Our namesake, E. Claiborne Robins, always said that the success of his business was attributable to its people, and that is certainly the case here. When I joined the Robins School last summer, there was no predicting what the year would bring. One thing that was abundantly clear, and has endured even now when our web is stretched farther than ever before, is that we are bound together by our shared commitment to each other and to the University.

During our months apart, we experienced exponential change, found new modes of teaching, connected in creative ways, and learned the sense of strength we have as individuals and as a community. There is no doubt that this time will provide a new outlook—on life, our capabilities, and our purpose.

Our mission at Robins has always been to deliver a transformative learning experience for our students to respond to the complexities of our ever-changing world; and business is now more important than ever, providing an opportunity in which our students will put their Robins education to service, to thrive, and to make a difference.

I look forward to witnessing the ways our community finds new paths forward amidst this adversity. While our time spent together on campus was cut short, we have much to be proud of, and I am delighted to share with you our stories of growth and success in the pages ahead. These incredible accomplishments highlight our ingenuity, strength, and commitment to excellence.

Until we see each other again, go Spiders!

Mickey Quiñones, Dean

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AT THE NATIONAL DIVERSITY CASE COMPETITION

Top 25
BEST COLLEGES FOR ACCOUNTING BY GRADREPORTS

#2
PART-TIME MBA IN VIRGINIA BY U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

864
DECLARED BUSINESS MAJORS AND MINORS

54
INTERNATIONAL PARTNER UNIVERSITIES

1st
GRADUATING CLASS MINORING IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

$669k+
VALUATION OF STUDENT MANAGED INVESTMENT FUND
Finance Professor Wins Lifetime Achievement Award

Longtime finance professor Jerry Stevens received top recognition in his field when he earned the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Joint Financial Education Association (FEA) and the Academy of Business Education (ABE). “The award is special because it represents recognition by academic peers at other universities for long-standing work to elevate the role of financial education in our profession,” Stevens said. Stevens has been teaching and mentoring University of Richmond students since 1987 — working with them on experiential learning, advising them on careers and interviews, accompanying them on networking trips, and more.

First Spider Named to National Advertising Organization’s Top 50 List

Sela Betz, ‘20, is the first Spider to be named to the American Advertising Federation’s list of the nation’s 50 Most Promising Multicultural Students. She single-handedly established Spider Advertising after her internship with TBWA/The Integer Group in New York last summer. “A recruiter told me that if you don’t have an advertising club on campus to join, then start one,” Betz said. “Working with real clients is an academic and learning experience in itself because you gain firsthand experience collaborating with teammates and growing and utilizing your skills.” Jeff Carlson, assistant professor of marketing, described Sela as “one of the most creative, persistent, and motivated students we have seen.”
It was such an exciting and proud moment... to be recognized for our innovative ideas.

GABRIELA TELEPMAN, ’20

It was such an exciting and proud moment... to be recognized for our innovative ideas.

GABRIELA TELEPMAN, ’20

Robins Team Wins National Diversity Case Competition

Four Robins School students were the first from University of Richmond to compete in the National Diversity Case Competition at Indiana University, an event bringing together top-level diverse talent from colleges and universities across the country to present innovative solutions to a case study. Seema Ahmed, ’21, Jessie Bonilla, ’21, Diwen Deng, ’21, and Gabriela Telepman, ’20, presented an idea that pitched 3M, the case company, on a dual mentorship system that paired employees with underrepresented college students, who simultaneously mentored underrepresented middle and high school students to ultimately increase STEM diversity.

“It was such an exciting and proud moment to win the competition while participating for the first time, and to be recognized for our innovative ideas,” said Gabriela Telepman. “Competing against some very large business schools was intimidating ... but we knew that our presentation was great, and that was all we needed to gain the confidence of a winning team.”

“Times of struggle are traditionally when the very best companies are founded.”

SHANE EMMETT
Netflix Co-Founder Joins Students in Virtual Classroom

In Joel Mier’s Managing Innovation course, students “learn by doing,” using a semester-long project to give them hands-on experience in applying Design Thinking to a real-world setting that addresses a true problem. “Guest speakers are crucial,” Mier, a lecturer of marketing, said. “They are able to shed light on the challenges and lessons in practice, and reiterate key themes from the course which goes a long way in reinforcement and credibility.”

When the class went virtual during the spring semester, Mier invited Marc Randolph, co-founder and former CEO of Netflix, to join the students screen-to-screen. Along with sharing how he has used creative problem solving in his many ventures, Randolph provided insight into his definition of success. “The only thing that [students] need to do to start turning their idea into a reality is to get started. The real skill these days is not coming up with good ideas; it’s being creative and clever enough to figure out a way to try your ideas. And every student has that ability. Perhaps the most important lesson I’ve learned is that the only way to know if your idea is a good one or a bad one is to try it.”

Approximately 1,450 courses across the University were taught remotely this spring due to COVID-19. When word came that students would not be returning to campus after spring break, business school faculty and staff quickly mobilized to go online for the remainder of the semester. We commend everyone for their ingenuity, adaptability, and cooperative spirit in responding to this change. There will no doubt be lasting lessons from our time spent in distance learning.

“As a result of remote teaching, I can see the benefit of students having the opportunity to review and think through tough concepts at their own pace. Thus, I think even when I’m teaching face-to-face again, I will try to record and provide supplemental, instructional videos in my courses.”
ASHLEY AUSTIN, Assistant Professor of Accounting

“My face-to-face teaching will definitely change—as all the slides I’ve been forced to create will get used in the classroom. I can also use the videos I’ve created to help students who missed classes because of illness or travel, even to share with them to reinforce their learning. All of this will—I hope—make it time more useful so that we can dig deeper, in the class and in office hours.”
MAURA ALEXANDER, Instructor of Finance
Fulbright Garcia-Robles Binational Internship Awarded to Student

Many Robins students have ambitions to make their mark on society. Gabriela Telepman, ’20, is getting that chance as a Fulbright recipient. The Fulbright Garcia-Robles Binational Internship combines professional and academic components, and as a recipient, Gabriela will intern in Mexico City and take international business courses at the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México. The grant was established to promote mutual understanding between the business communities in Mexico and the U.S.

“I hope to learn more about effectively supporting entrepreneurs who are working to change the world for the better. My overarching career goal is to connect businesses with non-profit organizations, and encourage the two seemingly unlike entities to work together in order to create powerful change,” Telepman said.

Student’s Tent Rental Business Helping NYC Hospitals

James Orioli, ’21, has run At Your Service Party Rentals LLC since he was 15 from his home in New York City. When he could not return to University of Richmond after spring break, and saw how widespread the COVID-19 crisis became, he knew his business could lend a helping hand to the community. His team has developed tents for multiple hospitals throughout the area, providing space to expand triage units to accommodate incoming patients.

“We have been working daily on developing new solutions to the evolving needs of the overwhelmed hospitals in the area,” Orioli said. “Most recently we are working on designing a temporary triage expansion center for a hospital which could house as many as 100-185 patients at a time.”
Best & Brightest Business Majors

Our students go above and beyond on a daily basis, and we take pride when they are recognized by national organizations. Two seniors, Claire Griffiths and Hanna Lankler were named to Poets&Quants’ Best and Brightest Business Majors of 2020 for their exemplary leadership and academic excellence. These women served vital functions in the business school, Claire as general manager of the Student Managed Investment Fund (SMIF) and Hanna as president of the Robins School’s Student Government Association (SGA).

Claire led 19 students acting as security analysts and portfolio managers for two funds that have a combined value of over $669,000. Her interdisciplinary approach to education caught the attention of Barclay’s Investment Bank where she has accepted a position as an equity derivatives flow volatility sales-trading analyst.

As president of the SGA, Hanna represented over 500 business school students, a position she didn’t take lightly. She worked to open the lines of communication between the student body and administration, promoting inclusivity and instituting student-led outreach to the campus at large. “I have been most surprised by the level of creativity that business requires,” she shared. “Industries are constantly evolving and no business survives without continuous innovation. Once you go beyond the foundational courses and get to the application, creativity is essential.” Hanna will join Bloomingdale’s Inc. as an assistant buyer after graduation.

Capstone Project in Overdrive

The Capstone Project is a graduate student’s final piece of the program, tying together all they’ve learned in The Richmond MBA. Program administration typically works with each student to select an organization relevant to their business interest to address a strategic challenge facing the firm. However, James Poole, GB’19, has long dreamed of working with Porsche, and knew his final assignment was the perfect opportunity to reach out.

Through networking and relationship building, Poole found a connection at Porsche, pitched the idea, and ended up working on a thorough market study of consumer data to expand Porsche’s customer base. “To shake hands with executives at Porsche and receive real feedback and confirmation from them was almost too much to handle,” Poole said. He traveled to Porsche’s headquarters in Atlanta to present his final recommendations.

“In the end, James was able to help Porsche see its business from a completely different perspective, which would not have been possible if he had relied solely on Porsche data,” said Randy Raggio, Richmond MBA director. “Thanks to James, I expect we’ll be partnering with Porsche on a future project.”
The University of Richmond has faced many challenges in its history, and has persevered through the generosity of generations of Spider alumni and families. Our current situation is unlike any other, and it poses great financial challenges for the Robins School.

As today’s students face a tougher job market and economic concerns, their needs will be greater than ever. Support is needed to continue providing the experiential learning opportunities, career resources, and transformative learning experience that have long been hallmarks of a Robins education, ensuring our students are the best possible candidates in helping organizations respond to this adversity.

There are several ways to support Robins, and every gift is an important part of our annual philanthropy. TO MAKE YOUR GIFT, RETURN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE OR VISIT givenow.richmond.edu/robins

Combining Camilla’s love for the beautiful campus with her deep appreciation for the life-changing education she received meant that the Robins School held a special place in her heart. We both wanted to help ensure that Robins in the future will be able to continue to open opportunities and vistas for its students.

Philip Rohrbach
Instructor of Accounting

Each of us has fond memories and built lasting friendships during our time here. The University is our ‘second home,’ and we hope that our support helps continue to provide an exceptional environment for others to grow, thrive, and become contributing members of the community.

John Becker, R’79, P’15, ’17, ’20

The value of my diploma has increased dramatically over the years as the University is continually recognized for its commitment to academic reputation and student life continues to attract top applicants. Our family wanted to share the incredible experience we have had here and provide that same opportunity to a deserving student.

Forbes Hopper, R’85, P’18

PNC has a long history of partnering with organizations that engage the community in stimulating, thought-provoking discussions. Nowhere is that more evident than at the Robins School, whose inspirational C-Suite Conversations allow students, faculty, alumni, and the business community to hear from some of the top minds in the country.

Richard K. Bynum
Regional President, PNC Bank
Greater Washington & Virginia

YOUR Support Means More Now Than Ever