

NEWS & INFORMATION

Wednesday, April 26, 2017 -- Volume 13, Number 38

 **VirginiaTech**
Invent the Future®



Commonwealth of Virginia Office of Governor Terry McAuliffe

The following is an open letter to all state employees sent on Apr. 20.

During the first full week of May, we will celebrate Virginia Public Service Week to honor your dedicated work as public servants of the Commonwealth. On **Wednesday, May 17**, I will recognize the outstanding employee recipients of the Governor's Awards for Public Service in a ceremony at the Executive Mansion. These awards highlight the excellence of our state workforce in serving Virginia citizens.

I am honored to present these awards in such categories as career achievement, customer service, innovation and teamwork. You also have an opportunity to participate in the celebration as a state employee Ambassador to recognize the award recipients. I encourage you to consider representing your fellow colleagues in this role at the Governor's Award ceremony.

If you are interested in serving as an Ambassador, please let us know. You can sign up online at survey.drhm.virginia.gov until **Tuesday, May 2, 2017**. Everyone who applies will be entered in a random drawing to select 20 employee Ambassadors from all regions of the Commonwealth.

If you have questions about the program, send an email to vpsw@drhm.virginia.gov or visit the Virginia Public Service Week web pages at www.drhm.virginia.gov. Thank you for everything you do for our great Commonwealth.

Registration open for Staff Appreciation Day activities

On Wednesday, May 17, Virginia Tech will celebrate the hard work and dedication of nearly 3,500 staff members. Staff Appreciation Day will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Due to the renovation of Rector Field House, the event is being held in Owens Hall this year. All staff, non-student wage employees, and emergency hires are invited to participate.

The event offers a wide range of activities including campus tours, bingo, stress-relieving massages, the "Fabulous Feud" game team competition, live music by the "Half Throttle Band," lunch by Personal Touch Catering, and more.

--View activity and tour descriptions

--View event brochure/schedule

--Activity and tour registration at
[virginiatech.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_0wDEcI5oMJ9\(4yN&Q_JFE=0](http://virginiatech.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_0wDEcI5oMJ9(4yN&Q_JFE=0)

Supervisors are encouraged to allow all staff employees to attend for a minimum of several hours. Please refer to the memorandum from the President's office at staffday.bams.vt.edu/assets/sad-memo-from-president.

For more information contact the President's Office at 540-231-7111.

Learn how to improve your sleep at upcoming Sleep Workshop

"Insufficient sleep is a public health problem," according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which estimates that an estimated 50-70 million US adults have sleep or wakefulness disorder.

A group of Virginia Tech graduate students in the Masters of Public Health program have partnered with Hokie Wellness to develop a workshop on the science of sleep, tips on how to sleep better and how to use mindfulness to deal with the stress that leads to sleepless nights.

Employees are invited to attend the workshop Thursday, April 27 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at North End Center, room 2200. The workshop is free and includes a light lunch. Participants may also bring their own lunch.

The program will end with a 30-minute yoga nidra, or sleep yoga session, led by Akke Hulbert, owner of Akke's Yoga Place, in Blacksburg. Participants are encouraged to wear comfortable clothing and bring a yoga mat (if they have one) to participate in this part of the program.

Seating is limited and registration is required. Search by alpha for Sleep Workshop.

For more information, contact Hokie Wellness at 540-231-8878.

Brett Farmer and Brian Tissue recognized for unwavering commitment to safety

Two Virginia Tech employees are being recognized for their commitment to maintaining a safe environment in university labs.

Brett Farmer and Brian Tissue have received the 2017 Virginia Tech Award for Safety Excellence.

Six other employees were nominated. They are:

--Brian Gilmore, laboratory manager, Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute

--Katrina Lasley, microbiology teaching laboratory coordinator, Department of Biological Sciences

--Nicholas Maxwell, research assistant and laboratory manager, Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute

--Kaitlin Read, research specialist and laboratory coordinator, Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute

--Valerie Vaught, supervisor of diagnostic and support services, Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine

--Paul Youmans, research associate and laboratory manager, Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute

The award, sponsored by the Office of Environmental Health and Safety in the Division of Administrative Services, recognizes members of the university community whose safety efforts or initiatives have resulted in a safer work environment or substantially helped eliminate or minimize loss or injury.

Farmer is the supervisor of the Thomas M. Murray Structures and Materials Laboratory, which is located off Plantation Road in Blacksburg. The 17,000-square-foot lab is managed by the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and includes a wide range of structural and materials testing equipment that can be used to conduct experimental research on full-scale structural components and conduct performance evaluations of civil engineering materials.

Farmer was recognized for leading the department's effort to update safety policies and procedures in the lab after researchers started to take on larger-scale structural testing. The increase in the size of specimens, some weighing more than 40,000 pounds, brought an increased risk for injury and necessitated the update.

Tissue, an associate professor of analytical and materials chemistry in the Department of Chemistry, was recognized for his leadership in the department's ever-continuing efforts to improve safety in the department's labs.

He is credited with proactively anticipating potential safety concerns and frequently going above and beyond departmental and administrative inspection requirements to implement protocols to avoid problems before they occur. During his time as the chair of the department's Chemistry Safety Committee, Tissue has encouraged graduate students, who conduct the bulk of the research, to actively participate in the development of safety policy and decision-making.

Farmer and Tissue, along with all of this year's nominees, were honored at a ceremony on April 11 at the Inn at Virginia Tech. The ceremony featured a presentation from nationally known "stunt scientist, experience engineer, inventor, TV producer, science presenter, and author" Steve Wolf.

In Memoriam: Peggy Meszaros, Provost Emerita of Virginia Tech

Peggy Meszaros, the highest-ranking woman in Virginia Tech's history, died in the city of her birth — Hopkinsville, Kentucky — on April 18. She was 79.

At the time of her death, Meszaros held emerita titles for two positions at Virginia Tech, the William E. Lavery Professor Emerita of Human Development in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences and Provost Emerita. These honorary distinctions were conferred on her by the Board of Visitors following her retirement from the university in 2016.

Following a series of administrative roles at Hood College, Oklahoma State University, and the University of Kentucky, Meszaros joined Virginia Tech in 1993 as professor of family and child development and dean of what was then the College of Human Resources.

Two years later, Virginia Tech President Paul Torgensen tapped her to serve as senior vice president and provost of the university, citing both her "strong commitment to helping students, faculty, and staff develop to their fullest potential" and her "deep reservoir of intellect and energy."

She was the first — and only — woman to become provost of the university.

For nearly six years as provost, Meszaros launched novel interdisciplinary research programs across campus. She developed a strategic plan, instituted an academic agenda, identified and applied the university's core values, established the Institute for Distance and

Distributed Learning, initiated key regional and international partnerships, developed diversity programs, and helped internationalize the curriculum.

From 2000 to 2015, she served as founding director of the Center for Information Technology Impacts on Children, Youth, and Families. There her scholarship made notable contributions to children, youth, and families through her translational research in parenting capacities and adolescent resilience, the effects of emerging technologies on individuals and families, and the influence of gender on information technology education and careers.

Meszaros taught a range of human development courses to both undergraduate and graduate students. Avidly following what she called her guiding principle, she mentored graduate students, helping them succeed in both academic and corporate careers.

Passionately devoted to the land-grant mission, she translated belief into action not only through her own research-enhanced outreach but also through her support of such community-enriching programs as the Virginia Cooperative Extension.

A generous benefactor to Virginia Tech, Meszaros was a member of the university's Ut Prosim Society of donors.

Upon retirement from Virginia Tech, Meszaros became president of the University of Kentucky Alumni Association. She received her bachelor's degree from Austin Peay State University, a master's degree from the University of Kentucky, and a doctorate from the University of Maryland.

Meszaros was preceded in death by her husband, Alexander Louis Meszaros; her sister, Joyce Faulkner; and a granddaughter, Hannah Mackensie Kriss. She is survived by her daughter Lisa Kimberly Kriss and son-in-law, Chuck, of Emmitsburg, Maryland; her daughter Elizabeth Caroline Villarreal of Perry Hall, Maryland; her son, Louis Todd Meszaros, and daughter-in-law, Erin, of Atlanta, Georgia; six grandchildren, Meaghan, Cameron, Andrew, Emily, Alex, and Sophia; five great-grandchildren, Taiyler, LilyElle, Jaxon, Courtland, and Ella Rose; her brother Albert Sisk and sister-in-law Barbara of Hopkinsville; and her brother Eugene Lee Sisk Jr. and sister-in-law Diann of Shelbyville, Kentucky.

A memorial service will be held on May 13 at 11 a.m. at Grace Episcopal Church in Hopkinsville. Inurnment will be held at a later date at Arlington National Cemetery.

Apply now for summer cohort of faculty/staff R.A.D. program

The Police Department is now accepting applications from faculty and staff who would like to participate in the next session of Rape Aggression Defense (R.A.D.) System program.

The four-part course begins with awareness, prevention, risk reduction and avoidance, and progresses to the basics of hands-on defense training. Participants learn self-defense tactics and techniques.

The free course is taught by Virginia Tech Police Department officers. The summer course will meet May 25, June 18, and 16.

Classes meet from 2-5 p.m. in the Jamerson Athletic Center at 21 Beamer Way, in the Bowman Room.

To register, fill out the application at <http://police.vt.edu/programs-training/rad/application>, or call 540-231-8123 or 540-231-6102.

Virginia Tech News is published weekly during fall and spring semester and bimonthly during the summer sessions, by the Department of Human Resources and the Office of University Relations as a service to university employees who do not have computer access on campus. For more information, or to discuss submission of items call 540-231-7643.