

## Take part in recreational activities at Jan. 11 Health and Benefits Fair

Start the new year off right by participating in the numerous interactive activities at the Hokie Wellness Health and Benefits Fair on Wednesday, Jan. 11, from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at McComas Hall. Employees are encouraged to bring comfortable clothes to experience all the activities the fair has to offer.

Activities include:

- Seated Massage
- Acupuncture
- Reiki
- 30-minute group exercise classes (Tai Chi, Yoga and Zumba)
- InBody screening provided by Carilion Wellness
- BOD-POD assessments, registration required

As part of the university's commitment to maintaining healthy lifestyles, all employees are encouraged to participate and will receive two hours of approved leave to attend the fair.

While admission is free, employees must bring a Hokie Passport to sign-in. The event is sponsored by the Department of Human Resources, the Division of Student Affairs, and Carilion Clinic.

For more information, visit [http://hokiewellness.vt.edu/Employees/Programs/Annual\\_Health\\_and\\_Benefits\\_Fair.html](http://hokiewellness.vt.edu/Employees/Programs/Annual_Health_and_Benefits_Fair.html) or contact Hokie Wellness at [hokiewellness@vt.edu](mailto:hokiewellness@vt.edu) or 540-231-8878.

## Martin Luther King Day events and programs planned

In commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr., Virginia Tech has a weeklong schedule to remember and honor the man who drove out hate and darkness through love and light.

This year's celebration theme is "Injustice Anywhere is a Threat to Justice Everywhere: The Legacy Between Two Movements." The events will reflect on the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Lives Matter movement.

The annual keynote address will be delivered on Wednesday, Jan. 18 at 6:30 p.m. in the Graduate Life Center auditorium by Opal Tometi of Black Lives Matter. Tometi is a dedicated activist who has worked at the intersection of racial injustice and immigrant rights for more than a decade. The originator of the Twitter hashtag #BlackLivesMatter, Tometi and a few others prompted activism nationwide and introduced the banner under which this generation's civil rights movement marches. Tometi serves as the executive director at the Black Alliance for Just Immigration.

In her keynote, Tometi will be interviewed by Ellington Graves, director of Africana Studies; Malik Keaton, president of the Black Organizations Council; and Meriam Nure, vice president of the Black Organizations Council. Funds from the Elizabeth A. (Betsy) Flanagan Women in Leadership and Philanthropy Endowed Lecture Fund support this event.

The schedule of events is evolving and subject to change. The Martin Luther King Celebrations website (<http://iec.vt.edu/Awareness/mlk.html>) will be updated to include the

most current information.

### AmeriCorps Day of Service

-- Primary School Read-in Across the New River Valley  
 -- Monday, Jan. 16 at ROCK Club (Radford) from 10:30-11:15 a.m.

-- Tuesday, Jan. 17 at Macy McClauthery Elementary VPI (Virginia Preschool Initiative) (Pearisburg) from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

-- Wednesday, Jan. 18 at Gilbert Linkous Elementary VPI (Blacksburg) from 9:30-10:15 a.m.

-- Wednesday, Jan. 18 at Eastern Elementary VPI (Pembroke) from 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

-- Thursday, Jan. 19 at Grace a Child (Christiansburg) from 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Registration available on GobblerConnect. Transportation available through VT Engage. Contact Catherine Cotrupi at [cotrupi@vt.edu](mailto:cotrupi@vt.edu) for more information.

### Black Liberation Talk Luncheon: Back to Prince Edward County

-- Tuesday, Jan. 17; Noon

-- Black Cultural Center, Squires Student Center

-- Hosted by Christian Matheis. RSVP to Kimberly Williams at [knwilliams@vt.edu](mailto:knwilliams@vt.edu).

### Archival Curation on the History of Protest

-- Tuesday, Jan. 17

-- Black Cultural Center

-- On display through Friday, Feb. 17

### Radford University MLK Keynote: Roland Martin

-- Tuesday, Jan. 17

-- Bodurant Auditorium, Radford University

-- Bus transportation provided. Contact Kimberly Williams at [knwilliams@vt.edu](mailto:knwilliams@vt.edu).

### Keynote: A Conversation with Opal Tometi from Black Lives Matter

-- Wednesday, Jan. 18; 7 p.m.

-- Auditorium, Graduate Life Center

### Faculty discussion panel on International Protest Demands and Black Lives Matter

-- Thursday, Jan. 19; 6 p.m.

-- Brush Mountain A, Squires Student Center

### Ethnoracial Diversity in Posttraumatic Stress: Epidemiology, Assessment, and Treatment

-- Thursday, Jan. 19; 3:30-4:30 p.m.

-- Pamplin 1045

-- Part of the Psychology Colloquium Series in honor of Martin Luther King. Nnamdi Pole will present.

### Memorializing MLK: Identity and Representation in Cultural Heritage Design Debate

-- Friday, Jan. 20; 11 a.m.

-- Art + Architecture Library, 100 Cowgill Hall

-- With special guest Ed Jackson, executive architect of the Martin Luther King Memorial Foundation and executive producer of the memorial effort.

### Rev. Dr. King Reflection Chime

-- Friday, Jan. 20; Noon



### From Silent Spring to Silent Night: A Tale of Toads and Men

-- Friday, Jan. 20; 2:20 p.m.

-- Auditorium, Biocomplexity Institute

--Sixth annual Martin Luther King Seminar from the Biological Sciences department. Tyrone Hayes will present.

### VT Expressions presents: Speak Your Peace, Art for Action

-- Friday, Jan. 20; 6 p.m.

-- Location TBA

University offices are closed and there are no classes on Monday, Jan. 16, the official Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

## Information on authorized closings during inclement weather

In times of inclement weather or other situations, it may be necessary for the university to close or delay opening at the Blacksburg, Virginia campus or any of the universities locations across the state. Decisions to alter the normal schedule for the university are made as quickly as possible and are communicated to employees and the community in the following ways:

-- The Virginia Tech homepage ([www.vt.edu](http://www.vt.edu))

-- Campus-wide email to all [vt.edu](mailto:vt.edu) accounts

-- Electronic message boards in classrooms

-- The weather/emergency hotline (540-231-6668)

-- VT Phone Alerts ([www.alerts.vt.edu](http://www.alerts.vt.edu))

-- VT Desktop Alerts

Note: These are the only official sources of information for authorized closings and delayed openings for the Blacksburg campus and facilities in the immediate Blacksburg area (excluding off-campus extension offices).

In the case of inclement weather, employees are responsible for confirming if and when to report to work that day. Because full details of university closings may not be adequately provided or described in other public media, employees are strongly advised to check the Virginia Tech homepage ([www.vt.edu](http://www.vt.edu)), or other official sources.

Additional information about authorized closings is available at [http://www.hr.vt.edu/forms/authorized\\_closings/employees/index.html](http://www.hr.vt.edu/forms/authorized_closings/employees/index.html).

## In memoriam: Paul 'Tony' Distler, legendary Voice of the Marching Virginians

Paul "Tony" Distler — director of the School of the Arts emeritus at Virginia Tech and former Voice of the Marching Virginians — died Dec. 28, 2016. He was 79.

After arriving at Virginia Tech in 1967, Distler helped build the performing arts program from a handful of faculty members into a division 10 times its original size. He served as the founder and leader of the Department of Performing Arts and Communications, head of the Department of Theatre Arts, and director of both the School of the Arts and the Division of Performing Arts. For four decades, Distler's distinctive baritone could be heard booming over the public address system during the halftime show of the Marching Virginians, the 330-member band known as the Spirit of Tech.

During a special ceremony in 2007, the Marching Virginians honored his integral role in the creation and success of the band by naming the Tony Distler Marching Band Tower. A celebrated teacher, performer, director, scholar, television host, and producer, Distler received the university's W.E. Wine Award for Teaching Excellence, published in a range of journals and books, and hosted "A Better Mousetrap," a regionally syndicated television series for PBS. Upon his retirement from the university in 2004, the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors conferred on him the title of Alumni Distinguished Professor emeritus.

Distler continued serving as the Voice of the Marching Virginians until 2014, the same year he supplied the voiceover during the installation

ceremony of Virginia Tech President Tim Sands. He remained an ardent advocate for the arts at Virginia Tech, as well as the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences. He spoke to dozens of alumni groups about the importance of the arts in educating the whole person as a rational, moral thinker.

Distler also advocated for quality of life for the elderly. He spent a decade as chairman of a major capital campaign for Warm Hearth Village, a retirement community in Blacksburg; in 2013, he served as president of the organization's Board of Trustees.

He served on the Virginians for the Arts' Board of Directors, chaired both the Blacksburg Partnership Collaborative for the Arts and the artisan network 'Round the Mountain, and served as a consultant on the historic Lincoln Theatre in Marion, Virginia.

Distler began his own theatre career as a child in 1948. In the 1950s and 1960s, he performed with such actors as Betty White, Anne B. Davis, Roy Schneider, and Robert Culp. Distler was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Williams College, where he earned a bachelor's degree in English. He received a master's degree and doctorate in theatre from Tulane University. A past president of the American Theatre Association and dean of the College of Fellows of the American Theatre, Distler was also a leader of the National Association of Schools of Theatre, an organization he served for 23 years.

A memorial service will be held in Blacksburg on May 5 — Distler's 80th birthday.

## Virginia Tech among first universities to have sponsored academic research agreement with Facebook

Virginia Tech is one of 17 institutions to have signed Facebook's sponsored academic research agreement, known as SARA. The agreement streamlines the process for joint technology projects between the commonwealth's most comprehensive research university and the one of the world's leading technology companies.

Facebook reported 1.79 billion monthly active users as of September 30. The SARA was created by Facebook's Building 8 team, which focuses on scientific research and product development. The team is led by Regina Dugan, who formerly headed the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. Dugan earned bachelor's and master's degrees in mechanical engineering from Virginia Tech and a Ph.D. from the California Institute of Technology.

Others involved in the initiative are Arizona State; California Institute of Technology; Georgia Tech; Harvard; Johns Hopkins; Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory; Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Northeastern; Princeton; Rice; Stanford; Texas A&M; University of California, Berkeley; University of California, San Francisco; University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; and University of Waterloo.

Virginia Tech Vice President for Research and Innovation Theresa Mayer said agreements such as the one with Facebook are essential to effective collaboration between industry and higher education. She said Virginia Tech has made it a priority to reach agreements with a variety of leading companies. In November, the university announced it had reached such an agreement with Lockheed Martin.

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