



The Department of **Human Nutrition, Foods and Exercise**

# Happenings

Volume 8: Fall 2014

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## From the department head

Hello from HNFE!

This fall, we are saying goodbye to two employees who have a combined 60 years of knowledge, experience, and wisdom: Sherry Saville and Mary McFerren. Sherry (p. 7) has been with the department since 1981 and has worked for nine department heads (including three interim heads). Mary (p. 6) spent 18 years with Extension as an agent and nine as the Family Nutrition Program director; a national search for her replacement is underway. Sherry and Mary have been invaluable to our programs and have made a positive influence on thousands of people over the years. We wish them a well-deserved retirement!



Matt Hulver

Our faculty numbers are growing. This fall, we welcomed three new assistant professors (p. 8); Samantha Harden, an exercise extension specialist; Valisa Hedrick in clinical nutrition; and Vivica Kraak in food and nutrition policy. In addition, we are interviewing for an adult nutrition extension specialist. The department also has approximately 60 graduate and 1,000 undergraduate students.

We are in the process of updating our strategic plan, so we are looking at past plans while assessing our accomplishments and developing objectives. As part of this, we plan to convene faculty, student, and alumni focus groups, and we want your input as we decide on our new goals. If you would like to be part of the alumni focus group, email us at [hnfeinfo@vt.edu](mailto:hnfeinfo@vt.edu).

Please stop by and see us anytime you are in town!



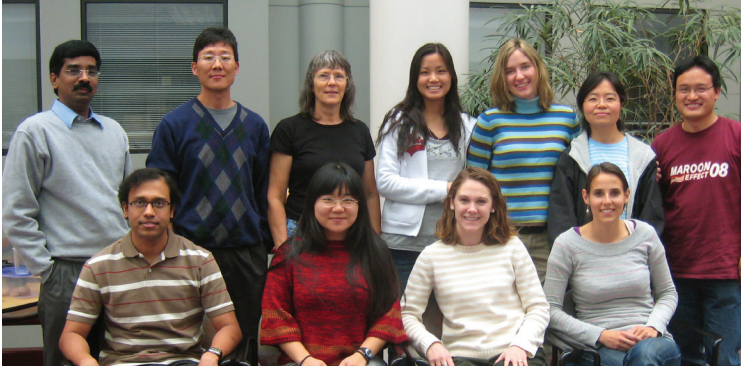
Follow our Facebook posts,  
job postings, Pins, and  
Tweets!

## Eat Smart, Move More

**First Lady of Virginia Dorothy McAuliffe kicked off Extension’s Family Nutrition Program’s “Eat Smart, Move More” campaign in August!** One goal of the campaign is to show children and their families that eating nutrient-dense foods, like fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, as well as being active, are not just good health choices — they are socially respected behaviors. A second aim is to share the message that eating nutritious foods helps athletes achieve their goals on baseball fields, basketball courts, and anywhere else they have to depend on their bodies to perform well. Learn more at [www.movemore.ext.vt.edu](http://www.movemore.ext.vt.edu).

**If you see a “Eat Smart, Move More” ad, snap a picture and tweet it to win!**  
**#esmmfotocontest #VAKidsesmm**





Dongmin (second from left, top row) and his lab.

## Innovative research leads to disease cure and treatment

During the last ten years, Dongmin Liu has established a well-funded research lab that has discovered groundbreaking and novel compounds that may treat, and possibly cure, diabetes, hypertension, and vascular disease. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, these are some of the most costly, yet preventable, diseases in our country.

The National Institutes of Health funded his innovative research on genistein (a food-derived compound) to prevent diabetes, and Dongmin believes continued exploration will lead to clinical studies. A patent is also pending on his genistein compound that enhances its anti-diabetic action to prevent type 2 diabetes.

In addition, his research on Dehydroepiandrosterone, or DHEA, led to the discovery that this hormone has a specific cell surface receptor and acts as a survival and growth factor for endothelial cells. These results show that DHEA, which has been available as a supplement for a long time, also has a protective effect on the vascular system.

He also examines other natural compounds such as cocoa, green tea, and soy isoflavones to treat disease; he has aspirations to start a National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine research center at Virginia Tech. Last year, he successfully launched an “Integrated Health and Wellness” study abroad program by partnering with Beijing University of Chinese Medicine in China. This experience encourages students to pursue health-related careers and alternative medicine techniques.

Dongmin is developing an internationally known research and study program that will make a difference to millions of people all over the world who are suffering from diseases.

## Can an app motivate us to exercise?

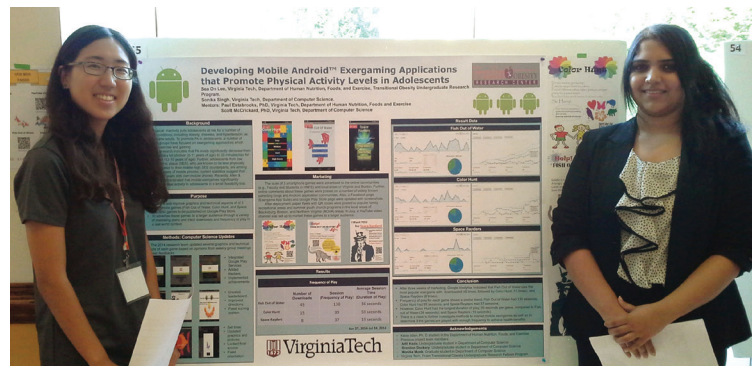
After graduating in May with dual degrees in HNFE and biochemistry and a minor in chemistry, Sea On Lee spent last summer as a Translational Obesity Undergraduate Research (TOUR) scholar working with Paul Estabrooks in HNFE and Scott McCrickard from computer science. She and her research partner Sonika Singh developed exergaming mobile gaming apps that promote physical activity.

Lee’s project continued the work of Kacie Allen (Ph.D. ‘13) whose research was pioneering in the use of apps to improve adolescent exercise behavior. Lee and Singh further developed three of Allen’s prototype mobile apps, “Fish out of Water,” “Color Hunt,” and “Space Rayders” which combine exercising and gaming. They are all available in the Google Play Store. Data

showed that users continued to play after downloading, and their research showed the mobile exergaming approach was a meaningful step towards healthy adolescent lifestyles.

Lee entered Virginia Tech as a biochemistry student, but the turning point in her college career was the class Introduction to HNFE, which made her realize that the biomedical approach to human health can be mechanical, while nutritional treatment seems more holistic. This different approach inspired her to study links between nutrition and metabolism.

While Lee hasn’t decided what her next career step will be, she knows that both nutrition and metabolism will figure prominently. We know her future will be a bright one!



Lee and Singh at the TOUR presentation last spring.



# HNFE students beyond the classroom



Giraldo-Herrera (second from right) in Costa Rica with fellow triage team members and local children.

**Daniel Giraldo-Herrera**, who is also majoring in biochemistry, chose HNFE because it offers a distinct perspective on healthcare and a solid foundation for pre-med students.

Two classes — Nutrition Across the Life Span and Introduction to HNFE — impacted his career focus when he learned about opportunities outside of the classroom. Giraldo-Herrera was able to spend two weeks participating in triage teams in Costa Rica, which initiated his awareness in the healthcare of undeserved populations.

Last summer, Giraldo-Herrera experienced six weeks of intensive academic enrichment and exposure to healthcare topics with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Summer Medical and Dental Education Program. The insights he gained and connections made will be helpful one day when he moves toward a career in medicine or science.



Ashkan in Ghana with the Medical Brigades in January 2014.

HNFE junior **Ashkan Katirai**, who is also completing minors in interdisciplinary engineering and science, wants to learn human biology and how the body works.

His favorite college experience so far was traveling to Ghana with the Medical Brigades at Virginia Tech; the group set up a clinic in Nanaben on the Cape Coast and saw more than 500 patients. Medical Brigades is part of Global Brigades, the world's largest student-led global health and sustainable development organization. This experience motivated Katirai to pursue a global health internship in Honduras, and he plans to go to Panama this winter on another brigade.

Katirai plans to attend physician assistant school because of his interest in patient care and interaction, and the ability to change specialties.



Birmingham (front) in his semi-final event in the 19-27 expert class.

BMX bicycle motorcross racing has taken senior **Daniel Birmingham** all over the world. In the last six years, he's finished numerous times in the top 20 in the nation in the expert class on his 20" bike. He also won many national races for his age group, including top 10, top five, and number one in the nation in the cruiser class (24" wheel base). Before coming to Virginia Tech, he qualified for, and competed in, the world championships in Denmark on California's 2008 Olympic-replica track.

Racing—and training to compete—has given Daniel an appreciation for the human body and what has to be done for it to function properly. He has developed his own training and nutrition programs for himself and other racers, and while his career path isn't settled yet, one day he wants to help people adopt healthy lifestyles.

The Dan River region in Danville, Virginia, is one of the most health-disparate regions in the commonwealth and has high rates of unemployment coupled with low rates of educational attainment. HNFE Doctoral student **Ramine Alexander** is helping the region change

in more ways than physical health and nutrition. Ramine and HNFE Assistant Professor Jamie Zoellner, along with marketing's Julie Ozanne and Emily Moscatto, collaborated with Dan River organizations and high school students to take photos of the beauty, diversity, and positivity the area has to offer. These photos were then showcased at a region-wide event to raise community awareness, pride, and create a dialogue with residents. This traveling exhibit will continue to promote change when it is presented to area high schools, the Boys and Girls Club, and Dan River community members and policy makers.

Watch more at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFKBYv6GyM0&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFKBYv6GyM0&feature=youtu.be)



Mark Aron from Danville's River City TV interviews Ramine.

# Ryland Webb: Africa on my mind

Ryland Webb, who retired in 1996 after spending 33 years with the university, was born in Africa to missionary parents Dick and Doreen Webb. To this day, the 13 years he spent in Africa still brings a smile to his face as he recalls the many adventures he and his two brothers Richard and Stanley were fortunate to have. If you discounted the numerous biting insects, poisonous snakes, and army ants, the environment was safe and exciting to grow up in. After all, how many kids have pet monkeys and chew on raw sugar cane for a snack?

In the 1930s, raising a family in Africa created many unique challenges. Communication was limited to letter writing, and both the nearest hospital and missionary school were three hours away over very rough roads. Families had to be both self-sufficient and healthy in order to survive. Ryland's father would hunt for the occasional antelope, while fruits and vegetables were grown in their orchard and garden. Water was drawn from a well to fill a 50-gallon drum for household use. Chickens provided eggs and eventually, a tasty Sunday supper, while other basic staples could be purchased nearby.

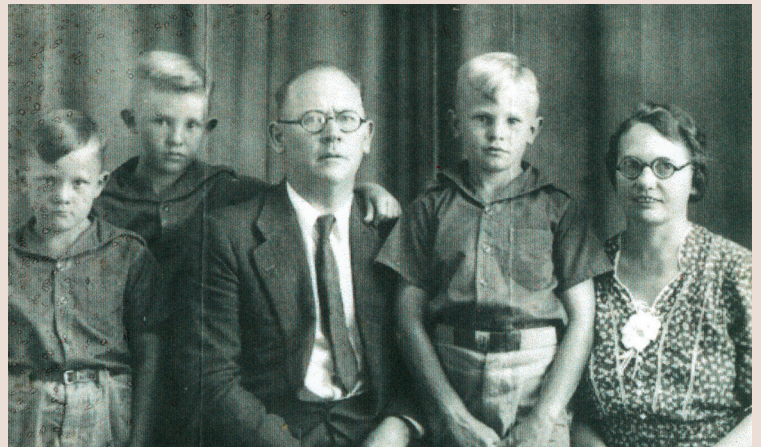
Ryland said they didn't know that electricity, running water, and telephones even existed, and what doesn't exist can't be missed. It was normal to go outside to use the "Johnny house," or pull the chamber pot from under the bed at night. In the evenings, kerosene lanterns filled the house with light, and the brothers enjoyed listening to their mother read, or entertained themselves with games of chess. Most nights, their father would hook up a short-wave radio to his car battery and listen as BBC reported on the unrest in Europe. Bathing was an adventure before bedtime, as the tub was filled with water heated on the cook stove and pulled near the fireplace. A daily dose of quinine protected them from deadly malaria, and at night, bed nettings sheltered the boys from mosquito bites as well as thunder, lightning, and monsters!

So while America was enduring the Great Depression and Europe was in the throes of war, life in Bailundo seemed a million miles away, in another era. It was safe, inviting, loving, and home.

Starting at the age of seven, the brothers left home to attend a missionary boarding school. Each summer, Dick picked them up in his old beach wagon and brought them back home where the boys enjoyed relaxing to games of tennis and soccer, as well as fishing the native way—by throwing poisonous root mush in the water. It never entered Ryland's mind that eating fish killed with poison might not be a good idea, but if the natives did it, so did the Webb boys!



The Webb home in Bailundo with its original thatched roof. The house provided a safe haven for the family and will always be home to Ryland.



Stanley, Ryland, Dick, Richard, and Doreen Webb, circa 1938.

The brothers had to return to the states for high school because the nearest secondary school was too far away. So, in 1944, Richard traveled with missionaries to Allendale in southern Illinois to live with their Aunt Emma. Ryland and Stanley followed the next year with their parents after the war ended, when travel was safe again. The brothers quickly adapted to electricity, telephones, and flushing toilets, but not so much to girls, who seemed scary at first, but Ryland got over that feeling quickly! The brothers excelled at both sports and schoolwork; all three became valedictorians of their graduating class. The family enjoyed 1945 together as their first furlough in nine years due to the war, but after Dick and Doreen returned to Africa, the family never lived together again.



Check out more pictures on our Facebook page:  
[www.facebook.com/VTHNFE](http://www.facebook.com/VTHNFE).

After graduating from the University of Illinois in 1954, Ryland served in the army for two years, and afterwards, visited his parents in Africa for six months; this was the last time he would set foot on African soil. After returning to the states, Ryland got his Ph.D. in nutritional biochemistry and accepted a research position with American Cyanamid in New York. In 1963, he joined Virginia Tech's Department of Biochemistry and ten years later, he became the department head with human nutrition and foods.



Ryland still lives in Blacksburg with his wife Wanda; they celebrated their 56th wedding anniversary this past May. They have three children, Stanley, Linda, and Susan, and six grandchildren. If you'd like to say hello to him, email him at [ryland@vt.edu](mailto:ryland@vt.edu).

For many years, Ryland traveled to Haiti, the Philippines, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic to work with applied nutrition programs. As the university coordinator of Haitian Programs, he worked with the Haitian Bureau of Nutrition and also initiated programs with Tech faculty in sociology, forestry, and horticulture. Their collaborative goal was to help native populations learn to use what they readily had available and teach them sustainable agriculture practices.

During his years with the department, student enrollment grew rapidly, the exercise component was added, and the hospitality and tourism option expanded and developed into a separate department. Ryland thoroughly enjoyed his research, but he particularly loved working with graduate students and teaching, especially when he taught Foods and People, which is now taught as Foods, Nutrition, and Exercise. His proudest moment as department head was awarding son Stanley his diploma in 1982.

Africa made a deep and lasting impression on all of the Webb family. Two years after retiring, Ryland's father quietly passed away, his life's work completed. Years later, Ryland spoke a few words to his mother in the Angolian native language of Umbundu, which brought her briefly back from the throes of Alzheimer's. In that moment, she turned, smiled, and dropped to her knees to pray. She died in 1993 at the age of 97.

Today, every conversation between brothers Stanley and Ryland can easily take them back to Africa, as if it was only yesterday and a cherished memory away. Africa is forever in their hearts and souls.



Ryland (third from left, top row) with his biochemistry colleagues in the early 1960s.



Ryland in Haiti in a Mothercraft Center, which was a concept of training mothers in simple nutritional practices, circa 1977.



One of the last pictures of the Webb brothers: Richard (who passed away in October 2013), Ryland, and Stanley.



## Mary McFerren: Extension agent extraordinaire retires

In 1987, Mary McFerren had three major milestones: she turned 40, was hired as an agent with Virginia Cooperative Extension in King George, and began living in the same community for more than two years. Living in a military family had her moving every year or two, so she thoroughly enjoyed being in one place long enough to develop strong working relationships, as well as community ties and connections. Her dedication to Extension enabled her to recruit hundreds of volunteers, including her family and friends, for countless programs, and she is proud that her own children developed lifelong leadership skills from their many positive 4-H experiences. She even raised funds to send kids to 4-H camp, which was always an adventure for everyone involved. Mary was excited to get these kids out of the city and public housing in hopes of changing their perspective about life and what was possible.

In 1996, Mary became an area coordinator for the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education. Both of these programs are designed to assist limited-resource audiences with nutritionally sound diets, contribute to personal development, and improve family diets and nutritional well-being. The programs typically employ Family Nutrition Program assistants with community connections who can relate well to the target population. Mary said, “seeing our Family Nutrition Program assistants, and our audience, gain knowledge, and put this into practice while improving health outcomes was very rewarding.”

In 2004, she moved to Blacksburg to work with Ruby Cox, the department’s Extension state coordinator, and began her doctorate in education. When Ruby retired in 2005, Mary was appointed to the state coordinator role, which she has held for the last nine years. Now, after 27 years of service to Extension, Mary is retiring this fall, and said “the partnerships and collaborations that I have been a part of have given me a better appreciation for making Virginia a great place to live and work. My life has been changed for the better because of all of the opportunities I have had. As I retire, I thank all of my friends and colleagues for giving me the opportunity to work with you.”

Mary’s influence no doubt enriched the lives of countless people throughout her career. Her retirement plans include “family, fun, and travel, as well as spending time with my four wonderful granddaughters!”

Mary, HNFE thanks you for your service to the department and to all of Virginia. We will miss you, and we wish you a well-deserved retirement!

Elena Serrano will serve as acting director until the position is filled; a national search is underway.



Mary (left) working with kids at Café Camp at the 4-H Center in Front Royal, Virginia.



“Erin go bragh!” (Ireland forever) Mary recently visited this beautiful country and plans to continue her travels after retirement.

In 2013, Virginia 4-H received a Youth Voice: Youth Choice 4-H Healthy Living grant to provide training and resources to 4-H and Family and Consumer

Science Extension Agents who serve low-income audiences. Teen Cuisine was developed in 2011 and focuses on key components of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, including MyPlate, the food label, sources of fat, whole grains, and nutritious snacks. FNP and VCE have a grant funded by Wal-Mart to expand Teen Cuisine adoption within limited resource adolescents throughout Virginia. The grant will also allow for funds to develop and test a crock-pot cooking program for mothers of young children.



## Sherry Saville: Fountain of knowledge and support says goodbye

Sherry Saville has been with the department since July 30, 1981. Not many people can say they have experienced what she did, or know what she knows!

In her 33 plus years in the department, she worked for six department heads: Ryland Webb, Judy Driskell, Eleanor Schlenker, Mike Houston, Susan Hutson, and Matt Hulver, and three interim department heads: S. J. Ritchey, Gerald Jubb, and Joe Marcy. She saw undergraduate enrollment increase from less than 100 students to today's 1,000, and she watched the graduate program evolve dramatically as well.

During the late 1980's, Sherry lived through the challenges of the Wallace Hall addition being built while she was pregnant with her son. Many days the closest bathroom was across the street in Engle! She also experienced the joys of a department merger when Exercise Science joined Human Nutrition and Foods in the early 1990's.

Sherry worked in every area of the department — Extension, teaching, research, and administration — and in numerous locations, including the Wallace Annex basement, Chicken Hill, and of course Wallace Hall.

During her many years, she has seen faculty, staff, and students come and go, and she still knows where most of them are today, a remarkable feat! She has kept a good attitude while providing invaluable support to thousands of students; she laughed often, gave out many hugs, and shed more than a few tears.

"HNFE has been my work home for 33 years, and I have enjoyed working with everyone. Upon retirement, I plan to continue to take care of my parents, work part-time, and enjoy my son and my life. It's not goodbye, but see you later!" she said.

The department thanks Sherry for her dedication, many years of service, and for always being there. Everyone who worked with her knows how special she is. The department will really miss her, but we plan on "seeing her later!"



Sherry Saville

## HNFE welcomes.....



**Valisa Hedrick** (Ph.D. '11, R.D.) is the assistant professor of clinical nutrition. She has a teaching and research appointment and her program will focus on the development and translation of dietary assessment methodology for the prevention and treatment of obesity and related comorbidities.



**Samantha Harden** (Ph.D. '12) is the assistant professor and exercise Extension specialist. She has an Extension and research appointment and her program will focus on the translation of evidence-based physical activity interventions into their intended practice settings.



**Vivica Kraak**, Ph.D., is the assistant professor of food and nutrition policy. She has a teaching and research appointment and her program will focus on U.S. food and nutrition policy, improving food marketing practices aimed at children and adolescents, and translational nutrition research relevant to policy-makers and decision makers in different contexts.

### New staff and project coordinators:

**Nabil Boutagy** (Ph.D. '14) is a postdoctoral associate working with Matt Hulver.

**Jennifer Helms** is a project coordinator working with Elena Serrano on the USDA-funded project Food, Fun, and Families.

**Michael O'Rourke** is a clinical nurse working with Kevin Davy.

**Kris Osterberg** (Ph.D. '14) is a clinical research coordinator working with Kevin Davy.

**Brianna Richie** is a research assistant working with the behavioral faculty group in Danville, Virginia.

**Kathryn Wilson** is a postdoctoral associate working with Paul Estabrooks.

**Nicole Young** is a research assistant working with Fabio Almeida on the "diaBEAT-it" study at VT Riverside.

Goodbye to **Elitsa Ananieva-Stoyanova, Jamshid Davoodi, Erin Krzeski, and John Pownall.**

# Once upon a time, there was an emperor penguin... and other tales of metabolic nutrition

By Christina McIntyre  
(M.S. '95, B.S. '88)

Forrest Thye was very passionate about teaching metabolic nutrition, a challenging course where many students were more proud of a C in his class than in any A earned elsewhere.

Dr. Thye taught us to understand how what we eat becomes energy through glycolysis, the Krebs's Cycle, and the Electron Transport Chain. He was a talented storyteller, and his stories helped us remember elements of metabolic pathways. How could we forget the emperor penguin recalling how his adaptive metabolism allowed him to endure starvation as he incubated the egg during his mate's long journey to feed? Remember the hibernating bear and the metabolically active brown fat? I'll always remember the lesson behind the stories!

He also cared about major social issues that are still important today, such as childhood obesity, greenhouse gases, and physical inactivity and the American diet. Recent news about the depletion of western aquifers had me recalling a conversation we had in the mid 1980s about water depletion in the west. Dr. Thye knew this would be a reality someday, and now, ground water is being exhausted to the point of no return; these

*"Dr. Thye was an incredible teacher. I vividly remember his explanations of the most complex nutritional biochemistry pathways; he actually made them practical and memorable."*

— Dustin Flannery, B.S. '07

*"I appreciated Dr. Thye making sure we learned how to apply basic metabolic nutrition pathways to real-life situations pertaining to nutrition. He did not want you to simply memorize these and repeat them back verbatim; he wanted to make sure you actually knew what the functions of the pathways were, and how they related to other mechanisms. His metabolic nutrition class was truly one of the hardest — but most rewarding and memorable — classes I have taken."*

— Valisa Respress Hedrick,  
Ph.D. '11, B.S. '06

*"Dr. Thye provided me a critical understanding of the intricate and dynamic nature of various metabolic pathways across multiple different organ systems. I still utilize this knowledge on a daily basis in my current research and teaching program."*

— Espen Spangenburg,  
Ph.D. '00, M.S. '97



Former graduate student Rick Lewis (left, currently at the University of Georgia) and Forrest, circa 1985.

aquifers will take thousands of years to regenerate.

Many of us ended up working in his lab long before the Boyer Report made undergraduate research a national initiative. For almost four decades, Dr. Thye engaged all students in undergraduate research in his methods of human nutritional assessment lab. Regardless of where we went next — graduate school, medical school, pharmacy, physical therapy, dietetic internship, etc. — his lab made assessment personal.

Dr. Thye is still highly engaged with his community, his church, and his "little slice of Iowa" in Blacksburg. He has the largest personal compost pile I have ever seen, and

*"I took Dr. Thye's Nutrition and Metabolism in the fall of 1986, the very first semester I was at Virginia Tech. I remember how hard it was; yet I did well in it. I still smile today as I recall how he kept us awake in class with entertaining questions, such as: "How can a bear sleep for four months without urinating?"*

— Ingolf Gruen, Ph.D. '93

his garden not only feeds his family, but also others in the community through the local food bank.

Dr. Thye's influence on my life, and I'm sure countless other students, will never be forgotten.

Forrest Thye was a devoted teacher to both undergraduate and graduate students for over 36 years. The department has an endowed scholarship for Thye that is almost at the endowed level; when it reaches this amount, it will be used to help students achieve their educational goals in human nutrition, foods, and exercise. To designate a gift to the scholarship, use the university's secure giving site at:

<https://webapps.es.vt.edu/givingto/academic/gift> and designate "Forrest Thye Endowed Scholarship," or contact Ashleigh Waddle Garnes in the CALS Development Office at 540-231-0391.



## Welcome to the Dietetic Internship Class of 2015!

### Northern Virginia



Back row (from left): Doris Farrell, Min Krishnamurthy, Derek Lipton, Stephanie Johnson, Hannah Hallgarth, and Laurie Van Dyk. Front row (from left): Robin Anglin, Elena Vanderveldt, and Kelly Magoffin.

### Blacksburg



Back row (from left): Natalie Barbaro, Jordan McDonald, Julie Knopp, Kirby Moir, and Lisa Fryda. Front row (from left): Grace Wilburn, Katie Soriano, Lena Husnay, and Kathleen Poole.

Congratulations to the 2014 Virginia Tech Dietetic Internship graduates who are now working in acute care, clinical dietetics, long-term care, nutrition communications, wellness, renal, and education. Program Directors are Carol Papillon and Amy LaFalce (Northern Virginia location).

## Good luck to our graduate students who completed their degrees in 2014!

### M.S. graduates

Karissa Grier, BCS, "Feasibility of an Experiential Community Garden and Nutrition Program for Youth Living in Public Housing: Exploring Outcomes from Youth, Parents, and Site Leaders"

Maggie Hooper, CPM, "Selection of an Evidence-Based Pediatric Weight Management Program for the Dan River Region"

Jing Luo, MCS, "Investigating the potential anti-diabetic effect of sulforaphane"

Grace Wilburn, BCS, "Exploring Cross-Sectional Relationships between Health Literacy, Dietary Intake, Physical Activity, and Anthropometric/Biological Variables among Residents in Southwest Virginia"

### Ph.D. graduates:

Nabil Boutagy, CPM, "Probiotic Supplementation and Arterial Stiffness Following High Fat Feeding"

Kyle Creamer, CPM, "Utilizing pQCT & Biomarkers of Bone Turnover to Study Influences of Physical Activity or Bariatric Surgery on Structural & Metabolic Status of Bone"

Kyle Flack, CPM, "Effects of Resistance Training on aged Skeletal Muscle and Mitochondrial Function"

Gabrielle Fundaro, MCS, "Do Probiotics Protect Against the Deleterious Effects of a High-Fat Diet?"

Sarah Misyak, BCS, "Farmers' market access by low income mothers of young children: Barriers and impact on nutrition education programming for Cooperative Extension"

Kris Osterberg, CPM, "The Effect of a Probiotic Supplement on Insulin Sensitivity and Skeletal Muscle Substrate Oxidation during High Fat Feeding"

Elika Shabrokh, MCS, "Mitochondrial Biology in Sporadic Inclusion Body Myositis"

Joey Stevens, MCS, "The Effects of Low-Dose Endotoxin on Glucose Metabolism"

## Say hello to our new graduate students:

### B.S./M.S.

Tessa Englund (Kevin Davy), \*CPM

Caitlyn Hill (Brenda Davy), CPM

Lindsay Kummer (Elena Serrano), \*BCS

Lily Nealon (Madlyn Frisard), CPM

Erin Passaro (Valisa Hedrick), BCS

### M.S.

Chris Angiletta (Matt Hulver), \*MCS

Ali Aziz, CPM

Josh Bostic (Brenda Davy), CPM

Seda Cukurova (Paul Estabrooks), BCS

Aurielle Lowery (Jamie Zoellner), BCS

Lu Liu (Zhiyong Cheng), MCS

Aurielle Lowery (Jamie Zoellner), BCS

Susan Ottey (Mike Goforth), BCS

Emily Pyne (Madlyn Frisard), CPM

Anna Taggart (Paul Estabrooks), BCS

### Ph.D.

Laura Balis (Jamie Zoellner), BCS

Xingbo Dong (Zhiyong Cheng), MCS

Cody Goessl (Fabio Almeida), BCS

Jasmine Hayes (Matt Hulver), CPM

Kristina Jiles (Jennie Hill), BCS

Justin Sperringer (Rob Grange), MCS

Meagan Van Engen (Jennie Hill), BCS

\* **Behavioral and Community Science (BCS)** \***Clinical Physiology and Metabolism (CPM)**  
\* **Molecular and Cellular Science (MCS)**

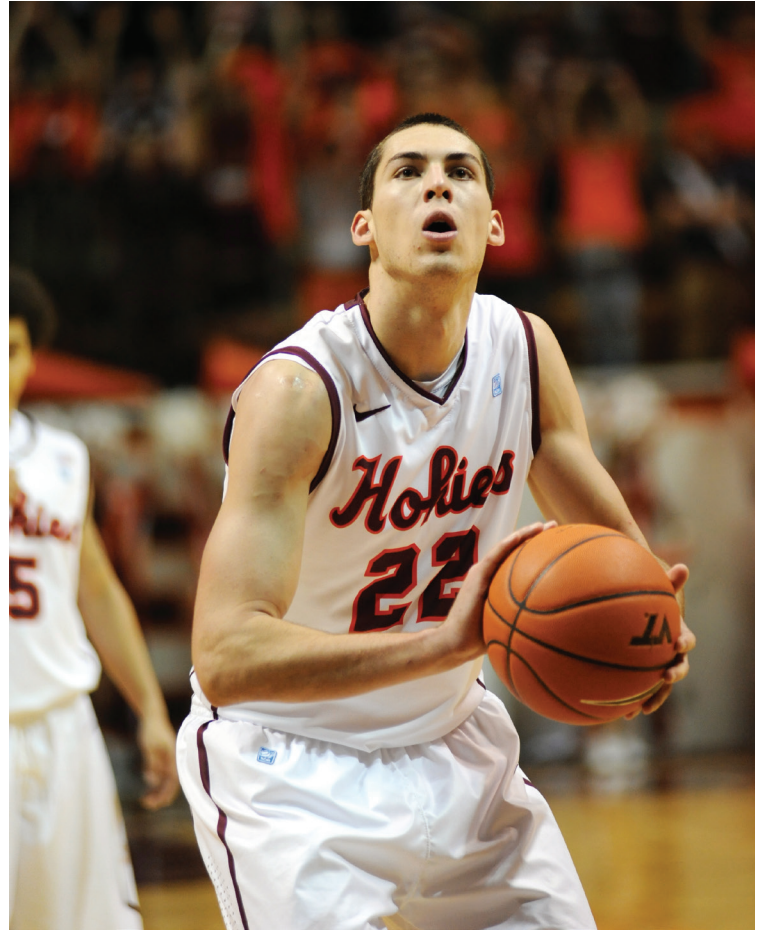
## Awards and honors



Housing and Residence Life recognized **Renee Selberg-Eaton** as a 2014 Favorite Faculty. Selberg-Eaton, the under-graduate program director, teaches Orientation to Human Nutrition, Foods, and Exercise and supervises internships and field studies. She has experience in outpatient physical therapy, high school and collegiate athletics, mental health counseling, teaching, advising, personal training, and group fitness instruction. Selberg-Eaton also participates in the college's Winter Session Study Abroad; students will go abroad again in January as part of the university's Feed the Future initiative.



The Virginia Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics presented **Carol Papillon** with the Distinguished Dietitian of the Year for 2014. This honor is reserved for academy members who demonstrate outstanding service and leadership in the field of dietetics. Papillon, who is the dietetic internship director, has educated and mentored dietetic interns resulting in countless new leaders in dietetics, with all 100 percent of those interns passing their R.D. exam during the first year after graduation. She also has worked in her community to provide nutrition counseling and creating student nutrition counselor positions so that they can learn first-hand counseling techniques.



Senior **Christian Beyer** received the Skelton Award for Academic Excellence in Athletics last spring, the highest designation handed out by the Tech athletics department. Each year, the \$5,000 scholarship is awarded to both a male and female student-athlete who has participated in intercollegiate athletics for at least two seasons and who holds an overall grade-point average of 3.4 or better. Last summer, Beyer went to the Dominican Republic as part of a summer school course, and then he shadowed an oncologist at a hospital in Charlotte, N.C. After he graduates, he plans to attend medical school and become an orthopedic surgeon.

## Alumni class notes

Alumni and former HNFE faculty member **Kathy Hosig** (B.S. '85) was named to Purdue University's 2014 Alumni Hall of Fame. She is an associate professor of population health sciences with the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine. A registered dietician, Hosig also serves as director of the Center for Practice and Research in Public Health at the college.

**Nicholas Todd Fisher** (B.S. '07) graduated from the VCU School of Pharmacy with a doctorate in pharmacy in May 2014. He also was a member of Magna Cum Laude and Rho Chi, the national honorary pharmaceutical society. Election for membership into the society is based on high attainment in scholarship, character, personality, and leadership.

Four recent Dietetic Internship graduates have leadership roles within the Virginia Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

**Kelsey Guth** serves as the consumer protection coordinator, **Alexandra Wahlberg** is an assistant state policy representative, **Laurie Hainley** is public relations chair, and **Carlene Thomas** is a member services chair.



# Creating healthy changes at the national level

Close friends **Katrina (Butner) Piercy** (Ph.D. '10, R.D., ACSM-CES) and **Stephanie Goodwin** (Ph.D. '11, M.P.H. '11, R.D.) who first met in HNFE, now work together in the Division of Prevention Science in the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Katrina is also a dietitian in the United States Public Health Service (USPHS).

Currently, their office has the administrative lead and works closely with USDA's Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion to develop the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA). The DGA forms the basis of all federal nutrition policy, education, outreach, and food assistance programs used by health professionals, nutrition educators, industry, and consumers. Stephanie and Katrina also serve as liaisons for the Healthy People 2020 Nutrition and Weight Status and Physical Activity workgroup, respectively. ODPHP also coordinates the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans (PAG), and Katrina served as the federal lead for the PAG Midcourse Report: Strategies to Increase Physical Activity Among Youth, which was released in 2013.

After completing her Ph.D. in Clinical Exercise Physiology and Nutrition under Bill Herbert and Sharon Nickols-Richardson, Katrina began a dietetic internship at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Her clinical and research background has proven invaluable in translating scientific literature into national policy, then into user-friendly consumer materials. Her background as an exercise physiologist caught the attention of the Acting Deputy U.S. Surgeon General, who tasked her to lead the overhaul of the basic readiness physical fitness requirement for all 6,800 USPHS officers. As the Annual Physical Fitness Test project lead, she oversees a team of nine senior USPHS officers and three interns to review the current scientific evidence and other Uniformed Services physical fitness requirements and make recommendations to senior leadership for implementation next summer. Although Katrina did not plan on a policy-related career, she enjoys being able to positively influence the nation's health.

Katrina continues to be physically active; she enjoys running and biking and has completed 20 half marathons. Last summer, she married fellow alumni Stephen Piercy, whom she met while at Virginia Tech.

After finishing the Virginia Tech Dietetic Internship and working as a clinical dietitian, Stephanie decided to continue her education and earned a M.P.H. in Health Education and a Ph.D. in HNFE under the leadership of Kathy Hosig. Understanding the interplay of research, policy, and practice to improve health, Stephanie then accepted a postdoctoral fellowship in metabolic



Piercy and her husband, Steve, after hiking four days to Machu Picchu, Peru in August 2014.



Goodwin has continued to spend her free time biking, kayaking, and playing the cello; this past summer she and her husband welcomed a baby boy into their family.

science with the NIH's National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. Here, as part of a multi-institute research team, she was the Lead Associate Investigator and studied whole-body metabolism and the regulation of body weight and composition.

Her experiences with the internship, working as a dietitian, and her graduate work all strengthened Stephanie's desire to pursue a career in nutrition policy. She plans to continue a career devoted to translating high-quality nutritional science to improve health, prevent disease, and promote smart public policies.



## Meet alumni Kelly Wilson and Jordan Chang

**Kelly Wilson** and **Jordan Chang** are 2009 HNFE graduates who completed their doctor of physical therapy degrees in 2012 from Shenandoah University. While in physical therapy school, Chang and Wilson used the knowledge and experiences they gained at Virginia Tech to help become successful clinicians.

These close friends now reside in Blacksburg and are directors of their own respective clinics as a part of University Physical Therapy. Chang is the director of the Pearisburg location, while Wilson directs the West Blacksburg clinic. They

work with a wide variety of conditions from such as sports injuries, neurological dysfunction, post-operative rehabilitation, and functional capacity evaluations.

They are also physical therapists for Virginia Tech Athletics and treat athletes from all 19 varsity sports. Throughout the year, Chang and Wilson are in the training room working alongside athletic trainers, physicians, and coaches to get athletes back from injury and onto the playing field. They enjoy representing their alma mater through their chosen profession and are privileged to play an integral role in keeping all Hokie athletes competing healthy and strong.

In his free time, Chang is the team physical therapist for the Ultra and Trail Running Club at Virginia Tech and actively participates in running races ranging from marathons to 100 miles. You can often find him running in the mountains around Blacksburg and spending time with his wife (Kristen Chang, M.S. '11, dietetic internship '12) and their dog. Wilson is also an outdoor enthusiast and enjoys spending her time mountain biking, hiking, kayaking, and traveling to exciting places.

## **Happenings**

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338 Wallace Hall  
Virginia Tech  
Blacksburg, VA 24061  
540-231-6056  
[www.hnfe.vt.edu](http://www.hnfe.vt.edu)

Editor: Sherri Songer [ssonger@vt.edu](mailto:ssonger@vt.edu)  
Contributors: Jordan Chang, Stephanie Goodwin, Christina McIntyre, Mary McFerren, Katrina Piercy, Sherry Saville, Sherri Songer, Ryland Webb, Kelly Wilson

### PLEASE STAY IN TOUCH:

We are interested in knowing what you are doing! Send a class note for the next issue of *Happenings* to [ssonger@vt.edu](mailto:ssonger@vt.edu). Include name, year, degree, employer, current position, and email address. Address changes should be sent to the Virginia Tech Alumni Association: [www.alumni.vt.edu/gateway/index.html](http://www.alumni.vt.edu/gateway/index.html).

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