



A Message from the Chapter President

Greetings, Houston Alumni! It is with pride and pleasure that I have taken over the reins from our former President, Tiffany Flowers, who has done our chapter a great service with her leadership over the past year. And due the efforts of the chapter committee and volunteers, we had a very successful year indeed, and now I am very excited to pass on wonderful news! Our chapter won two awards at the 2004 Annual VTAA Chapter Officers Forum in Blacksburg in early September.

The first is the **G.E. Russell Outstanding Chapter Award**. This award is given to the chapters that meet all criteria including: an active committee, regular meetings, submitting timely annual/event reports, hosting several activities such as the TV-watching parties and picnics, inviting guest speakers, performing public service, fundraising, participating in the admissions program, and most importantly – awarding a scholarship. That's quite a list of tasks, and a great accomplishment! This award is very important because it includes a much-needed \$500 donation from the VTAA toward the Houston Chapter's Scholarship! Congratulations, Hokies! Your recognition is well deserved!

The second award is the **Outstanding Community Service Award**, for our "Hokie Bird Fights Hunger" campaign in which our chapter collected over one ton of food for the Houston Food Bank during football TV-watching parties. A whopping 1,888 pounds of that was collected single-handedly at the Third Annual Houston Food Bank Challenge during the "VT-WVU SRO Showdown" in Oct 2003! The Mountaineers may have won the game, but the Hokies conquered the Food Bank Challenge, no-contest! Way to go Hokies! You have proudly upheld our motto, Ut Prosim, "That I may serve"!

While we celebrate last year's success, the momentum has already propelled us into a very busy fall season for 2004. Soon after the committee election and planning meeting was held last June, Fred Gibson was working hard to get us ready to participate for the first time in several College Fairs all over the Houston area. I want to extend a special thank you to Fred and all the volunteers for doing such a great job in representing Virginia Tech and the Houston Alumni Chapter!

I am also very happy to announce that we have filled two chapter officer's positions. Wendi Tibiletti, our current Secretary, has accepted the position of President-Elect. Given her experience as an officer, and her genial nature, I know she is going to do well to lead the chapter toward future successes. With the Committee's approval, I have decided to continue as president for a second term, so Wendi and I will have plenty of time to work together to make her transition as easy as possible. Thank you so much, Wendi!

The Telephone Bank Chair position was accepted by Kelly Guillory, who is making a huge effort to get the alumni contact database updated. Soon, she will be greeting area alumni via telephone, so you might receive a call from a very friendly Hokie in the future. We greatly appreciate Kelly's invaluable help!

There are several events still planned for fall, so don't forget to check out the Houston chapter website (www.houstonhokies.org) to keep current on the latest

events. In the spring, we are looking forward to hosting another distinguished guest speaker from Virginia Tech, and getting together at the annual family picnic. In addition, plans have begun to host our first Annual Golf Tournament! The scholarship funds earned from the Texas A&M game T-shirts sales are steadily depleting, so it's time to roll up those sleeves and generate another major fundraising opportunity!

Congratulations to all of you for a successful 2003, and for making this chapter an organization we are proud to be a part of! It is always a pleasure to meet a fellow Hokie. If you have suggestions or questions, feel free to contact me via email (setyree@houston.rr.com) or phone (281) 240-0464.

Cheers,

Shelley Ellison Tyree ('98 & '01)

Update Your Contact Information!

We are a society constantly on the move! Please take a moment to check your profile in the VA Tech Alumni Association database (<http://www.vatechalumni.com/alum/gateway.html>), and email Shelley Tyree (setyree@houston.rr.com) if you've made changes, so we can keep our chapter email distribution list current. You do not want to miss out on any of our exciting Chapter activities!

Houston VTAA Chapter Scholarship Update

This spring, our chapter awarded another scholarship in the amount of \$1,500 to an incoming freshman from the Houston area. Congratulations to Beth Byrum, this year's winner! Beth graduated from Klein Oak High School in May and is attending Virginia Tech, majoring in Apparel and Housing Management. Beth is also an accomplished swimmer. She won the USA Open Water Championship 5K race in June and will go on to the World Championships in Dubai, UAE in November. This will be her second trip to the World Championship. She will train for the championship with the Virginia Tech coaching staff. We congratulate her and extend our best wishes to all of the ten Houston area incoming freshmen for success in their Virginia Tech years!

If you know of any students who plan to apply to Virginia Tech, please let them know about this scholarship opportunity. The main selection criteria for the scholarship are academic excellence, leadership, and strong extra-curricular activities. The Scholarship Committee, which is comprised of five members; Mike Strickler (Chairman), Fred Gibson, Bart Hatfield, Jim Burke, and Mike Hoffmann, reviews all applicants for the scholarship. If you are interested in helping with this effort, or have scholarship



funding raising ideas, please contact Mike Strickler (hauhokie@ev1.net).

If you would like to assist future local Houston Hokies, the chapter would greatly appreciate your tax-deductible contribution to our Houston Chapter Scholarship Fund:

Make checks payable to: Virginia Tech Foundation
Include on the memo line: Houston Chapter Scholarship Fund
Mail to: Virginia Tech Annual Fund, 201 Pack Building (0336), Blacksburg, VA 24061

Houston Hokie Events 2004 – 2005

★ **Annual Planning Meeting and Election of Officers, June 16, 2004**

Agenda included review and feedback on the chapter's performance during the previous year, discussion and preliminary planning events for the next calendar year, organizing community service activities, and electing a new President.

★ **College Fair Kick-Off Meeting, Aug 31, 2004**

A dinner meeting was held at the Sugar Land Community Center. After administrative items and announcements were given, Fred Gibson reviewed information and materials for the College Fairs held in the greater Houston area, and outlined the university's guidelines for the volunteers. During the second half of the meeting, we welcomed special guests:

- Mr. Thomas W. Giffin**, Director of Development, Graduate School and Honors Program, Virginia Tech
- Dr. Barbara Cowles**, Assistant Director of University Honors, Virginia Tech
- Dr. Mark Embree**, Rhodes Scholar Winner in the Virginia Tech Honors Program, and Professor of Mathematics, Rice University

Our guests, each as entertaining as they were enlightening, discussed many facets of the Honors Program, including: the history and development of the program; recent efforts to grow in strength of academics, scholarships, and reputation; and case histories of current and former students. We also appreciated Dr. Embree's reflections of his experiences as a student in the Honors program and the impact it has made on his life. Many thanks to our guests for sharing their time with us and helping us learn more about the wonderful opportunities available to incoming students. We also appreciated all the compliments we received about our chapter's efforts, as well as the dinner. Thank you all!

★ **College Fair Volunteers Meeting, Sept 14, 2004**

A follow-up meeting was held at Goode Company Barbeque on the Katy Freeway. Fred Gibson outlined the final arrangements with the volunteers and distributed the materials needed for each fair. We also had the pleasure of meeting with **Jill Wells, Admission Office College Fair**

Representative, who provided helpful advice and tips to keep in mind at the fairs.

Many thanks to all twelve volunteers who eagerly prepared to participate in five College Fairs: Cy-Fair (Oct 6), Fort Bend (Oct 12), Spring Branch Part 1 (Oct 12), Katy (Oct 13), and Spring Branch Part 2 (Oct 13); and to Fred Gibson for doing such a great job getting us organized.

★ **4th Annual Houston Food Bank Challenge, Oct 2, 2004**

The West Virginia University vs. Virginia Tech Football TV-Watching Party was held at SRO's again this year:

<http://www.srosportsbar.com/championsmap.html>. The outcome is not known at the time of this printing; an announcement will be made after the game. Next year's football game will be the **final game** between VT and WVU, so make ready for the **5th and Final Annual Houston Food Bank Challenge!** Start stocking up on those donations, folks, because it's our last chance to give those Mountaineers another whoopin'! Monetary donations are also welcome:



Make checks payable to: VTAA Houston Chapter
Include on the memo line: Houston Food Bank Challenge
Mail to: Shelley Tyree, 14102 Anson Grove Lane, Sugar Land, TX 77478.

★ **Hokie Hockey Night at the Aeros, Nov 14, 2004**

Robb Nejako is making arrangements again for group tickets (and great seats!), which will be about \$13 per person, details to follow. If you are interested in joining us, please email Robb (nejrob@sbcglobal.net) or call (281) 856-9920.

Houston Aeros
vs.
Edmonton Roadrunners
Game time: 5:05 p.m.

Toyota Center:
<http://aeros.com/arena/directions/>



★ **An Evening with a Virginia Tech Distinguished Speaker, Spring 2005**

Roger Daniels endeavors to bring in yet another entertaining guest speaker in early spring! If you have questions, please email Roger (rdjdhou@aol.com) or call (713) 973-5780.

★ **Annual Family Picnic, Spring 2005**

The 2004 picnic was held June 5 at Cullen Park. While the Hokie parents enjoyed the "hoo-wee! C'est Bon!" crawfish boil prepared in person by *MudBugs Cajun Catering, Inc*, the kids had a blast running Hokie Bird Egg relay races and tossing water balloons. Check out the photos on the chapter website! We would





also like to thank Jarield Francis and *MudBugs* for their \$100 discount for catering a college alumni event! Got a special request or suggestions for the next picnic? We'd love to hear 'em! Email Tiffany Flowers (tflowers222@yahoo.com).

Join the Downtown Hokie Lunch Bunch!



Do you work in or near the downtown area? Come out and meet other Hokies for lunch! The lunch crowd meets on the 1st Thursday of the month at various locations, (check website for details). Downtown is steadily becoming a modernized, commuter-friendly area, providing lots of opportunities for social gatherings. We hope you'll take advantage of this chance to expand your Hokie network and make new friends. Many thanks to Geoff Tonini ('95) (tonini@yahoo.com) for getting us away from our desks for a change!

Your Help is Needed - Chapter Volunteer Opportunities

<Golf Anyone? Have you ever helped organize or participate in a golf tournament fundraiser? Do you have access to a facility that could host such an event? If so, the committee could use your help organizing the Spring 2004 Golf Tournament to raise money for the Houston Chapter Scholarship Fund. Please email Mike Strickler (hauhokie@ev1.net) for more details.



<Welcome VT Freshmen! The Houston Chapter contacts the high school students from the Houston area (~25/year) who have been offered admission to Virginia Tech to congratulate them on their accomplishment and make them aware of our local alumni chapter as well as our annual scholarship. If you are interested in helping contact these students, email Robb Nejako (nejrob@sbcglobal.net) or call (281) 856-9920.

<Sports Events Chair, South Location: If anyone is interested in organizing a Southside TV-watching party location, please email Erroll Hines (eahines@aol.com) for details.



Chapter Officers 2004-2005

- President:** Shelley Ellison Tyree ('98 & '01)
 - President-Elect:** Wendi Tibiletti ('92)
 - Treasurer:** Bart Hatfield ('66)
 - Secretary:** Wendi Tibiletti ('92)
 - Webmaster:** Scott Sage ('88)
 - Telephone Bank:** Kelly Guillory ('95)
 - Sports Events – North:** Erroll Hines ('83)
 - Sports Events – South:** OPEN
 - Scholarship Chair:** Michael Strickler ('83)
 - Admissions Program:** Robb Nejako ('98)
 - Program Chair:** Roger Daniels ('61)
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- Board of Directors:**
 - Michael Strickler ('83), Tiffany Flowers ('91 & '93),
 - Bart Hatfield ('66), Roger Daniels ('61),
 - Erroll Hines ('83), Fred Gibson ('78)

