen to be female.

# CONTRIBUTORS

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Think hard before you cast a judgment on an entire generation — Page 22

*And it's not a "we're not going to change and overturn our whole world just because you're part of it now" demand from men. I might have missed it, but I don't think "A Chip On Her Shoulder" is a message of give-and-take. There is no capitulation needed—or in fact—no real need to change—if we all just simply do one thing. Respect one another.*

This reviewer might be on to something. I'm thinking about my own daughters. One is working right there in an engineering environment that is overwhelmingly male. And I've also worked in engineering environments myself, that just so happen to employ a lot of women. So we all know what workplaces are like when they are not diverse—and when they are.

In real life, we will always have people of both genders who carry chips on their shoulders. They'll continue to expect a degree of fairness that will never be. They'll also look for a world that accommodates them. That's a perplexing journey to me. It's hardly an adventure and a good way to ensure you will remain bitter.

If we can't get to the peaceful flower-loving state, let's at least treat each other with mutual respect. Even as we recognize our differences.

Will it ever be that simple?  
Is there an engineer in the house to solve this one? 

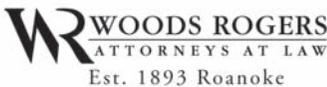


In real life, we will always have people of both genders who carry chips on their shoulders. They'll continue to expect a degree of fairness that will never be. They'll also look for a world that accommodates them.

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## Bolstering bioscience within Virginia >

In 2014 Governor McAuliffe announced a Virginia bioscience initiative with an overarching goal of enhancing the strength of the bioscience industry in Virginia. One of six core goals featured within the initiative focuses on commercializing translational research from public universities, thus improving patient outcomes by a more rapid development process.

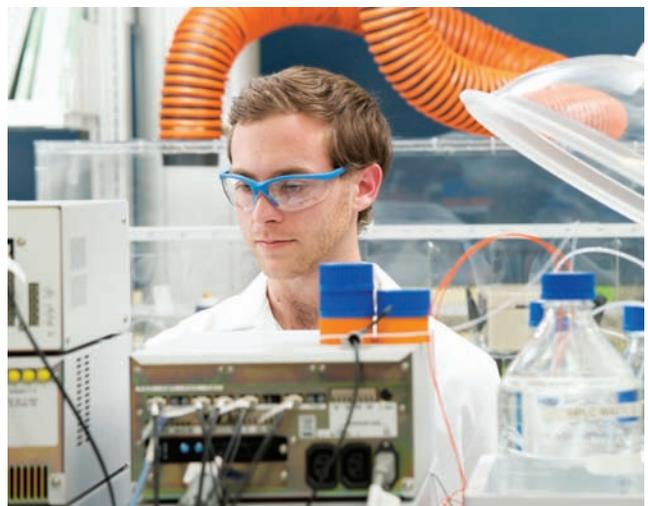
Cynthia Rancourt, CEO of Polymer Solutions Incorporated (PSI), has served on multiple executive panels, sharing her ideas about how working relationships between academic institutions and companies within industry can be improved to support bioscience and the commercialization of translational research. With chemical analysis and physical testing, PSI supports companies in bioscience, ranging from small and promising start ups to large global corporations. Rancourt is also on the Board of Directors for VirginiaBio, a non-profit trade association representing the life sciences industry in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Her leadership has led to increased discussions about practical steps that can be taken for the betterment of bioscience.

To better understand the ways analytical testing labs serve companies within the bioscience industry, Delegates Sam Rasoul and Nick Rush visited PSI on October 26, 2016. While at PSI they met with Rancourt, other company leaders and scientists. The visit focused on the work that happens in analytical labs, such as PSI, and how it directly supports the medical device and pharmaceutical industries. Discussions also included the ways in which PSI is currently partnering with local universities and how these partnerships can be enhanced.

## Guest Commentary

By Caitlyn Scaggs

**Executive Summary:**  
*Established analytical testing labs that serve bioscience can produce measureable benefits for local business and the economy.*



Polymer Solutions lab in Christiansburg

## Letters

### Cogs for propaganda

It seems today that everyone's favorite topic is how horrible media coverage has become of everything from the presidential race to seemingly insignificant social media driven pop-news. Mark Zuckerberg said the idea that Facebook's fake news problem could have influenced the result of the 2016 presidential elections is a "crazy idea," He certainly must know that his statement doesn't make a great deal of sense when you consider that he has continuously spoken about the power of social media. I was astounded by all of the posts and reposts of fake news and misinformation about both presidential candidates. I was shocked that many of my friends were so eager to get their opinion across that they didn't at least go a few more clicks beyond what they were posting in order to learn for themselves that they were, in fact,

promoting misinformation. Most of these posts were so outlandish that it would only take a little effort to learn that they were unfound. Many of the posts laid outlandish accusations that were later found to be untrue, but, the posts did their job by whipping up a frenzy of anger, fear, and insecurity. It no longer mattered if we later learned that the posts were fake news and the posters and re-posters had made themselves cogs for propaganda. Worse yet, when many learned that the information wasn't accurate, the damage was done because the negative sentiment they were intended to evoke were now forever attached to the individual. We can't blame the media for their lack of proper and accurate coverage when we are doing the same thing through our social media accounts. This is not a statement for either candidate. This is a plea for people to slow down and think about what their posts are saying about themselves.

**Jay Brechick**  
*Salem*

*Send letters to [news@vbFRONT.com](mailto:news@vbFRONT.com) or any FRONT contact of your choosing (page 6). Submissions may be edited. You can see, read, print any current or back issue online at [www.vbFRONT.com](http://www.vbFRONT.com)*

Delegate Rasoul spoke with WLSL 10 and explained the importance of visiting PSI. "It's the type of investment we are all looking for to increase our technology footprint and capitalize on a lot of the good work we are seeing not only at Virginia Tech, but also, for example, the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute; and when we've got industries like Polymer Solutions right here it really compliments what we're doing," Rasoul said.

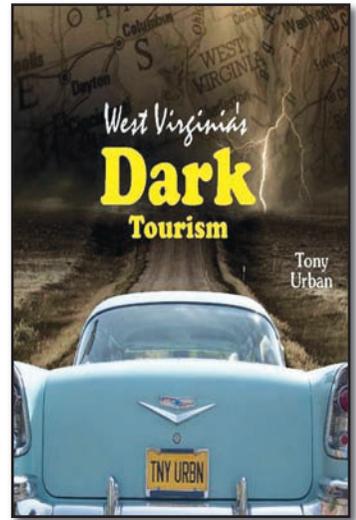
The Commonwealth of Virginia is well suited to enhance the BioSciences industry, thereby improving our economic position. We have highly reputable public universities, technology hubs, and professional organizations that can all interact to elevate biosciences in Virginia. Roanoke and The New River Valley in particular are poised to explode with growth. The innovation and discovery happening at Virginia Tech and the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institution will improve patient outcomes. It is up to those of us in industry and academia to partner so the valuable work accomplished is able to become practical solutions for everyday people. 



The Commonwealth of Virginia is well suited to enhance the BioSciences industry, thereby improving our economic position.

## Books @ the FRONT >

Following are book recommendations from our contributors and business people in the Roanoke and New River Valleys who are inveterate readers. Readers are invited to submit short reviews of books you've read during the past six months. Our goal is to recommend good books on any topic and in any genre. Send reviews to [news@vbFRONT.com](mailto:news@vbFRONT.com)



### *Our spooky neighbor*

*West Virginia's Dark Tourism* (Schiffer; 2016) by Tony Urban features monsters, true crimes, strange history, and assorted oddities from the cities to mountains and "hollers."

West Virginia is famous for its mountains, nature, and scenery, but it's also a treasure trove for tourists who prefer to visit history's darker and stranger side. Hitch along with the author as he visits over 60 West Virginia strange and spooky landmarks, including the Trans Allegheny Lunatic Asylum and haunted Moundsville State Prison. Learn about Charles Manson's childhood hometown, the "Hillbilly Black Dahlia," and serial killer Harry Powers, whose story inspired *Night of the Hunter*. Haunted houses, colleges, and cemeteries, otherworldly alien encounters, cursed amusement parks, and more are explored in detail. You'll even discover Bat Boy's cave, Sasquatch's hideouts, werewolf country, and read about the time Teddy Roosevelt went monster hunting. Each location is complete with visitor information and a bounty of odd history.

—Tracee Groff

### *Take your time*

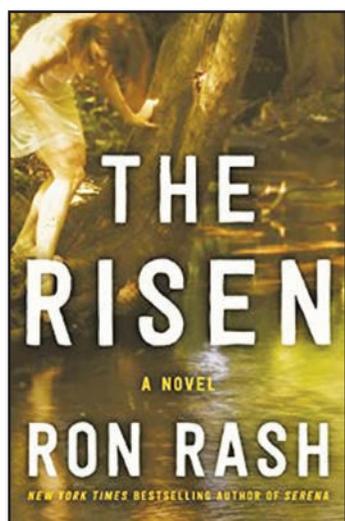
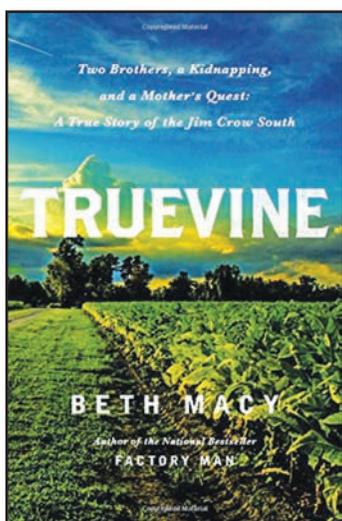
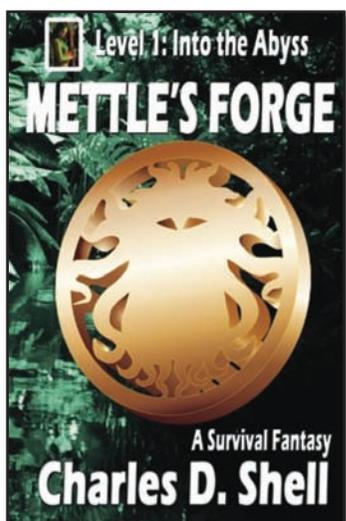
*Mettle's Forge* (CreateSpace; 2016) trilogy by local Roanoke City author Charles D. Shell is a well written, well grounded survival fantasy. It begins in modern day, and quickly our protagonists find themselves on another world. The initial set up is very intriguing. Shell does an excellent job of establishing the situation the characters are in and slowly sinking the characters and the readers into his world. The author takes the

time to deal with many implications of what people would realistically have to do if they found themselves in a wilderness setting with few resources. The most stand out thing about the work is how Shell takes the time to take time with things. We are used to movies and stories where the entire adventure takes place in the course of 24 hours where characters make implausible leaps in relationships and skills for such a short amount of time. In *Mettle's Forge* there is a learning curve and the characters have to take the time to travel distances and to learn things. It is a very natural and enjoyable process of discovery. The pace of information that flows to the reader is very natural; and the more the reader learns about the world, the more the reader wants to know about it. This is a fantastic piece of world building. The series concluded very well. Not everyone gets out alive and you will be moved to tears at points. You can order his book on Amazon.

—John Brill

### *Black lives prevail*

Beth Macy is a journalist, and *Truevine* (Little, Brown and Co; 2016) is a story that took decades to get to the root of truth. Macy cares deeply about the people and places in this book. Who should read this book? Part One should be read by every Southerner, descendant of the South, descendants of carpetbaggers, and transplants to the South. The daily venom and institutionalized insults that African-Americans suffered — and they did suffer — cannot be guessed. It must be told and read. Macy conveys the landscape of pervasive, poisonous hate



and innate/outright meanness that was the Jim Crow era. Anyone who is unable to utter the three words “black lives matter” without qualifying it in some way needs to read about how little they did matter to anyone. Macy delivers the truth, unflinchingly.

Part Two brings circus and freak aficionados the world the Muse brothers were thrust into; a world of sideshows, fellow freaks, and people who could be “bought” by “talent scouts” and traded like Pokémon cards among “managers.” As a former reporter, Macy is equally adept at poking family sore spots and dodging verbal slings and arrows as she learns more of the story, questions a tightly-knit family’s lore, and presents evidence suggesting other probabilities.

In Part Three she paints the portrait of Harriet Muse, the mother who waited (and hustled while waiting) and through sheer force of will snatched her children back from the circus. The legal chess game that ensued was played across decades. Wherever Harriet Muse got those smarts from, the gift was not wasted. Those who enjoy legal yarns and unlikely heroes tilting poles at windmills will not be disappointed. In a book rich with injustices, a victorious underdog prevails.

Part Four provides much food for thought as the circus and sideshows travel to entertain societies overseas. The scope of *Truevine*, like the well-worn circus travel routes, eventually ends at a resting place after its exploration of a century of change in these interesting and unusual chapters. That resting place is the loving, protective and attentive care of the family in Roanoke, Virginia. Our town. A place where the

darkest chapters of history were perpetrated by the real freaks — the local Ku Klux Klan, and the institution of racism in a very shocking past. This book will have your mind “Musing” on all these aspects and more as you continue to digest its story and scope long after the pleasure of the read is completed.

—Mim Young

## *Bad in beautiful*

In *The Risen* (Ecco; 2016) Ron Rash writes with uncanny efficiency. I say uncanny because this is a tale of Appalachia, set in the Asheville, NC area, in the Summer of Love, 1969. You’d expect a zillion adjectives and colorful mountain phrases like we hear in the region’s heralded oral tradition; but Rash resists. The novel (more like a novella) is still good storytelling. We see that good and evil still flourish in simple pure places like a slithering strain of poisonous contaminant floating undetectable, just beneath the surface of an otherwise beautiful mountain river.

*Risen* is no *River Runs Through It*; but it does capture the twists and turns of our waters’ shallow parts.

—Tom Field

(**The reviewers:** Tracee Groff is a publicist with Schiffer Publishing in Atglen, PA; John Brill is a reader of books from Roanoke; Mim Young is an entrepreneur and marketer in Roanoke; Tom Field is a creative director and publisher of FRONT.)



## PM buildup >

The Project Management Institute of Southwest Virginia held its annual fall symposium on Oct. 21 at Roanoke College; 145 attended the event featuring topics covering Agile, leadership, PMO, and other project management skills-building tools.



## Horrible, just horrible >

**Ad 2 Roanoke** advertising club held its "Advertising Horror Stories" program at Halloween time on Oct. 25 at The Quarter restaurant in Roanoke. **Samantha Torre** (in Flintstones costume) hosts a panel including media sales rep **Shannon Cavendish** with Wheeler Broadcasting; Chernoff Newman agency president **David Campbell**; **Ace Evans** of OneFourFive Creative; and creative services manager **John Griessmayer** of Carilion, who described a lesson learned when a commercial production had to be edited frame by frame to remove fingernail polish from one of the talent.



UW of Montgomery, Radford & Floyd

## Holiday deliveries >

**United Way of Montgomery, Radford & Floyd** conducted its annual holiday meal box partnership program through the Thanksgiving and Christmas season; providing food to individuals (1,752 last year); families and children are welcome to help, volunteering to collect supplies from local grocery stores (above).



Foundation for Roanoke Valley

## 4 checks, please >

The Roanoke Women's Foundation announced its grants in the amount of \$324,000 to four nonprofit organizations (covering arts and culture; health and human services; education) in the Roanoke Valley at a presentation on Oct. 27 at Roanoke Country Club; the program is administered by Foundation for Roanoke Valley.



Courtesy of Pierson Grant PR

## Cat's eye >

**Bobcat Backpacks Program**, a community effort to meet weekend food needs for Radford City school children, received a \$2,500 grant from the ABB Cares program, nominated by Invision optometry in Christiansburg.

## Hat can do >

**CANstructionSWVA**, a charitable community event held annually at the Taubman Museum of Art in Roanoke featured canned food creative displays by six teams; the "Best Use of Labels" and "Juror's Favorite" award went to Roanoke County Public Schools / Burton Center for Arts and Technology and its "Hat's Off to Willy Wonka" sculpture.



Courtesy of Feeding America Southwest Virginia



Emory & Henry

## And... >

**The Ampersand Center** at Emory & Henry College, a new facility and resource for undergraduate research, community-engaged work, and project center for career development celebrated its official opening at a ribbon cutting in November.



FRONT

## Entrepreneur tools >

An **Entrepreneur Express** workshop was held Nov. 14 at Vinton War Memorial in conjunction with Global Entrepreneurship Week, and organized by City of Roanoke Economic Development, Roanoke County, Town of Vinton, Roanoke Small Business Development Center, and the Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity.



Courtesy of Roanoke Star Tank

## Star power >

**Roanoke Star Tank**, an entrepreneurial pitch and investment resource for new businesses and start ups, held its pitch and panel session on Nov. 15 at the Grandin CoLab; one recipient was disabled veteran **Kerry Prater** who presented her apparel line for military women.

# FRONT 'N ABOUT



## Quiet for queen >

A significant sound barrier wall nears its first stage completion along both sides of I-581 between Valley View Mall and downtown Roanoke; a resident on Queen Ave., whose back yard butts against the wall, says the noise level is "nowhere near as loud as it used to be" from all the traffic.



## Subtle welcome >

The new water tower in **Roanoke County** that happens to sit at the entrance to Roanoke (I-81 and I-581 / US 220 interchange at exit 143) has been painted with the Virginia's Blue Ridge logo. The opposite side includes the Splash Valley water park at the County's recreation center on adjacent property.



## Beltway bastion >

**Bob Woodward**, associate editor of The Washington Post and world renowned author and political journalist spoke at The Henry H. Fowler lecture series on Nov. 17 at **Roanoke College**, where he shared personal anecdotes on his interviews with Gerald Ford, Bill and Hillary Clinton, and Donald Trump, as well as his observations on the 2016 presidential election.



Courtesy of Uncork-It



## Cheers to new >

Our **Daily Bread Bakery and Bistro** in Blacksburg held its Beaujolais Nouveau Day, the annual French tradition of new red wine release, on Nov. 17, complete with six-course dinner.



## Reading power >

**Appalachian Power** employees conducted a "Read to Me Day" program at more than 400 schools in the Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee region, serving around 17,000 students, including Colonial Elementary in Blue Ridge, VA (above) read to by **Lisa Doss**.

*Valley Business FRONT is FRONT'n About at many events each month. Check the social media links at [www.vbFRONT.com](http://www.vbFRONT.com) for more coverage.*

# Career FRONT

## FINANCIAL FRONT



Leffel

**Scott Leffel** has joined as market executive at Freedom First Credit Union Business Banking division.

**B. Randolph Roller** has been named senior vice president and trust officer for the Trust and Wealth Management Division of First Bank and Trust Company.

**John Settle Jr.** has been named executive vice president and president of trust and investment services at American National Bank and Trust Co.

**John Rader Jr.** and **William Hendrickson** have joined the Valley Investment Management team at Davenport & Co.

## LEGAL FRONT

**Benjamin Johnson** has joined as an associate at Johnson, Ayers & Matthews.

## TECH/INDUSTRY FRONT

**Steve Lush** has been named executive vice president, Caseload sales

and merchandising, at Hooker Furniture Corp.

## DEVELOPMENT FRONT



Massey

**Tim Massey** has joined the real estate sales team at Berkshire Hathaway Home-Services Smith Mountain Lake.

**Josh MacDonald** and **Jerry Kline** have joined as project engineers at Parker Design Group.

## RETAIL/SERVICE FRONT



Wells

**Brian Wells** has been named general manager for The Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center.

**Bob Cushing**, EVP of Advance Auto Parts, has been named to the Import Vehicle Community Hall of Fame by the Auto Care Association.

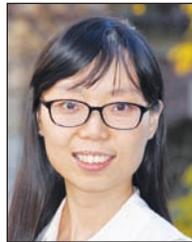


Cushing

## EDUCATION FRONT



Lucero



Leo



Hotchkiss

**Jamie Lucero** of Virginia Tech has been elected president of the National Agricultural Alumni and Development Association. **Shaowen Leo** has been named assistant professor in the Department of Economics of the College of Science at Virginia Tech. **Erin Hotchkiss** has been named assistant



Thompson



Lin

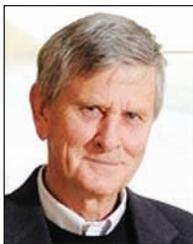


Franck

professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at Virginia Tech. **Tom Thompson** has been named associate dean and director of international programs in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Virginia Tech. **Feng Lin** has been named assistant professor in the Department of Chemistry, College of Science at Virginia Tech. **Christopher Franck** has been named assistant professor in the Department of Statistics at Virginia Tech. **Lee Hawthorne** has been named chief of staff and **Robin Jones** has been named executive director at Virginia

## Have a career announcement?

Send announcements to [news@vbFRONT.com](mailto:news@vbFRONT.com). Photos should be color, 300dpi. A contact / source must be provided. Inclusions are not guaranteed and all submissions are subject to editing.



Dunay



Johnson

Tech's Student Affairs. **Robert Dunay** of Virginia Tech's College of Architecture and Urban Studies received



Gramacy

the William C. Noland Medal by the American Institute of Architects Virginia. **Leah Johnson** has been named assistant professor of analytics in the Department of



Taylor

Statistics at Virginia Tech. **Robert Gramacy** has been named professor of complex stochastic modeling in the Department of Statistics at Virginia Tech. **Sally Taylor**



Childs

has been named assistant professor of entomology and Extension specialist at Virginia Tech. **Lauren Childs** has been named assistant professor in the

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# Career FRONT



Sengupta



Jones

**Carol Gilbert** of Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine received the Arnold P. Gold Foundation Humanism in Medicine award.



Haskell



Pálsson

Management of the Pamplin College of Business at Virginia Tech.



Crow

**Cecelia Crow** has been named executive director of marketing at Hollins University.



Mosely-Hobbs

Department of Mathematics in the College of Science at Virginia Tech. **Srijan Sengupta** has been named professor in the Department of Statistics at Virginia Tech. **Eyvindur Pálsson** has been named assistant professor in the Department of Mathematics at Virginia Tech. **Kevin Jones** has been appointed director of the Business Diversity Center in the Department of



Pastor

**John Pastor** has been named director of communications at Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute.

## CULTURE FRONT

**Issac Rife** of Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce received the Virginia Association of Chamber Executives scholarship to the VACCE Institute.



Mylum



Gilbert

The Smithfield-Preston Foundation that operates Historic Smithfield Plantation



Petrine



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Quigley

**Kerri Mosely-Hobbs; Paul Mylum; Debbie Petrine; Dr. Paul Quigley; and Kathleen Curtis Wilson.**

**Mike McEvoy and Gary Robertson,** executive directors of the Western Virginia Water Authority, received the Livability Vision in Leadership



Wilson

on the grounds of Virginia Tech, has added six new members to its board: **Dr. Jean Haskell;**

Award by the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission and Partnership for a Livable Roanoke.

**Daniel Foutz** has been named president of Virginia Amateur Sports Inc.

**Lee Clark** has been named chief executive officer



Clark

of the Roanoke Rescue Mission.

*Compiled by Tom Field*

“ ”

Design Thinking is human-centered, and this studio provides students with strategies to gain empathy — Page 60



all of us at the FRONT wish each of you a joyous holiday season and a most prosperous new year



Foundation for Roanoke Valley

## Grandin Theatre's Film Lab project

*And, we're rolling*

**Grandin Theatre** received a \$15,000 grant awarded by Foundation for Roanoke Valley for a pilot film lab project by local high school students.

*LU+CVCC=DE*

**Liberty University** and **Central Virginia Community College** have signed a Dual Enrollment agreement, allowing up to 50 students to enroll at both schools within credit requirements.

*2 hours to eat and shop*

**Downtown Roanoke, Inc.** offers a parking validation pilot program from November 1 to January 31 that gives a 2-hour parking pass at four designated garages downtown, one coupon per customer per day; about 30 retail merchants and 40 restaurants offer the voucher [ list at

downtownroanoke.org/get-around/park-dri ].

*Southside park*

Construction on **Southern Virginia Multimodal Park**, a new 800-acre redevelopment site in Hurt, will begin in 2017; the business park is developed by Samet Corp., and involves collaboration from Hurt Partners LLC and Pittsylvania County economic development.

*La vida caliente*

**Tuco's** tequila and taco bar has opened in downtown Roanoke at West Station.

*We're number 1*

A business could claim the distinction of being "number 1" if it wins the new leasing opportunity put out to bid by Roanoke City for its scenic and historic **Firehouse**

**No. 1**, located on prime downtown property; proposals are accepted until the 2pm deadline on Feb. 1, 2017.

*Cool stuff*

**Emisshield**, a ceramic nanoparticle thermally-enhanced materials technology company at Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, is a participant in a \$7 million Euro grant to study heat transfer and greenhouse gas emissions.

*Mini-business camp*

**The Business Hub**, a new collaboration site for multiple business tenants, is opening in Grandin Village in Roanoke; a renovation of existing building and scheduled for fall 2017 opening.

*Animal control*

**Mountain View Humane** reached a milestone in

November as the clinic performed its 50,000th spay/neuter operation on a cat; the non-profit clinic with offices in Christiansburg and Roanoke offers low cost, high volume spay/neuter surgeries to dogs and cats throughout the region.

*Five more steps to climb*

Virginia continues to retain its business-friendly status, moving up one ranking from last year to 6th place in **Forbe's Best States for Business** annual list; the state has consistently ranked high, including the top positions in recent years.

*Jerry's biz*

A new School of Business building is being constructed at **Liberty University**; expected to open by fall 2018, built by Lynchburg's English Construction,

and housing a Center for Entrepreneurship in the 78,000 square foot facility.

*Slick award*

**Advance Auto Parts** was given the 2016 Vendor of the Year by Grease Monkey International, an automotive maintenance franchise based in Denver, CO.

*JMU's Inn*

**Hotel Madison** and **The Shenandoah Valley Conference Center** is expected to open by the second quarter of 2018; the \$34 million project is under construction in Harrisonburg, includes a 230-room hotel and a conference center owned by and drawing business

from James Madison University.

*Second nest*

**The Bird Cage** women's clothing and fashion boutique in Salem has opened a second location at 21 Franklin Street in downtown Roanoke.

*Hall pass*

**Hall Associates** commercial real estate has been acquired by its current president and 31-year associate Stuart Meredith.

*We're number 202*

**202 Market** building in downtown Roanoke is for sale; the popular site and city market landmark

*Have an announcement about your business?*

Send announcements to **news@vbFRONT.com**  
 A contact / source must be provided. Inclusions are not guaranteed and all submissions are subject to editing.

is listed at \$2.8 million and has housed multiple retail operations over the years, the past 14 being a restaurant venue and nightclub for the current owner.

*More living at VT*

**Sturbridge Square** rental complex on University City Blvd. in Blacksburg will be deconstructed and redeveloped with townhouses and apartment buildings, expanding its capacity

to 441 units, pending rezoning approval.

*Cluck, cluck*

**The Brown Hen**, a breakfast and lunch take-out and small dine-in restaurant has opened at the corner spot on College Ave. and Main St. in Salem.

*GO really went*

**GO Outside Festival** in Roanoke experienced



Courtesy of Downtown Harrisonburg

Rendering of Hotel Madison/Shenandoah Valley Conference Center

# FRONT NETWORK



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a 20 percent increase in attendance (over 30,000 people in three days), according to a report by the Roanoke Regional Partnership and Roanoke Outside Festival; other milestones included a sold-out tent glamping; 20,000 beer consumption, and 120 vendors.

---

*Gluten free desserts*

**Corbin's Confections**, a bakery specializing in sweets for people who suffer with gluten and other food allergies, has opened on Main Street in downtown Salem.



**Corbin's Confections**

---

*right-to-work not enshrined*

Virginia's status as a "right-to-work" state (where participation in a union may not be a condition for employment) did not change after the Nov. 8 election, but a constitutional amendment on the ballot to preserve that provision did not pass.

---

*Cutting down homework excuses*

**Montgomery County Public School** buses will serve as WiFi internet service delivery hotspots in selected rural areas during after school hours and overnight in a pilot program especially

directed for improving student accessibility.

---

*'62 alumna gives big*

**Hollins University** received a \$20 million pledge for an unrestricted endowment from the Elizabeth Hall McDonnell and James McDonnell charitable trust; a contribution marking the university's largest single gift assurance in its 175 years.

---

*Not as trapped*

The new I-581 interchange at the south end of **Valley**

**View Mall** opened the week of Thanksgiving in time for increased holiday shopping traffic.

---

*Network growth*

**Lumos Networks Corp** has signed an agreement to acquire Raleigh, NC-based Clarity Communications Group by the first quarter of 2017; a deal that would expand the network to a seven state region.

---

*Turning later*

**Apex Clean Energy** announced a delay in its production of the

Rocky Forge 25-turbine windmill farm on North Mountain in Botetourt County; now slated for the end of 2018.

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*Nonprofit and security degrees*

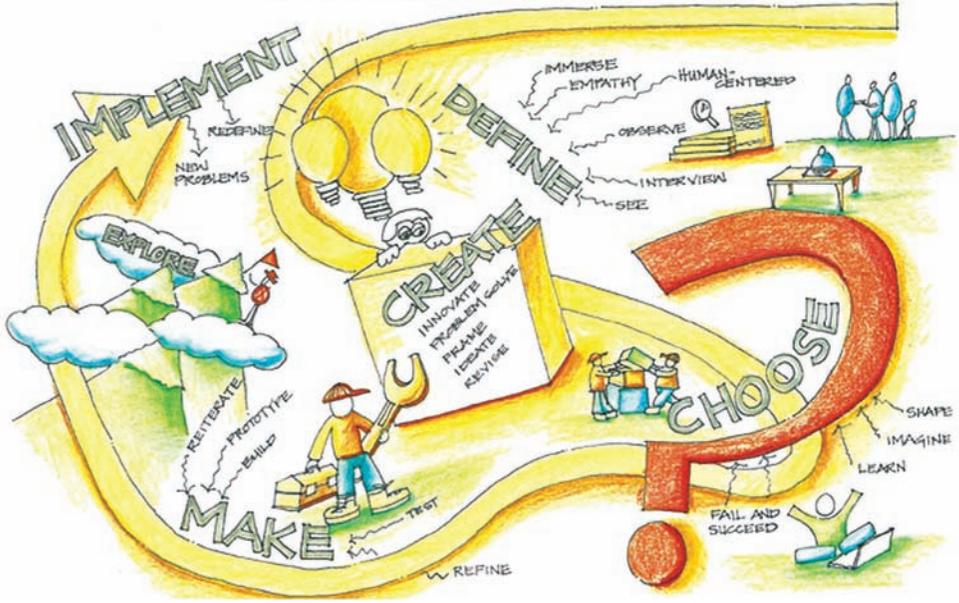
**Virginia Tech** will offer a new master's degree in nonprofit and nongovernmental organizational management and a new doctoral degree in security governance by the fall of 2017, pending SCHE approval.

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*RCompiled by Tom Field*

**Additional FRONT Notes posted online at [moreFRONT.blogspot.com](http://moreFRONT.blogspot.com). Read extended versions of items listed above, plus photos and many more current listings each day on the moreFRONT blog, also available by link at [vbFRONT.com](http://vbFRONT.com).**

# DESIGN THINKING



## Design Thinking: a unique degree >

### Executive Summary:

*As an academic program name, Design Thinking might be difficult to grasp; but the whole objective is to provide clarity and get to practical answers.*

### By Ashlyn Davidson

When you think of the word 'design' what comes to mind? Interior design, fashion design or graphic design may have popped in your head. What if we asked you to start with a blank slate and open your mind to a different type of design? We are talking about design thinking – a unique area of academia that teaches students to combine creative and multifaceted design methodologies to solve complex problems. Radford University (RU) is one of the few schools in the country to offer such a degree, which is changing the way professionals look at their jobs and the world around them.

RU began its Masters of Fine Arts (MFA) in Design Thinking program in 2012. Faculty at the university saw a need to give students a degree opportunity that allowed them to

understand complex problems, gain empathy for stakeholders who are affected by the problem, and generate innovative and creative solutions. Unlike other master programs that are tailored to a specific area of interest such as business administration or engineering, Design Thinking enrolls students from a variety of industries including admissions, recruiting, and marketing. A background in design is not necessary to enroll in the program.

Dr. Joan Dickinson, MFA in Design Thinking Coordinator, explained the four studios the 60 credit program is broken up into. "In Studio 1, students learn techniques that teach them brainstorming and creative thinking. These exercises stretch the student's mind to help them generate innovative solutions. In Studio 2, the focus is on observing human behavior," Dr. Dickinson explained. "Design Thinking is human-centered, and this studio provides students with strategies to gain empathy. Studio 3 examines understanding strategies and in Studio 4, the focus is on making. An important component of design thinking is quick and rapid prototyping (i.e., making). Prototyping allows designers and stakeholders to use the idea, test it, and determine its viability."

Alnea Miskiv, a student currently enrolled in the program, reflected on how much she has gained from the courses she has taken thus

far. “The MFA in Design Thinking program started off as a professional development career advancement. By the end of my first year, it became much more of a personal development,” Miskiv shared. “The strategies we learn in Design Thinking are advantageous professionally and personally. I can’t tell you how truly rewarding it has been to be a part of the program.”

The benefits of a MFA in Design Thinking don’t stop once graduation rolls around. Students can take the lessons learned and apply them to a variety of situations in their personal and professional lives. “I believe the strategies we teach are very sustainable,” Dr. Dickinson explained. “We teach strategies that dig deep into the problems faced by organizations through human centered techniques and we teach ways to address these complex problems through understanding and innovation.”

Students have the opportunity to work on a variety of complex problems (or wicked problems, as Dr. Dickinson referred to them) in design thinking courses. Currently, a student is looking at oncology units to see if patients receiving chemotherapy become more stressed due to the surrounding environment. Another student, who resides in Indiana, is utilizing design thinking to understand why her home’s downtown area has become depressed, in hopes of proposing solutions for the problem.

## 2 Examples of Problems Addressed by RU's Design Thinking Students

- Do chemotherapy patients suffer more due to the treatment environment?
- How do we revitalize our depressed downtown?

RU’s Design Thinking program is a terminal degree, meaning it is similar to a PhD or Doctorate. Many students work towards their degree, which is completed online, while being employed full-time. Currently 30 students are enrolled in the program, and the first student graduated last spring. The degree can be completed in either two or four years, depending if the student is enrolled part-time or full-time. Because coursework is online, students from across the country, including California, Florida and Utah, are enrolled in the program.

Whether your background is in business or fashion, media or teaching, design thinking could have a place in your world. The program takes passionate professors and teams up with eager-to-learn students, resulting in a deeper, unique understanding of how to solve complex problems in today’s world. 



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