

**THE SPECTATOR**  
THE UNFILTERED, UNCENSORED VOICE OF THE STUDENTS

**A graduation to remember**



**Early graduation held for student battling cancer**  
See Page 3



**Sororities**  
**ignite**  
**joy**

See Page 9



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Announcements

After the Degree: Panel of Criminal Justice Professionals

The Alpha Phi Sigma National Criminal Justice Honor Society will host the panel today at 5 p.m. The panel will be held in the University Center Theatre. Each member on the panel is a professional in a criminal justice field. Guest speakers include a forensic specialist, correctional officer, among others.

Student Government applications due

Applications for SGA senator positions due today by 5:30 p.m. at the Student Affairs office. Senator positions are open to any full time student with a minimum 2.5 GPA. If you have any questions, contact Vice President Colleen Kavanaugh at ckavanaugh@valdosta.edu.

Free HIV Testing

The Student Health Center will hold free HIV testing today from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Participants must bring her or his VSU ID.

Fund raiser at The Mix

Alpha Epsilon Delta will host a fund raiser for cancer today. The fund raiser will be held from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Want to have your event featured in our  
Announcements section? Email Editor-in-Chief  
Jordan Barela at jlbarela@valdosta.edu to have your event featured.

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TODAY!

Thurs., March 24<sup>th</sup>  
10am – 2pm  
University Center  
Magnolia & Cypress Rooms

Arrive Early,  
Dress Professionally &  
Bring Several Resumes!

Photo of the Week :



Photo Editor Kyle Dawson recently made his way downtown to take some photos of Bleu Cafe. Head to vsuspectator.com to see this week's VSU in 5!

Photo taken by Kyle Dawson/THE SPECTATOR

It's the Battle of the Sexes  
in next week's issue.  
Stay tuned!

Spectator Classifieds

The Spectator prints free classifieds for current students of Valdosta State University only. These must be no more than 40 words, or a \$13.90 charge will apply. Classifieds for faculty, staff, student organizations, student-owned businesses and the general public cost \$13.90 for up to 40 words.

Ads should be sent to the Spectator or delivered to our office in 1238 Hopper Hall. The deadline is 5 p.m. Thursday, a week prior. If payment applies, it should be submitted in a sealed envelope at the time the ad is placed or paid via

Mastercard, Visa, Discover or electronic check online through Aimee Napier, Advertising Manager. Email Aimee Napier at acnapier@valdosta.edu to pay online.


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vsuSpectator.com

For Rent



Services



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## Health Tip of the week

“Being healthy includes eating fruits and vegetables, which add nutrients to diets, reduces the risk for heart disease, stroke, and some cancers, and helps manage body weight when consumed in place of more energy-dense foods.”  
-CDC.org

# Student with cancer enjoys early graduation

Jordan Barela  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
jlbarela@valdosta.edu

While most students were getting ready to take in the beach sun or catch up on Netflix over spring break, one VSU student graduated early.

Michael Cowger graduated cum laude with a double major in finance and economics on March 11.

The reason for his early graduation: Li-Fraumeni syndrome, a rare type of cancer that he is now battling at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center.

In December 2014, Michael went to the emergency room with what he thought was a heart attack. But it was more serious. He was then transferred to South Georgia Medical Center and an MRI scan confirmed that there was actually a large mass in his chest.

Michael had surgery in January to remove the mass. The surgeon confirmed that it was a cancerous tumor. After pathology tests, the tumor was found out to be a liposarcoma. A liposarcoma is a rare type of cancer that resembles fat cells when examined.

While recovering from the surgery, Michael began undergoing chemotherapy at SGMC. The cancer was found to have spread to his tailbone and vertebrae.

Because of the spread of the cancer, SGMC could not offer further effective treatment.

In October 2015, Michael be-



Michael Cowger, pictured above, seen shaking hands with President Cecil Staton at his graduation. The graduation was held in the West Hall Rotunda and Michael gave a humorous and uplifting speech.

Darien Harris/THE SPECTATOR

*“He slept with a smile on his face and one hand on his diplomas the entire time. He accomplished his most important goal.”*  
-Josh Cowger

gan undergoing trial experiments at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. Michael was officially diagnosed just before the start of the spring 2015 semester. It was his final semester before graduation. Despite the surgery and treatment, Michael attended classes

until it became too much of a burden. Because of the immense strain on Michael, Dr. Attila Cseh, the Department Head of Langdale College’s Department of Economics and Finance, went to President Cecil Staton and talked about Michael getting his degree early. Dr. Staton agreed. “It is a joy to have him in our classes,” Dr. Cseh said. “Students

like Michael are the reasons professors fall in love with teaching, and students like him also make our job easier because with their work ethic, they set an example to their peers. The professors I have talked to all speak very highly of Michael for his performance in our classrooms and for being a very kind person. We are all humbled by his courage and his spirit in this fight.”

According to Michael’s father, Josh Cowger, Michael was kept semi in the dark about the early graduation. Convinced to come home for a quick visit, Michael was told about the graduation when he saw the cap and gown when he arrived home.

On March 11, the graduation kicked off. Michael gave a speech and opened by thanking President Staton and his staff for the ceremony.

He talked about his struggles with cancer, but added his humorous twist. Michael talked about Dr. Cseh going to Dr. Staton

to urge him to graduate early. “I assume that President Staton either immediately agreed, or was frightened by the head of his Economics and Finance Department standing on top of his desk, kicking his papers around,” Michael said. “I’m confident the first scenario is what actually took place, but I like the image of Dr. Cseh going full on ‘Exorcist’ (is what) I have in my mind right now.”

As his speech drew to a close, he thanked his family. He saved a special thanks for his girlfriend of several years, Liz Buchner.

“She has been by his side from the beginning, she moved to Houston with him, she works a full time job, all the while tak-

ing care of him and going to his doctor’s appointments with him,” Michael’s father said. “Liz is the peanut butter to his jelly.”

No stranger to overcoming struggle, Michael gave himself one more challenge. Michael decided to go through the ceremony without taking his pain medication.

“Michael wanted to be fully coherent that day,” Michael’s father said. “He did not take any of his pain meds before showing up to get his diploma.”

Once the ceremony was over, Michael immediately took his pain medicine. According to his father, Michael slept for more than 18 hours.

“He slept with a smile on his face and one hand on his diplomas the entire time,” Josh said. “He accomplished his most important goal.”

Michael is currently undergoing treatment in Houston. According to Josh, this is the last treatment available for Michael. He also said that if the treatment doesn’t work or eventually stops working, Michael will

come home for the last time and spend the rest of his time with his family.

“You know the cliché about that guy that never met an enemy, never had an enemy, everybody that knows him as his friend, he’s that guy,” Josh said.

*“You know the cliché about that guy that never met an enemy, never had an enemy, everybody that knows him as his friend, he’s that guy.”*  
-Josh Cowger

The \$pectator  
gets  
thrifty.

Two editors  
will take the  
\$20 thrift  
store  
challenge.  
Tune into  
next week’s  
issue!

## History of Late Modern Philosophy

“Knowledge is in the end based on acknowledgement.”

“Each of us is responsible for everything and to every human being.”

“Everything has been figured out, except how to live.”

“A great artist is always before his time or behind it.”

VSU Philosophy & Religious Studies  
Ashley Hall 1202 • 229-333-5949  
valdosta.edu/colleges/arts-sciences/philosophy/

► A historical survey of philosophy of the late modern period, ranging from the 19th to the 20th centuries A.C.E.  
PHIL 3090:  
CRN 80574  
MW 2:00-3:15  
WH 150

► Prerequisite:  
PHIL 2010 or  
consent of the  
instructor.



## Changes in store for mass media department

**Kenzie Kesselring**  
OPINIONS EDITOR  
klkesselring@valdosta.edu

In Fall 2016, the mass media department will roll out its new curriculum for students who have not yet completed their pre-requisite courses.

At a March 10th meeting, students were invited to attend a meeting where upcoming curriculum changes were discussed, and students were informed on how the changes would affect their education and graduation path.

Students were informed at the meeting that a writing and media diversity class would be added to the pre-requisite course list. The production and workshop classes will also be changed.

Production classes will now be broken into levels instead of divided into specific areas. The workshop classes however, will be divided into specific areas such as news, video, sports and audio.

There will also be a three-credit hour senior capstone class as well as a senior seminar class that will be worth three credit hours instead of one. Students will also take one media law and ethics class as opposed to two separate classes.

The good news for graduating seniors in the current spring and upcoming fall semester is they can still stay with the old curriculum if it would work better for their graduation path. The only students who will be required

to make the switch to the new path are students who have not yet completed the pre-requisite program.

Like all changes, some mass media professors are excited for the change, while others do not believe the program will benefit from the changes.

Jason Brown, assistant professor of mass media, is excited about the change the new curriculum will bring and hopes the emphasis on writing, social media and audio will make for more well-rounded graduates.

“I’m excited about where we are going,” Brown said. “Like most programs, the world changes and you want to have classes that help to inform our students about the world they are about to enter.”

While Brown believes the new curriculum is good for the program, he does understand why some students and professors are upset.

“Change is hard for everybody,” Brown said. “However, the transition will be a lot less painless than people think it’ll be.”

People who oppose the new curriculum, like Frank Barnas, professor of mass media, believe that it will produce less well-rounded students and could take away what is different about VSU’s mass media program.

“The hallmark of our program was that students could gain expertise in their chosen field; I’m not sure how we get that back,” Barnas said.

Professor Barnas believes that the removal of specialized courses will affect students’ ability to stand out among mass media students from the University of Georgia and Georgia Southern. According to Barnas, Valdosta State has the only Bachelors of Fine Arts in Mass Media program in the state, which has been a strong selling point for the program, but he now believes that the new curriculum will enable the program to live up to its name.

“My primary concern is the negation of our production classes,” Barnas said. “When you see the surge of Georgia Film Academy in the Atlanta area, it’s evident that our students need to be the best trained to compete.”

The main advantage Barnas sees in the curriculum change is the flexibility of the university to work with students on substituting and waving classes to best meet students’ needs.

The mass media department will be hosting another information session about the curriculum change today, at 3:30 p.m. in the Student Union Theater.

Brown encourages all students not graduating in May to attend to become more informed on the changes. He also encourages mass media students to talk to their advisors about how the changes will affect their education path.

## Faculty Senate to discuss rescindment of three laid-off faculty members and campus carry bill today at meeting

**Julia Rodriguez**  
ASST. OPINIONS EDITOR  
jlrodriguez@valdosta.edu

Three of the 31 laid-off professors may be keeping their jobs.

At the beginning of the 2015 fall semester, 31 VSU faculty members were told that they would not have their contracts renewed and would need to find work elsewhere by the end of the fiscal year.

On March 23, the Faculty Senate released the agenda for Thursday’s meeting. According to the Faculty Senate Agenda for March 24, 2016, “Three non-renewal letters have been rescinded.”

When the lay-offs were initially announced, there were protests in response and numerous students worried about their education suffering. Although it is still in discussion, the possibility of these faculty members returning should provide relief to many still vexed by the lay-offs.

Decrease in enrollment was attributed to the need for lay-offs, however with the recent increases in enrollment, it is no wonder that the situation is beginning to turn around. For now, students can

hope for these faculty members and more to keep their jobs.

The agenda also reported that Columbus Day has been removed from the VSU calendar and included an attached resolution against firearms on campus. The resolution explained why the Faculty Senate does not want firearms to be permitted on campus.

“...Allowing concealed carry permit holders to bring firearms on university grounds or into classrooms threatens the progress of education and the expression of ideas by imposing lethal weaponry within a place that harbors vigorous and often heated academic discussion...” was written in the Faculty Senate Resolution Against Firearms on Campus.

This resolution goes further in depth on the subject and can be found in the Faculty Senate agenda for March 24, 2016.

Elections will be held at the meeting in April for Vice President, Secretary and Parliamentarian of the Faculty Senate. It is essential that these positions be filled.

*According to the Faculty Senate Agenda for March 24, 2016, “Three non-renewal letters have been rescinded.”*

## WORLDRELIGIONS

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- WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW THE BELIEFS, PRACTICES, & SPIRITUAL PATHS OF THE MAJOR RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS?
- LEARN ABOUT YOUR NEIGHBORS, CLASSMATES & CO-WORKERS’ CULTURES & BELIEF SYSTEMS.



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## Former VSU President to be honored at fundraising gala

**John Preer**  
CORRESPONDENT  
jhpreer@valdosta.edu

Blazers who graduated between 2002 and 2008 may remember Dr. Ronald M. Zaccari as former president of VSU. During Dr. Zaccari’s term and in the years that followed, he has been an active member in the Valdosta community.

Now, Dr. Zaccari is returning to the VSU campus to be honored at a gala sponsored by the Cancer Coalition of South Georgia. Dr. Zaccari was diagnosed with cancer in 2015 and the purpose of this event is to raise money for cancer screenings and community research. Upon receiving his diagnosis, Dr. Zaccari turned to art and writing as a means of therapy. He has praised the Cancer Coalition’s local work with cancer survivors and their families in the Valdosta community.

The gala will be held today in the Student Union Ballroom. This will be a formal event with a plated dinner and live musical entertainment provided. Attendants may participate in the live and silent auctions, as well as donate

items to be sold. There will be space available for memorials and honorariums in the program booklet as well as business ads. All donations to the Cancer Coalition made during the events will go directly to the Valdosta community.

“We are excited to honor Dr. Zaccari and to have him share his story and his passion for the Cancer Coalition,” said Diane Fletcher, Cancer Coalition CEO. “With the community’s support, we hope to exceed our fundraising goals so we may continue our local, lifesaving work against cancer.”

With help from the community, the Cancer Coalition hopes to honor Dr. Zaccari and all local families touched by cancer by continuing its health navigation, education and support for local survivors.

For more information about sponsorship or how to purchase tickets for the event, contact Doris Pierce-Hardy via email at doris.pierce-hardy@sgacancer.org or via phone at 229-809-6882.



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Our point of view...

# Don’t discriminate, educate

On Tuesday, March 22, there was a terrorist attack by two suicide bombers in Brussels, Belgium.

According to the New York Times, the attack consisted of two bombings. One was at the Brussels Airport, which killed 10 people and the other at Maelbeek subway station, which killed about 20 people. Approximately 230 others were injured.

After the attacks, ISIS issued a statement claiming responsibility for the bombings. They said the attacks were done because they felt as if Belgium was a part of the coalition against the Islamic State.

It is scary that these attacks exist in the world, but they are nothing new. ISIS attacked a French music festival in Paris recently that injured hundreds of people, and it seems as if it is only a matter of time until a large attack happens on US soil.

Don’t, however, confuse Islam with terror. Don’t confuse Muslims with members of ISIS. Overall, Muslims are peaceful people. It sometimes is easier to blame all Muslims for the actions of a few like Donald Trump has done with

his proposed ban of all Muslims from the USA.

Get an education. At VSU, there are world religion and history faculty members that can provide information about Muslims and the various sects of Islam.

Meet some people. There are students at VSU from predominantly Muslim countries. Students can go to the English Language Institute, which is located next to the Student Health Center on campus, to get to know students from other countries. The ELI often holds events that try to help garner a relationship between foreign students and American students.

Contrary to what ISIS says, Belgium is not against Islam. They are against terror, and like many other peaceful, forward thinking countries in the world, ISIS puts a target on them.

While we hope that military leaders around the world can put aside their differences and work together to stop ISIS from wreaking havoc among major cities, students should find out as much as they can about Islam in order to avoid stereotypical discrimination.

*This editorial was written by a member of the editorial staff and expresses the general opinion of The Spectator.*

Visit  
www.vsuspectator.com  
to read Terrance  
Johnson’s  
article on self -  
driving cars

# Pregnant student shamed and suing

Jada Dukes  
STAFF WRITER  
jldukes@valdosta.edu

Recently, a former graduate student at Wayne State University filed an \$850,000 law suit against the university because she was the victim of gross discrimination while on a social work internship.

According to USA Today, the student, Tina Varlesi, had entered the graduate program at Wayne State for the fall 2006 semester. In her second and final years in the program, Varlesi took on an internship with the Salvation Army at the request of Wayne State.

Prior to her starting the internship, Varlesi became pregnant. USA Today reported that once Varlesi started the internship, a female supervisor bombarded her with questions regarding her pregnancy and her personal life, ultimately embarrassing her in front of her fellow classmates. The supervisor is said to have repeatedly asked Varlesi to “stop rubbing her belly” and to “wear looser clothing” because the men who were present were being “turned on by her preg-

How long  
will it  
take before  
women  
no longer  
have to  
fight for  
the right  
to own  
their  
bodies?

nancy.” Sadly, the administrators at Wayne State sided with the supervisor and her ridiculous requests. Varlesi ultimately received a failing grade in the internship which prevented her from being able to graduate on time.

How long will it take before women no longer have to fight for the right to own their bodies? It is disgusting to think that a woman’s body is never truly her own, even when she is trying to enjoy one of the most beautiful parts of life on Earth. Why didn’t the administrators at Wayne State ever take the time to ponder over the fact that maybe they shouldn’t place their student in an environment where her body is being objectified by those around her rather than suggest that she take preventative measures herself? Women are blessed with the miraculous gift of being able to bring life into this world and each and every woman deserves the utmost respect for this. Varlesi was wrongly denied this respect and, by the same token, robbed of her entitlement to be treated like a human being instead of a sexual object.

# Letter to the Editor...

Dear Editor,

Where have all the tolerant liberals gone? The past couple of weeks have been a busy one for presidential candidate Donald Trump in terms of dealing with protesters at his rallies. I for one think it’s a breath of fresh air to have a candidate with such a sense of humor when it comes to dealing with such issues.

This idea of trying to shut Donald Trump down at his rallies as evidenced by what the people in Chicago did a couple weeks ago is nothing short of illustrating how truly intolerant the left is. Apparently, their idea of tolerance only applies after you check with them and receive their stamp of approval, before proceeding with whatever you are going to do or say. It also appears that this so called hate coming from Mr. Trump’s rallies is being instigated by the protesters who, by the way, several have been discovered to be Bernie Sanders supporters. Why doesn’t Sanders

address his supporters? Furthermore, why are Clinton and Sanders’ rallies not being constantly interrupted by say Trump supporters despite the fact that they are much more controversial than Trump, particularly Clinton? I for one think that speaks more to which group is really displaying hatred.

The media also likes to continually engage in their bashing of Trump, despite the fact that this has had no impact on his popularity. Their portrayal of Mr. Trump not disavowing former KKK member David Duke, despite the fact that he did it numerous times, was quite sophomoric and amusing at the same time. When are Clinton or other democrats going to disavow their connection with former (now deceased) Democratic Senator Robert Byrd, a prominent member of the KKK, whose nickname use to be “Sheets”? If you don’t believe Democrat Byrd’s prominent connection with the KKK look it up.

I guarantee you they won’t teach that in most history or political science classes.

Donald Trump’s mission has been quite clear during his campaign. He truly wants to make America the best it has ever been. One must wonder what Hillary Clinton’s central message is despite her many years as a politician. She appears to think Mr. Trump’s message is nonsense as America is already doing just fine. Students, particularly those soon to graduate, ask yourself, are you having problems finding a job? Clinton thinks everything is fine and we should just continue down the same path. Trump, a proven leader (particularly in the world of business) and not a politician, knows how to make things happen and move our country in a direction that will not only grant success to this current generation, but also to the ones to come.

-Caleb Thomas  
Math Instructor

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DID YOU

KNOW?

According to Mashable, Mario was named after Nintendo's warehouse landlord Mario Segale.

Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Lewis

ACROSS

1 "The Affair" network, briefly

4 Feel the pain

8 Connect (with)

14 "How's that again?"

15 The season to be jolly

16 Sprain application

17 Lois Lane, portrayer in "Man of Steel"

19 Acquiring very little interest?

20 Put one over on

21 Earliest recorded Chinese ruling group

23 Ranking card suit

25 Sunrise direction

26 Tawm brew

28 Pantyhose shade

29 Heavenly balls

33 Kevlar-lined vest, e.g.

37 Pet's reward

38 Blood typing letters

39 Holy threesome

41 Multi-platinum 44-Across album pronounced like a continent

42 Abrasive

44 "Reelin' in the Years" rock group

46 First party barrels

47 Shine, in ads

48 Opposite of paleo-

49 Arboretum sight

51 Big name in cubes

55 High-definition medium

61 Melt fish

62 Spring tweeters

63 What a nine-to-five works ... or, literally, what each set of circled letters represents

65 Get payback

66 "I hear you"

67 See 32-Down

68 Corporate consolidation

69 Give for a while

70 Make an effort

DOWN

1 Mining tunnel

2 Funny business

3 "What a joker!"

4 "Then what happened?"

5 Sweet-talk

6 Prefix with sphere

7 "Frozen" princess

8 Tripoli native

9 Clickable pictures

10 Lawn maintenance tool

11 Nile wader

12 Director Gus Van

13 Like French toast

16 "The American Look" cosmetics brand

22 Luv

24 "The Bell Jar" author Sylvia

27 Make a boo-boo

28 Pinto-riding sidekick

30 Enjoy a book

31 Tijuana's peninsula

32 With 67-Across, co-creator of Spider-Man

33 Announce a visitor, dog-style

34 Bassoon kin

35 Magician Henning

36 Sent on a wild-geese chase

37 Polk's predecessor

40 Rightmost bowling pin

43 Stripper's bottom line?

45 Kid

47 Old Faithful, e.g.

50 Cooking stove

52 Constructed

53 Figure out

54 "Sons of Anarchy" actress Sagal

55 Novelist Stoker

56 Romcom subject

57 Over, in Germany

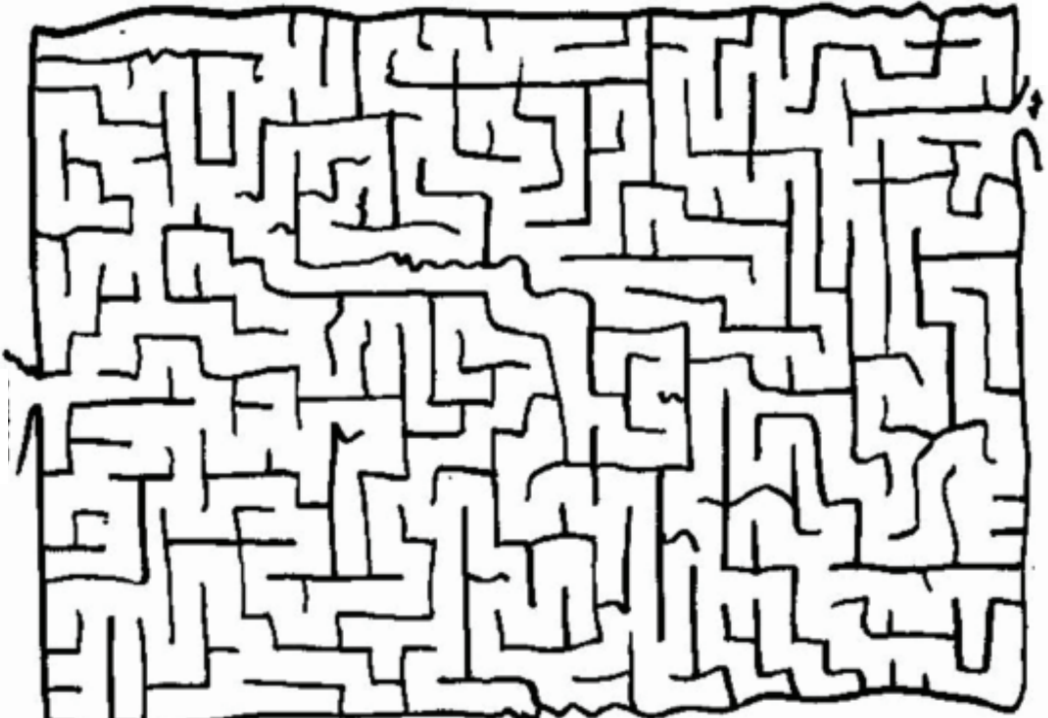
58 Celeb with a big fan base

59 "Oh, for Pete's \_!"

60 Color similar to teal

64 Guitarist Barnett

Can you make your way through our maze?



SUDOKU


	9			4				
	4		8				2	9
	2	3	9			1	8	
3				2	8			
			6	9				3
	6	9			1	7	5	
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				8			4	

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	4		3				1	
				2	9	4		
	5		6					1
2		1					3	6
		6		7				

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DID YOU

KNOW?

According to Gizmodo, back in 1936 Russian scientist Vladimir Lukyanov created a computer that ran on water.

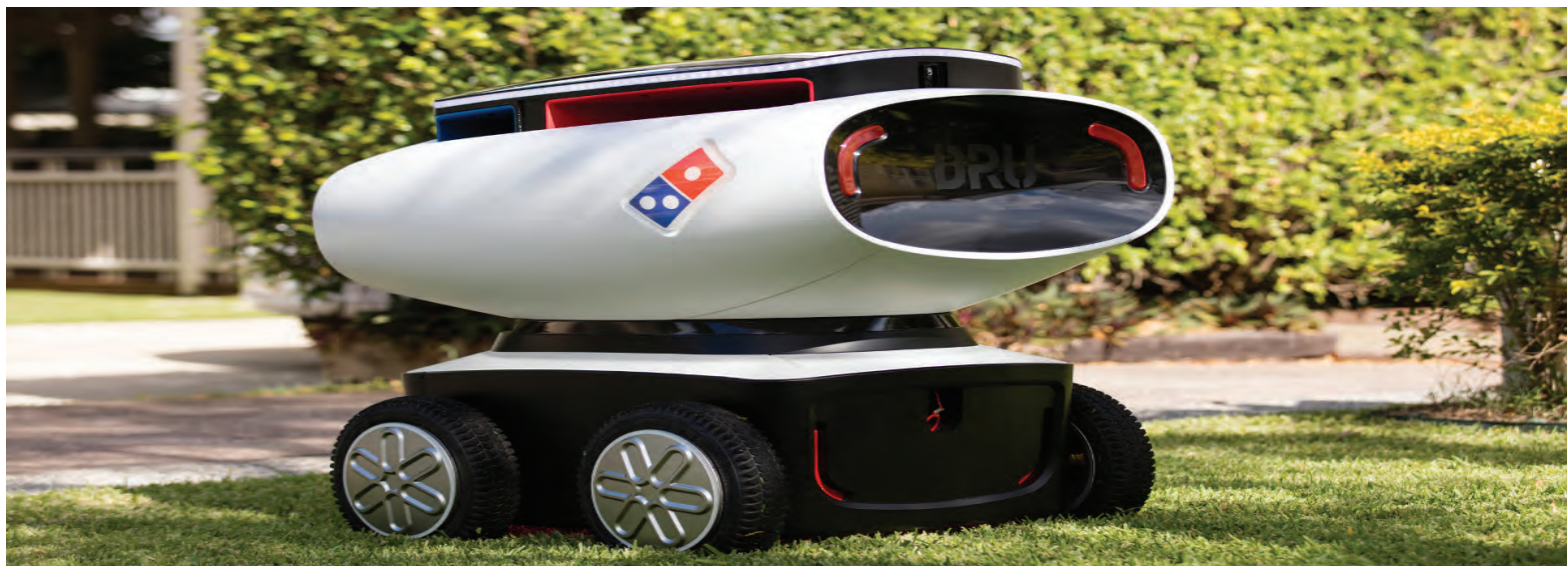


Photo courtesy Dominos.au

# Dominos gets futuristic delivery

**Kayla Stroud**  
WEB EDITOR  
kistroud@valdosta.edu

The average pimple-faced teenage delivery boy that we’ve all become accustomed to bringing us our favorite pepperoni topped treats is getting futuristic.

The Australian independent branch of the pizza franchise, Dominos, is developing an innovative way of bringing starving customers their pies by creating a robot.

According to NOLA, the new four wheeled prototype model DRU which stands for Dominos Robotic Unit completed its first trial run earlier this month – the first of its kind. The DRU stands just three feet tall, weighs 190 kilograms and can hold up to 10 pizzas at a time.

“DRU is cheeky and endearing and we are confident that one day he will become an integral part of the Domino’s family,” Scott Bush, New Zealand general manager, told AFP.

Domino’s has already started using a DRU to deliver its pizzas and are looking to develop more.

It goes up to extreme speeds of 12.5 mph...Thankfully the Australian

drivers don’t have to deal with waiting for DRU in traffic as it rides down bike paths and sidewalks to find the fastest route.

“We need to work with government to change regulations,” Gillespie said. “Working with them is hopefully going to push new frontiers and new boundaries that people would’ve thought were possible for many years to come.”

Domino’s latest “deliveryman” stands three feet tall and doesn’t need to be tipped. It has ferried pizzas in Brisbane at a top speed of 12 mph, and the company’s Australian master franchise said it’s excited by what could come next.

“We have a relentless passion to push the boundaries of what’s possible with pizza delivery,” Michael Gillespie, chief digital officer for Domino’s in Australia, said. “As we get further, it’s not hard to believe that we might have a store with a couple of [robots] that are doing deliveries.”

Would it be considered socially unacceptable to not tip a robot for its service?

No word if it has an anti-theft clause because something tells me that this DRU won’t be hovering around the streets without conflict.

## Illegal to walk and Text in NJ?

**Kayla Stroud**  
WEB EDITOR  
kistroud@valdosta.edu

Texting and driving has been illegal for years, but now texting and walking might also book you a two week stint in a jail cell.

A New Jersey lawmaker introduced a bill that, if passed, would make it illegal to walk the streets with a cell phone glued to your face.

According to CBS2, offenders could either face a \$50 fine, or spend 15 days behind bars.

“If a person on the road — whether walking or driving — presents a risk to others on the road, there should be a law in place to dissuade and penalize risky behavior,” Pamela Lampitt, assemblywoman who helped support the bill, said in an interview with Huffington Post.

New Jersey already has a distracted driving ban in place where offenders would have to pay upwards \$400 for the first infraction. So this bill seems a tad excessive.

“An individual crossing the road distracted by their smart-phone presents just as much danger to motorists as someone jaywalking and should be held, at a minimum, to the same penalty,” said Lampitt.

Sure, whatever you say Pam.

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\* A typical worker with a bachelor’s degree earns \$1.19 million more than a typical high school graduate, according to Hamilton Project’s “Major Decisions: What Graduates Earn Over Their Lifetimes.”





DID YOU KNOW?

According to Uberfacts, too much homework can cause stress, depression and even lower grades

# Sororities help ignite joy through running

**John Stephen**  
CORESPONDENT  
jsstephen@valdosta.edu

“If they could just bottle how you feel after the run,” Claire Walton says, describing how running always makes her feel better about herself, her family, her day and her entire life.

Walton is the director of Girls on the Run South Georgia, and while she may not be able to package the endorphins released after a run, she is using running to bring joy and valuable lessons to young girls all over town — and she’s teaming up with VSU sororities to make it happen.

GOTR is a national non-profit organization that takes small teams of third through fifth grade girls through a 10-week program that creatively integrates running into lessons on important concepts, such as being physically

and emotionally healthy, setting goals, and encouraging those around you.

In 2015, GOTR served over 179,000 girls through 225 councils nationwide. Walton started a council in Lowndes County last year, and she currently oversees program sites at five schools in the area. She hopes to expand the program to middle schools and additional elementary schools in the fall.

Since 2012, the Alpha Sigma Alpha sorority has maintained an official partnership with GOTR as part of the sorority’s philanthropy work. This partnership includes raising money for GOTR and volunteering at the end-of-season 5K, a celebratory race that’s open to the public where each girl completes the course with a running buddy over the age of 18. This year’s 80s-themed, “Girls Just Wanna Have Fun” 5K will take

place April 23 in Hahira.

Alex Deaton, president of ASA’s Theta Mu chapter at VSU, has volunteered with GOTR since 2013, and is glad she and her sorority sisters can now support GOTR from Valdosta. At last season’s 5K, ASA members provided the girls with bright tutus and cheered along the sidelines while waving encouraging posters.

Deaton, along with several other ASA sisters, currently volunteers as a coach on a local GOTR team. Being a coach means attending GOTR sessions twice a week, helping to teach the day’s lesson through fun games and interactions, and supervising and encouraging the girls as they run.

Deaton says the topics discussed with the girls at GOTR will stay relevant for a lifetime.

“I’m 20 years old learning new lessons that I wish I had as a child like these girls are receiving,”

Deaton said. “Girls on the Run isn’t just running. It’s more of how these young girls can get through hardships that may be thrown their way such as bullying and peer pressure.”

Walton echoes that sentiment. “It’s not a running program,” Walton said. “We use running to teach them about life and to teach them about themselves. And we constantly say ‘just keep moving forward.’ A lot of times (in life) you just have to keep taking another step when it’s hard and when it’s difficult.”

Walton has also tapped into VSU’s Kappa Delta and Phi Mu sororities to gain volunteers, coaches and running buddies.

Taylor Rowland, a member of Kappa Delta, is a GOTR coach and intern, and she says she loves seeing the girls become stronger through running, physically and emotionally.

“I believe running has the ability to give anyone confidence, no matter the age,” Rowland said. “Running has always been something I am passionate about, and I love (seeing these girls) develop that passion when they achieve their goals.”

When the girls run together, they each set their own goal and run at their own pace. Along the way, coaches hand out beads, jelly bracelets, pipe cleaners and other fun objects to visually represent the girls’ accomplishments. Walton says this system helps the girls to realize that it’s ok to have a different goal than your peers, and challenges them to compete with themselves rather than their teammates.

For more information on GOTR, to volunteer with the organization, or to register for the upcoming 5K, visit [www.girlsontherunsouthgeorgia.org](http://www.girlsontherunsouthgeorgia.org).



Photos Courtesy of Alex Deaton



## Medieval expert comes to VSU: Sparks discussions Islam and Christianity

**Olivia Studdard**  
STAFF WRITER  
oastuddard@valdosta.edu

Dr. Suzanne Akbari has a lot to say about the misconceptions many Western Christians have of Islam.

One of the most interesting; “When Christians describe Muslims in a certain way, they’re also saying something about themselves.”

She challenged the audience to drop the common judgement they may have of Islam because they may not understand the religion as it was designed to be.

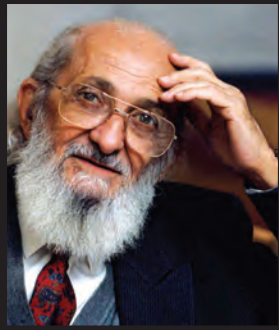
Dr. Akbari said that many Western Christians are guilty of associating Islam with idolatry, when in actuality the two traditions reinforce each other. The similarity between the two religions is found in the act of praying itself.

Dr. Akbari is the director of the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Toronto, as well as a coeditor of the Norton Anthology of Literature. The English Department sponsored her visit on Tuesday night to present “Empty Idols and a False Prophet: European Representations of Islam in the Era of Crusade.”




Olivia Studdard/ THE SPECTATOR


### Post-Colonization in Indigenous Cultures OFFERED FALL 2016




“Looking at the past must only be a means of understanding more clearly what and who they are so that they can more wisely build the future.”  
- Paulo Freire



“Five hundred years after Columbus, a more secular version of the same project of colonization continues through patents & intellectual property rights.”  
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“When asked by an anthropologist what the Indians called America before the white men came, an Indian said simply ‘Ours.’ ”  
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“I don’t think anybody anywhere can talk about the future of their people or of an organization without talking about education. Whoever controls the education of our children controls our future.”  
- Wilma Mankiller

This class is an examination of post-colonial issues in Indigenous cultures throughout the world. The course will focus on the individual and academic voices of Indigenous people.

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# Calhoun leads softball's hot streak

VSU is finding its groove at the perfect time

**LaMarcus Wilkerson**  
STAFF WRITER  
lkwilkerson@valdosta.edu

Since the opening of March, VSU softball has found its rhythm and dominated the opposition.

VSU has won nine out of their last 11 games to earn a season record of 23-8-1.

Upon the beginning of Spring Break, the Blazers lost to Shorter twice in a three-game series. The Hawks sent three homers over the wall of Steel's Diamond at Blazer Park to upend the Blazers in game one. The teams went on to split the next day's doubleheader to finish the series.

But the rebound was swift for VSU. The Blazers overwhelmed Florida Southern with 8-0 and 6-1 victories.

The encore was even better. The Blazers then swept the conference rival Union Lady Bulldogs in a three game series. The first two games were 11-0 and 11-3 blowouts before the series concluded with a 6-3 VSU win.

On Tuesday, Caitlyn Calhoun was recognized as the Gulf South Conference Pitcher of the Week for the fourth time this season.

Calhoun's week was highlighted by a no-hitter against Florida Southern on March 15. On the season, VSU's ace boasts a 1.46 ERA and a 15-4 record.

Calhoun was also recognized as GSC Pitcher of the Week a couple of weeks ago. Infielder Heather Robinson was named Gulf South Conference Player of the Week recently as well.

These were repercussions of the Blazers sweep of the West Alabama Tigers. During that weekend, coach Thomas Macera reached his 500th win via a 9-1 victory on March 9.

VSU is currently tied for fifth in the GSC with an 11-7 conference record. Just a game separates the Blazers from fourth place Shorter. While North Alabama and Delta State's 16-2 records are unlikely to be reached, VSU is built for tournament play and neither team will want to draw a matchup with the Blazers.

The Blazers next opponent is the Lee Flames in a doubleheader on Friday at 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. The last game will be on Saturday at 1:00 p.m.



If you are interested in contributing to The Spectator's sports coverage, contact Sports Editor Gabe Burns at gburns@valdosta.edu.

DID YOU

KNOW?

When Middle Tennessee upset Michigan State in the first round of the NCAA tournament, it was just the eighth time in history that a 15 seed defeated a 2 seed. Four of such upsets have occurred since 2012.

# Tennis prepares for critical weekend

**Marquez Slaughter**  
CORRESPONDENT  
mjslaughter@valdosta.edu

The Blazers men and women tennis teams are set to take on the Alabama-Huntsville's Chargers, Arkansas Tech Golden Suns (women), West Florida Argonauts and the Concordia Clippers in anticipation of their approaching Gulf South Conference tournaments.

Both teams hope to redeem themselves after 3-5 losses to the Columbus State Cougars on March 9.

The losses moved the No. 9 men's overall team record to 6-3 and the No. 21 women's to 5-5. Both teams will have a chance to sink or swim in conference competition when they take on the rival Chargers and the No.4 men

and No. 6 women Argonauts.

Wednesday's matches against the Chargers will also mark the last time seniors Andrew Harvin, Niklas Herbring, Joachim Schemm, Joanna Lario and Laura Ubuda will play an exhibition game as Blazers.

Harvin partnered up with sophomore Xavier Pineda and junior Gereon Heitmann in doubles to obtain a 3-1 record for his senior year.

Herbring owns a 4-2 record this season in singles. He has partnered with Heitmann to produce a 3-3 record in doubles.

Schemm has a 2-1 record in doubles with sophomore Fernando Rivas.

Lario has competed in eight singles matches this season and has a 3-3 record with two unfinished matches.

Ubuda has a 4-2 record with two unfinished matches in singles. She teamed with junior Sabrina Schmidt for a 6-2 standing in doubles.

Coach John Hansen and the Blazers will head to Pensacola, Florida for the women to face the Golden Suns on Thursday at 5 p.m. Arkansas Tech currently sits at 5-8 overall.

The men do not play Thursday, but they are preparing for matches on Friday and Saturday in Pensacola. The men will take on the Argonauts at 11 p.m. on Friday and the Chargers at 10 a.m. on Saturday.

The Blazers will play six more teams in Pensacola before April 3. The GSC tournament begins April 14 in Montgomery, Alabama.



Kyle Dawson/THE SPECTATOR  
Sabrina Schmidt swings during VSU's match with Alabama-Huntsville. The women fell to the Chargers, 4-5. The men came out on top by the score of 8-1. The women return to the court on Thursday, while the men play on Friday.

ATTN FRESHMEN: Part 2 Deadline Is Tues., March 29<sup>th</sup>

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SPORTS

Baseball enjoys successful spring break

Gabe Burns  
SPORTS EDITOR  
gcburns@valdosta.edu

If you thought you had a good Spring Break, VSU baseball did you one better. Sunday's 10-4 win over Union was the Blazers' fifth win in seven games and clinched the team another winning series in league play. Over the span of Spring Break, the Blazers collected five conference victories. VSU swept the struggling Shorter Hawks in last weekend's showdown. Now losers of seven in a row after being obliterated by the Blazers and Lee, Shorter has fallen to the basement of the conference. The Blazers followed up that big series win with a 14-2

blowout loss to the Augusta Jaguars. Fortunately for VSU, that hiccup was against a non-conference foe. Over the weekend, the Blazers traveled to Jackson, Tennessee to face the Union Bulldogs, a team that was virtually even with VSU in the standings. After an 8-0 shutout victory in game one, VSU was stifled by the Bulldogs in a 4-0 loss. The rubber match was held in less than ideal conditions, but VSU's offense pulled through to give the Blazers a half-game lead over Union and a tie for fourth place in the conference. VSU grabbed a huge win over Tampa 7-6 on Wednesday night, but that was an out of conference game. The Blazers host Lee in a

critical conference series this weekend. The Flames are 16-12 on the season, but their 7-8 record in the GSC has them fourth from the bottom. A Blazer sweep essentially forces Lee into the spoiler role for the rest of 2016. A series win helps the Blazers keep pace with Alabama-Huntsville, with which the team is tied. Alabama-Huntsville will take on Shorter this weekend in a series that highly favors the Chargers. West Florida, which sits a game up on the Blazers, takes on last place Christian Brothers. VSU will get its shot at the Chargers in early April, but West Florida has already swept VSU in their meeting. With such a tight race coming down to the wire, the Blazers need to take advantage of

their home matchup with Lee. That is easier said than done. Lee has been playing its best baseball as of late, having won six in a row including its own sweep of Shorter. The Flames are batting .296 as a team, just a tick below VSU's .297 average. However, Lee has out-scored the Blazers 189 to 170. The Flames lead the conference in home runs with 37. Where the Blazers have the upper-hand is in the pitching department. Lee's 5.11 team ERA ranks worse than VSU's 4.55. While VSU's ERA has been skewed by outliers (such as the Augusta game) and early season inconsistencies, the Flames have made a season out of playing shootouts. In fact, the Flames have surrendered four or more runs in eight of their last eleven

games. Their bats have been good enough to bail them out in most instances. While Shorter did not have the formula to upend Lee, VSU does. It starts and ends with quality pitching. The Blazers offense is capable of plating runs against the Flames' arms. The key will be controlling the pitch counts and getting Lee's bats to go down quickly. Any matchup between these two rivals that turns into a pitchers' duel will favor VSU. Game one of the series will open on Friday at 4 p.m. at Billy Grant Field. Game two is expected to start at 7 p.m. The final contest will be held on Saturday at 1 p.m. This is the last home series for the Blazers until April 9.

COMMENTARY

A message to Atlanta Braves fans

Austin Wells  
STAFF WRITER  
amwells@valdosta.edu

For the first 10 years of my life, the Atlanta Braves couldn't lose. The 10 years after have not been so pretty. But be brave, Brave fans—the future is bright. Very bright. So this is what you can do to keep the fan base's future just as bright: be supportive, be present and be loud. Even in the darkest of times, you're an Atlanta fan. If you were there for the days of Greg Maddux's masterful performances on the mound; if you were there for the days of Andruw Jones flying down balls in the outfield; if you were there to see the Braves return to the postseason in Bobby Cox's farewell tour, there is no reason to jump ship now. Watch the next dynasty grow before your own eyes, be it on television or at Turner Field, which is hosting its

final season of Braves baseball. The Braves have done a lot of rebuilding the past couple of years, trading away fan-favorite stars such as Jason Heyward, Craig Kimbrel and Andrelton Simmons. Despite this, there is hope in sight. Atlanta went from having one of the worst farm systems to a top 5 farm system by trading away stars and loading up on prospects. By doing this, however, 2015 resulted in a tough 95 loss season for the Bravos. 2016 probably won't be any better, but that shouldn't stop you from supporting your Atlanta Braves. The rotation this season will be made up of stop-gap, back of the rotation veterans like Bud Norris. It will also include young pitchers still trying to reach their full potential, like Matt Wisler and Mike Foltynewicz (two pitchers acquired in recent trades the Braves have made). Although

staff ace Julio Teheran is primed for a good year, the other rotation pieces and a pieced together bullpen could result in struggles from the pitching unit. Although they could slump, they could also thrive. If the team comes to the stadium and only see 10,000 fans or fewer, it'll be hard to find the motivation. Imagine, however, walking out to warm up and seeing almost all the seats filled, despite the forecast of a down year. That won't just result in motivation, that'll give them determination—determination to play their heart out for all the fans still showing their support. Now, think of the lineup, which will mostly be made up of aging veterans who might not even be able to hit above the Mendoza line. A lot of those guys, like AJ Pierzynski and Nick Swisher, will go out thinking they can still be great and still help a team succeed.

How do you think that feeling will change if they walk out to an almost empty stadium? Probably not for the better. Imagine, though, the Braves going out to batting practice and already seeing many seats filled with fans ready for a win? They'll start feeling determined just like the pitchers. I understand it'll be hard—there's a good chance the Braves are not going to be anywhere close to a good team this year. Not to mention a lot of Braves fans are used to the winning in years past, and won't want to come see a mediocre team occupy Turner Field. With enough fans though, with more sellouts than expected and fans still going out, there's no doubt that Braves team will play all-out for every fan there. You shouldn't stop with the major league team, though—remember that top five farm system I was telling you about?

There are plenty of prospects, highly-touted prospects, ready for their chance to shine. If they want to succeed, a huge part will be confidence. If fans go out to not only see the Atlanta Braves but the Gwinnett Braves and Mississippi Braves as well, the prospects will find that fire too—and if they start reaching their potential because of it, the sky is the limit for this franchise. The struggles will still be there, both in the minors and majors, and drinking and praying might become involved if you want to get through some of the rough patches. But stay strong and stay supportive, Braves fans, because in 2017, when those prospects start coming of age and joining the major league team in the fancy new SunTrust Park, the struggles are going to disappear—and your patience and support will be greatly rewarded.

Blazers Stat Leaders

Softball:

Average: Kiley Rusen, .394  
ERA: Caitlyn Calhoun, 1.46  
Home runs: Kiley Rusen, 12  
RBIs: Kiley Rusen, 41

Baseball:

Average: Dalton Duty, .479  
ERA: Colby Wisdom, 0.00 (11 appearances)  
Home runs: Marcus Sigmon, six  
RBIs: Marcus Sigmon, 32





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\*\* Source: It Takes More Than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success, 2013



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As a history major, the study skills, writing skills, and research skills learned while at VSU aided my progression through the training pipeline greatly, and I couldn't thank the faculty at VSU enough for giving me the tools I needed for success."

-- 2nd Lt. Christopher L. McGuirk, 489th FTG, USAF

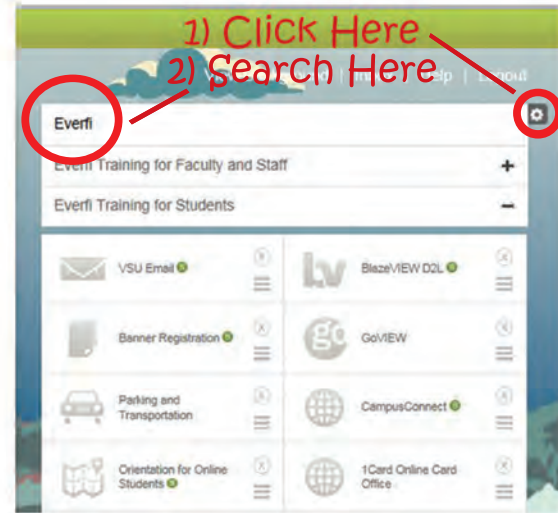


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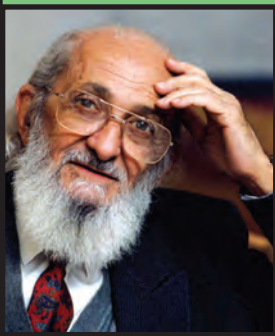


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- Paulo Freire

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