I hope you and your families had an enjoyable holiday season. Our students return this month with graduation, residencies, and summer internships on their minds! Over the past several months, we have visited each of our third year MHA residents and their preceptors at their sites across the country. These visits underscore the importance of this year-long experience in preparing our students for their first post-graduation job. They also remind us how very important the preceptors are to the quality of the experience. We are fortunate to have a terrific set of preceptors this year (as always), many of them alumni. For me personally, I enjoy hearing how our preceptors value the opportunity to mentor our students (to whom they give uniformly high marks) and how excited and engaged our students are with their residency organizations. Our conversations give us not only a sense of how the residencies are progressing but also some understanding of how the organizations are coping with the challenges they face in their respective markets. By sharing this understanding with our faculty colleagues and our students, we enrich the classroom experience to better prepare the next year’s residents.

As the spring semester begins, we are implementing a number of initiatives to improve our students’ experiences in and out of the classroom. The MSHA strategy course will include a major capstone project in conjunction with Richmond’s award winning emergency transportation service, the Richmond Ambulance Authority. The project will require students to integrate what they have learned throughout their coursework to address several challenges faced by RAA. In addition, we will supplement your gifts to our New Ventures Fund (thank you!) with a small competitive grant we received from our accrediting body, CAHME, and Aramark to send most of our first year MHA students to the ACHE Congress in March. To increase the number of students whose Congress expenses we can subsidize, we have decided not to have a booth at Congress. We did not make this decision lightly, but rather in consultation with our Alumni Advisory Council and our colleagues from other top ranked programs, many of whom have made the same decision. We most certainly will, however, continue our tradition of sponsoring the Cardwell Reception Tuesday evening, March 27. We hope to see many of you there!
In the last Cardwell Comments edition, I outlined the Alumni Advisory Council’s (Council) newly revised vision, mission, goals and objectives. Since then the Council has approved this new direction. In order to implement this plan, the Council has developed a new committee structure including Academic Affairs, Student Recruitment and Mentoring, Engagement, and History and Recognition.

I am pleased to announce that Alan Keese (MHA ’09) has accepted the role as Chair of Academic Affairs, Tracey Papas (MSHA ’11) as Chair of Student Recruitment and Mentoring, William Haugh (MHA ’08) as Chair of History and Recognition; and Bridget Fitzpatrick (MHA ’14) as Chair of Engagement. In addition, a faculty/staff member has been added to the committee structure as well. These include: Academic Affairs - Dr. Dolores Clement; Student Recruitment and Mentoring – Rachel Haga (MHA ’10); History and Recognition – Tracy Kemp Stallings (MSHA ’95); and Engagement – Beth Williamson Ayers. The next big challenge will be to populate these committees with alumni volunteers to help accomplish our mission.

Please consider taking time from your busy schedules to volunteer with these committees. We need your time, wisdom, and engagement to assure that our Department maintains its prestigious national position, creating great leaders who are reimagining healthcare. Our alumni are a smart, motivated, talented group of people. We need your help! If interested, please contact Beth Williamson Ayers (bwayers@vcu.edu or 804-828-8662), Cindy Watts (cwatts@vcu.edu or 804-828-5222) or me (mking12@aol.com or 304-482-1402). As we make progress, I will keep you in the loop! My best to you and your families.

The final accreditation results from CAHME, the Commission of Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education, were announced and they granted the Department the maximum accreditation of seven years! Go HAD!
The fall Paul A. Gross Landmarks in Leadership Lecture Series was held in October at the Virginia Historical Society. About 100 attendees enjoyed a nice reception, dinner and alumni awards presentation. Several VCU guests, including Dr. Marsha Rappleye, VP for Health Sciences and CEO of VCU Health System, were in attendance. The evening began with remarks from Dean Dr. Cecil Drain, Dr. Cindy Watts, Chair, and Mike King (MHA ’78), Chair of the Alumni Advisory Council. Jess Judy (MHA ’77), was not only our featured speaker but also the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement and Service Award. Several special supporters from the Lifepoint organization, Mr. Bill Carpenter, CEO, and Mr. David Dill, COO, traveled from Tennessee to join several family members of the Judy family to support Jess.

Jess Judy (MHA ’77), Senior Vice President, Lifepoint Hospitals in Brentwood, TN, received the Lifetime Achievement Service Award, which was presented by William Haugh (MHA ’08), CEO of Georgetown Community Hospital. This award recognizes an alumnus for his or her lifetime of strong dedication and contribution to the Department, its faculty, and its students.

Teresa (Terrie) Edwards (MHA ’84), Corporate Vice President for Sentara Healthcare in Newport News, VA, received the Alumnus of the Year award, which was presented by Joanne Inman (MHA ’05) President, Sentara Leigh Hospital and Eric Young (MHA ’07), Vice President of Operations, Sentara Leigh Hospital. Several family members and guests traveled from Tidewater to support her. This award recognizes an alumnus who shows uncommon excellence in his or her healthcare career and service to his or her community and to the Department.

Roberta Tinch (MHA, ’09), Chief Operating Officer at Johnston-Willis Hospital in Richmond, VA, received the Young Professional Award, which was presented by Zach McCluskey (MHA’07), CEO of Johnston-Willis Hospital. Roberta’s family attended to support her. This award acknowledges an alumnus who exemplifies the Department’s core values early in his or her career in service to his or her community and professional organization.
Virginia Commonwealth University recognized 15 members of its alumni community at the 2017 Alumni Stars program in October. Mr. Jess N. Judy (MHA '77) represented the Department of Health Administration and the School of Allied Health Professions as our distinguished Alumni Star. The event was held at the Science Museum of Virginia and attended by several hundred guests. Dr. Michael Rao, President of VCU and VCU Health System, welcomed the Alumni Stars and recognized each one for their important career and humanitarian achievements.

When asked about his connection to VCU, Mr. Judy refers to himself as a third-generation anomaly on VCU’s MCV Campus. Rather than follow his father and grandfather into medicine, he chose a career in which he uses his medical school “genetics” to relate to and work closely with physicians in an administrative capacity. Jess, Senior Vice President of Provider Relations for LifePoint Health in Nashville, TN, says reconnecting with his alma mater in the mid-2000s “was one of the most rewarding things I have done in my professional life and culminating in a now a 115 year family association with the institution.”

In his career, Jess worked in hospital and corporate leadership roles. He also pursued several entrepreneurial opportunities in the ambulatory and physician services arena. In 2001, he returned to his true passion, hospital administration, serving in various capacities before accepting a division president role with LifePoint in 2006. He moved into his present role in 2008, overseeing all activities related to physician practices and engagement.

Jess is an active alumnus, serving a three-year term on the Department of Health Administration’s Alumni Advisory Council, co-chairing the department’s Committee for Sustained Excellence and serving as an adviser to department leadership. He also is active in fundraising efforts, hosting gatherings for Tennessee and Kentucky alumni and establishing the Judy Family Student Enrichment Fund. He participates in the residency interview process and resident selection for LifePoint Health. “Each of these activities has allowed me to give back to MCV/VCU, stay connected to the program,” Judy says.

Since the inception of the VCU Alumni Stars program, our Department has had six alumni out of a total of 21 School of Allied Health Profession alumni who have been recognized as stars. They are: Paul A Gross, 1989; Denise Williams, 1992; David Singley, Jr. 1995; Richard Kraus, 1997 (deceased); Art Layne, 2013; and Jess Judy, 2017.
Virginia Commonwealth University honored its top 10 graduates of the last decade, or GOLD, in November. This was the third annual 10 Under 10 award ceremony. The awards celebrate alumni who earned their first VCU degree within the past 10 years and who have enjoyed remarkable professional success, made important contributions to their community and/or loyally supported the university. The event was held at The Depot and attended by guests of the award recipients and members of the VCU community. Mr. Jay Davenport, Vice President of Development and Alumni Relations and Mr. Chad Krouse, Executive Director of Regional Giving, welcomed the Alumni Stars and recognized each alumnus for his or her remarkable career.

**William Haugh** (MHA ’08) represented the Department of Health Administration and SAHP as one of the 10 recipients. When asked about his career path, he said he can trace it to his childhood, growing up in a small town in Virginia. He specifically chose hospital administration because of the important role hospitals play in the community, especially in rural areas. William completed an internship at Halifax Regional Health System. After he graduated from college, he worked for a year at the hospital. He was then accepted in to VCU’s MHA program the following year.

William states that “without a doubt, the success I have been fortunate to enjoy in my career is a direct result of the education I received at VCU.” William joined Tennessee-based Lifepoint Hospitals, in 2008. He served first as a chief operating officer at the 220-bed Memorial Hospital of Martinsville and Henry County, VA. He then served as CEO of Logan Memorial Hospital in Russellville, KY, from 2009-2012. He joined Georgetown Community Hospital in Georgetown, KY, as CEO, in 2012. Three years later, he was named Lifepoint’s CEO of the Year.

William is an engaged alumnus, and is currently serving a two-year term on the Department’s Alumni Advisory Committee. He also chairs the History and Recognition committee. As Class President, he has been active in fundraising efforts for the class scholarship. He is the Department’s 2014 recipient of the Young Professional Award. The award acknowledges an alumnus who exemplifies the Department’s core values early in his career and has shown professional accomplishment, advancement and innovation in the field of health administration.
Shirley Gibson (MSHA ’90) and Jenifer Murphy (MHA ’09) were quoted and pictured in VHHA’s REVIEW Magazine on page 6.

John Pestian (PhD ’94), a professor in the Divisions of Biomedical Informatics and Psychiatry at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center in Cincinnati, OH, and a group of ten researchers were invited to make a predictive model of mental illness and suicide in the Virginia population using genetic and clinical data and machine learning/AI. You can read more about the project in the Washington Post article.

Tim McCormick (MHA ’71) passed away in December near Rochester, NY. Tim was the CEO of Park Ridge Hospital in Rochester and served the organization for more than 40 years. He was involved in many professional and community organizations throughout his career. Tim earned his BA and MA in History from Seton Hall University.

Gerry Ibay (MHA/JD ’06) started a new position as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Health Administration and Policy, College of Public Health at The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in Oklahoma City, OK.

Dan Jones (MHA ’94) was named Chief Executive Officer of St. Francis Hospital in Columbus, GA in November.

Janet Lynch (PhD ’88) retired as Corporate Science Officer from WVMI Quality Insights in January.

Zachary Reid (MHA ’09) is the Chief Operating Officer for Henrico Doctor’s Hospital in Richmond, VA.

Roberta Tinch (MHA ’09) joined Johnston-Willis Hospital in Richmond, VA in December as Chief Operating Officer.

Dr. Jon Thompson (PhD ’95) retired from James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA. He will be teaching the Department’s MHA Health Care Marketing course in the spring.

In November, Joe Wilkins (MSHA ‘11) was named the new Chief Executive Officer of Wythe County Community Hospital in Wytheville, VA.

Betsy Blair (MSHA ’95), retired from Chippenham & Johnston-Willis Hospital in Richmond VA. Ms. Blair started her career at Chippenham in 1977 as a psychiatrist assistant at Tucker Pavilion. In 2008, Betsy was promoted to Chief Operating Officer at Tucker Pavilion, Betsy also served as Ethics and Compliance Officer since 2013.

David Collins (MHA ’00) has a new position as Practice Administrator for Telemedicine at VCU Health in Richmond, VA.

Nailya DeLellis (PhD ‘10) will assume the director position for Health Administration at Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant, MI in spring 2018.
The Department joined other School of Allied Health Professions faculty, staff, students, and Dr. Rao at the SAHP’s Topping Out Ceremony for the new building in October. Everyone had a chance to sign a beam that was hoisted in the air and placed at the top of the new building.

The Department was one of eight winners of the first CAHME/Aramark Innovation Grants. The $3,360 award recognizes programs with innovative ideas in improving graduate healthcare management education. The award will be used to send first year MHA students to the ACHE congress in March.

Using funds provided by his Blick Scholar appointment, Dr. Jon DeShazo purchased telepresence robots for remotely attending health management classes. He demonstrated the use of the Kubi Robots in his Information Systems for Health Care Management class.

Nancy Agee, President and CEO of Carilion Clinic in Roanoke, VA was named Virginia Business Person of the Year. Ms. Agee has been a long time friend and preceptor of the Department. Bill Jacobsen (MHA ’89), administrator at Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital in Rocky Mount, VA was quoted in the article.
Dr. Cindy Watts’ Healthcare Politics and Policy class was busy in November and December! The class participated in mock debates at the Richmond Capitol where they presented to Brent Rawlings (MHA/JD ’04), Vice President for the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association; Paul Speidell, VP for Government Relations and Health Policy at Sentara (as well as an annual speaker in Dr. Watts’ policy class); and Ross Airington (MSHA ‘17), Director of Health Policy at Washington Strategic Consulting, who acted as Senators during the presentations. Brent represented the right leaning perspective, Ross the left, and Paul the middle. They listened and asked questions from their assigned political perspectives and gave feedback as themselves. The class also traveled to Washington DC to visit with Marilyn Tavenner (MHA ’89), CEO at AHIP; LeAnne Zumwalt, Group VP of Purchasing and Government Affairs at DaVita, Inc.; Kristen Molloy, Senior Health Policy Advisor for Senator Tim Kaine; and Kristin Seum, Legislative Director and Counsel for Congressman Morgan Griffith.
Dr. Christian Wernz will serve as the "Sponsored Cluster Chair" for the Decision Analysis Society (DAS) of INFORMS (the Institute of Operations Research and the Management Sciences). DAS is the among the largest INFORMS societies with over 1000 members. http://connect.informs.org/das/about-us/about

Several faculty traveled to China this fall to continue the collaboration with Shandong University. Dr. Jessica Mittler taught a course on hospital quality and safety, and adjunct faculty Rod Adams taught law and ethics. Rod had this to say about his time there: "My challenge was scrubbing all of the US law out of the discussion and including Confucius ethics in it. The students appeared to appreciate my effort to respect the local tradition and not assume that Western ethics were superior.” Dr. Jon DeShazo traveled to Shandong in early January to teach hospital information management.

Dr. Michael McCue published his latest financial analysis regarding health insurers’ performance under the ACA market rules as a Commonwealth Fund brief. His findings indicate that some health insurers have adapted to the ACA’s individual market rules much better than others. In a separate article, he assessed how noncompliant health plans affect the market. Dr. McCue was also interviewed for an article on Medicaid featured in the LA Times regarding insurance companies that are reaping spectacular profits from the taxpayer-funded program in California.

Dr. Laura McClelland co-authored an article entitled, "Compassion Practices, Nurse Well-Being, and Ambulatory Patient Experience Ratings" with Ph.D. student Matthew DePuccio. It will be the lead article in the January issue of Medical Care.
Congratulations to the two teams who won the Health Information Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Virginia Chapter Annual Meeting Poster Competition. The first place $1,000 award went to MHA/MD Class of 2020 student Joanne Chiao, and MHA Class of 2019 students Maneet Deol and James David Drasbek. The second place $750 award went to MHA Class of 2019 students Nisha Gnawali, Supriya Patel, and Roberta Solomonova, and MHA/MD Class of 2020 student Dev Sahni.

The Department’s MSHA Executive Program students joined us on campus in December for their intensive week-long fall semester session. The week marked a couple of firsts for the Department. Program Director, Rachel F. Haga (MHA ’10), made her instructional debut in Strategic Management in Healthcare Organizations, and a student piloted the new departmental Kubi telepresence robots (purchased with Dr. Jon DeShazo’s Blick Scholar Award grant). One of our out-of-state students was unable to travel to Richmond, so we brought Richmond to her! With the help of the Kubi robots, Beverly Lukawski was able to join her teammates for their final group presentation in Healthcare Organization & Leadership. The presentation was a proposal for a service called "Patient's Paws" in which their proposed company would arrange to take care of a veteran's service dog while the patient is in the hospital. Tami Pohnert's service dog, Rilla, joined for the presentation. When the team was not presenting, Beverly's "robot" occupied a stool so she could watch and listen to her classmates' presentations, ask questions, and engage in class discussion, all from her office in Las Vegas, NV.
Chip Decker serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the award-winning and internationally recognized Richmond Ambulance Authority (RAA) and has overall responsibility for the Richmond Emergency Medical Services system. His duties extend to administering the high performance system design, employing innovative equipment and treatment modalities to assist with improving patient outcomes, and providing the City of Richmond with clinical excellence in the most economically efficient way possible. Chip served as Chief Operating Officer for RAA prior to his promotion to Chief Executive Officer in 2009.

His experience in EMS spans over 35 years and includes both volunteer and career positions. Over the last 15 years, Chip has worked for the Commonwealth of Virginia’s Office of Emergency Medical Services as a Program Representative and as the BLS Training Coordinator. In 1996, Chip became the Chief Operating Officer for a private ambulance service prior to joining the Richmond Ambulance Authority.

Chip is the recipient of a number of awards and recognition for his dedication to the EMS field, including a certificate of recognition for outstanding service from the Virginia Attorney General for his EMS response work at the Pentagon following the 9/11 attack, an award of commendation from the Virginia Office of EMS, life member of the Tuckahoe Volunteer Rescue Squad, and the Henrico Division of Police Meritorious Unit Citation for his service as Senior Volunteer Medic and member of their S.W.A.T. team.

He has extensive community affiliations such as the Virginia EMS Advisory Board, Chairman of the Advisory Board’s Transportation Committee, member of the ODEMSA Board of Directors, the Virginia Association of Governmental EMS Administrators (VAGEMSA), past-Secretary of the Virginia Ambulance Association, and the President-elect of the Academy of International Mobile Healthcare Integration (AIMHI). This Academy consists of member organizations represented by high performance EMS and mobile healthcare providers in both the U.S. and abroad.

Rob Lawrence is the Chief Operating Officer of the Richmond Ambulance Authority. Prior to that, he was the Chief Operating Officer for Suffolk as part of the East of England Ambulance Service in the UK. His first career was as a British Army Officer. He is a graduate of the UK’s Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, and later the British Army Staff College. He served as a Medical Support Officer responsible for pre-hospital delivery and evacuation and served in many operational theatres around the world to include Northern Norway, the Falkland Islands, Central America and Bosnia.

He is responsible for the oversight of RAA’s key operational activities: Field Operations (Paramedic Services), Emergency Communications, Fleet and Support Services. Rob also has an eye on the well-being of all EMS in the Commonwealth through his role as the current Vice President of VAGEMSA. Rob is also an accomplished writer, broadcaster, communicator and international speaker on pre-hospital subjects. He is a member of the Editorial Boards of the Pan American Trauma Journal and EMS World Magazine and is a peer reviewer for the European Resuscitation Journal. Additionally he serves as Vice Chairman of the American Ambulance Association’s Communications Task Force.

Both Chip Decker and Rob Lawrence are delighted to be affiliated with the Department of Health Administration as they are keen to pass on high performing operational healthcare management lessons with students. They believe that by sharing their use of real world efficiency techniques and lean management principles, everyone can benefit no matter their area of healthcare management. Chip and Rob are also genuinely excited to meet students as they pass through to exchange ideas and help shape the future as they realize they are dealing with the next generation thought leaders of the healthcare world.
**Adjunct/Alumni Spotlight**

**David Collins  (MHA ’00)**

Leveraging health IT as a tool to achieve improved outcomes for the patient experience has been my driving interest and passion since my early days working as a unit secretary and tech in the Bon Secours St. Mary’s emergency department, and my seven years as an EMS provider, knowing there has to be a better way to do things.

I followed a non-traditional MHA path from my colleagues, launching a new residency experience. I asked to be mentored by the CIO and the Medical Director of Quality Improvement at the Medical College of Virginia. To “date myself,” and to showcase how far health IT has come, I received the VCU Health Administration Department’s Herman Mullins Management Study Award for "Improving Information Exchange: Development of an Intranet at the Medical College of Virginia Hospitals."

During my four years at Health Quality Innovators (QIO for Virginia), I learned the fundamentals of quality improvement, and I had the opportunity to work with providers across Virginia to improve wellness for Medicare beneficiaries, as well as promote the value of the use EHRs, through the Doctors Office Quality-Information Technology (DOQ-IT) project.

I served in a variety of roles over my ten years with the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS), including oversight of the HIMSS Davies EHR Awards of Excellence program, traveling across the country to determine model practices that deserved recognition for patient care efficiencies achieved through seamless integration of health IT across the continuum of care. In my last three years with HIMSS, I led the connected health team in developing resources for telehealth, remote patient monitoring, and mobile health.

I had the opportunity to return to VCU Health to improve quality outcomes for the patient, and have spent the last 18 months as part of the Performance Improvement team to help form its strategic approach and infrastructure to meet value based reimbursement for the CMS Quality Payment Program.

Upon my return to the health system industry, I was fortunate enough to become Adjunct Faculty in 2016 for the VCU Department of Health Administration, teaching Information Systems for Health Care Management for the MSHA program. This has been a fantastic opportunity to learn from motivated students who are eager to apply their knowledge both within the classroom and within their respective careers.

I am fortunate to be soon joining the VCU Health Telemedicine team as practice administrator to help leverage technology to improve quality outcomes for the patient, and to continue the journey to achieve success in value based care. I’m very excited to see health IT becoming an integral part of care both at VCU Health and within the healthcare industry.

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**In the next issue…**

- VHHA Patient Safety Summit
- UAB Case Competition
- KMU Workshop
- ACHE Congress on Healthcare Leadership
Alumni Advisory Council
September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2018

Officers

Chair
Mike King, FACHE, MHA 1978
Senior Consultant, Healthcare Repass, Inc.
128 Timberlake Ct.
Mt. Gilead, NC 27306
Email: mking12@aol.com

Past Chair
Bassam Kawwass, FACHE, MHA 1980
President & CEO, Archer and Associates
925 Upper Hastings Way
Virginia Beach, VA 23452
Email: Bassam.Kawwass@ArcherAndAssociates.org

Members - at- Large

Bridget Fitzpatrick
MHA 2014 - 2nd year
Director of Operations, Bon Secours St. Francis Medical Center
13710 St. Francis Blvd
Midlothian, VA 23114
Email: bridget_fitzpatrick@bshsi.org

Matt Gitzinger
MHA 2008 - 3rd year
Director of Clinical Support Services, Vidant Health
211 Virginia Road; PO Box 629
Edenton, NC 27932
Email: matt.gitzinger@vidanthealth.com

William Haugh, FACHE
MHA 2008 - 2nd year
CEO, Georgetown Community Hospital
1140 Lexington Rd.
Georgetown, KY 40324
Email: william.haugh@lpnt.net

Alan Keesee
MHA 2009 - 3rd year
COO, Sunrise Hospital & Medical Center
3186 S. Maryland Parkway
Las Vegas, NV 89109
Email: Alan.Keesee@hcahealthcare.com

Marijo Lecker
MSHA 1993 - 1st year
Vice President, Clinical Programs, Sentara Martha Jefferson Hospital and Sentara RMH Medical Center
500 Martha Jefferson Drive
Charlottesville, VA 22911
Email: mxlecker@sentara.com

William Maixner
MHA 2010 - 1st year
Associate Administrator, MCV Associated Physicians, VCU Health, Division of Transplant Surgery & Office of Research, Biomedicine, Innovation, & Technology
1200 East Broad St., Box 980710
Richmond, VA 23298
Email: William.maixner@vcuhealth.org

Steve Montgomery
MHA 1975 - 1st year
Retired, former President/CEO of Williamsburg Landing
Williamsburg, VA
Email: monty1221@icloud.com

Jenifer Murphy
MHA 2009 - 4th year
Patient Safety Manager, VCU Health
Richmond, VA 23298
Email: jenifer.murphy@vcuhealth.org

Tracey Papas
MSHA 2011 - 3rd year
Director, Clinical Information and Reporting, Anthem
5729 Rolling Creek Place
Glen Allen, VA 23059
Email: Tracey.papas@anthem.com

Carrie Willetts
MSHA 2007 - 3rd year
President, Wellspan Ephrata Community Hospital
169 Martin Ave
Ephrata, PA 17522
Email: cwwilletts@wellspan.org

Sam Williamson
MHA 2010 - 4th year
Director of Finance, Piedmont Atlanta Hospital
1968 Peachtree Rd NW
Atlanta, GA 30309
Email: samuel.williamson@piedmont.org