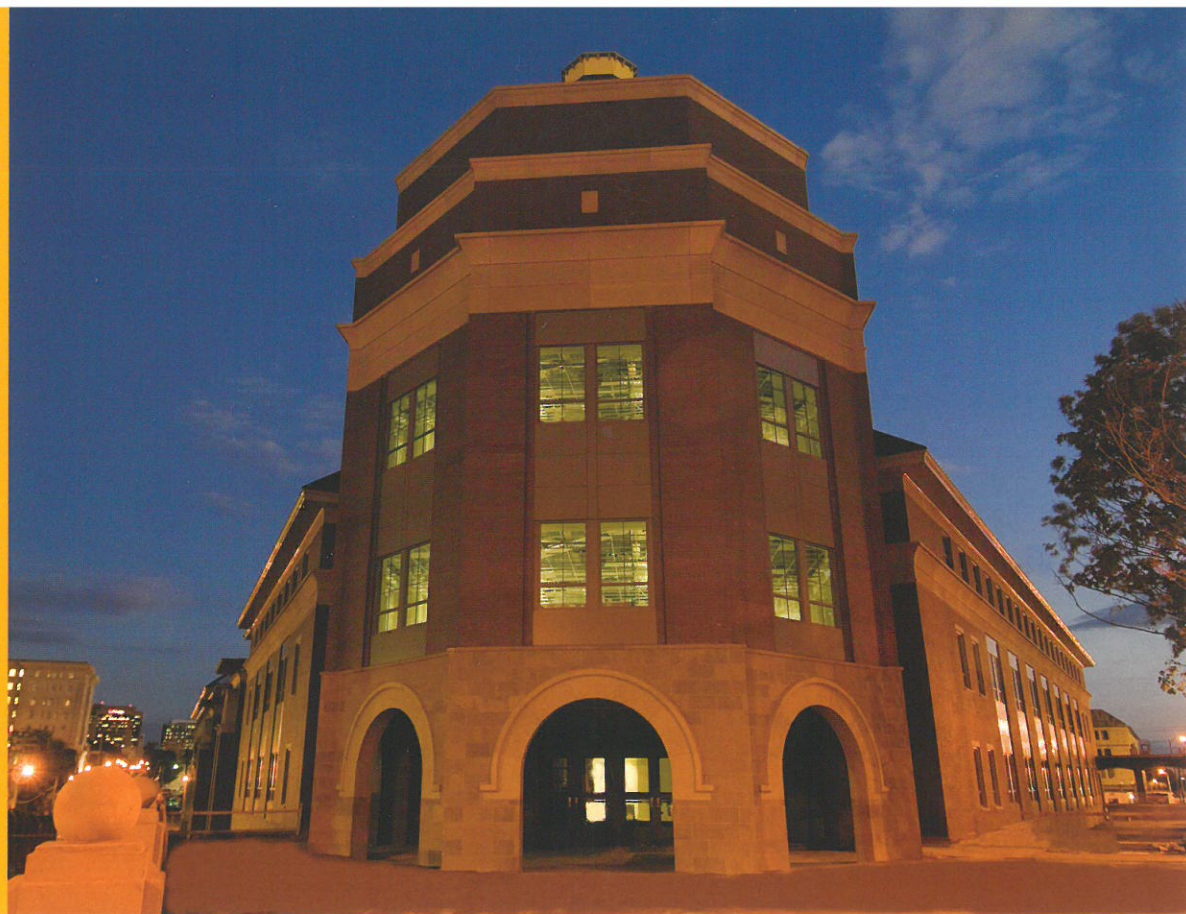


The Pauley Pavilion, the octagonal tower that anchors the School of Engineering expansion, will house the new da Vinci Center for Innovation in Product Design and Development. The center will bring together the disciplines of engineering, business, and design in a single venue to engage the creative, the technical, and the commercial elements that comprise successful product development.



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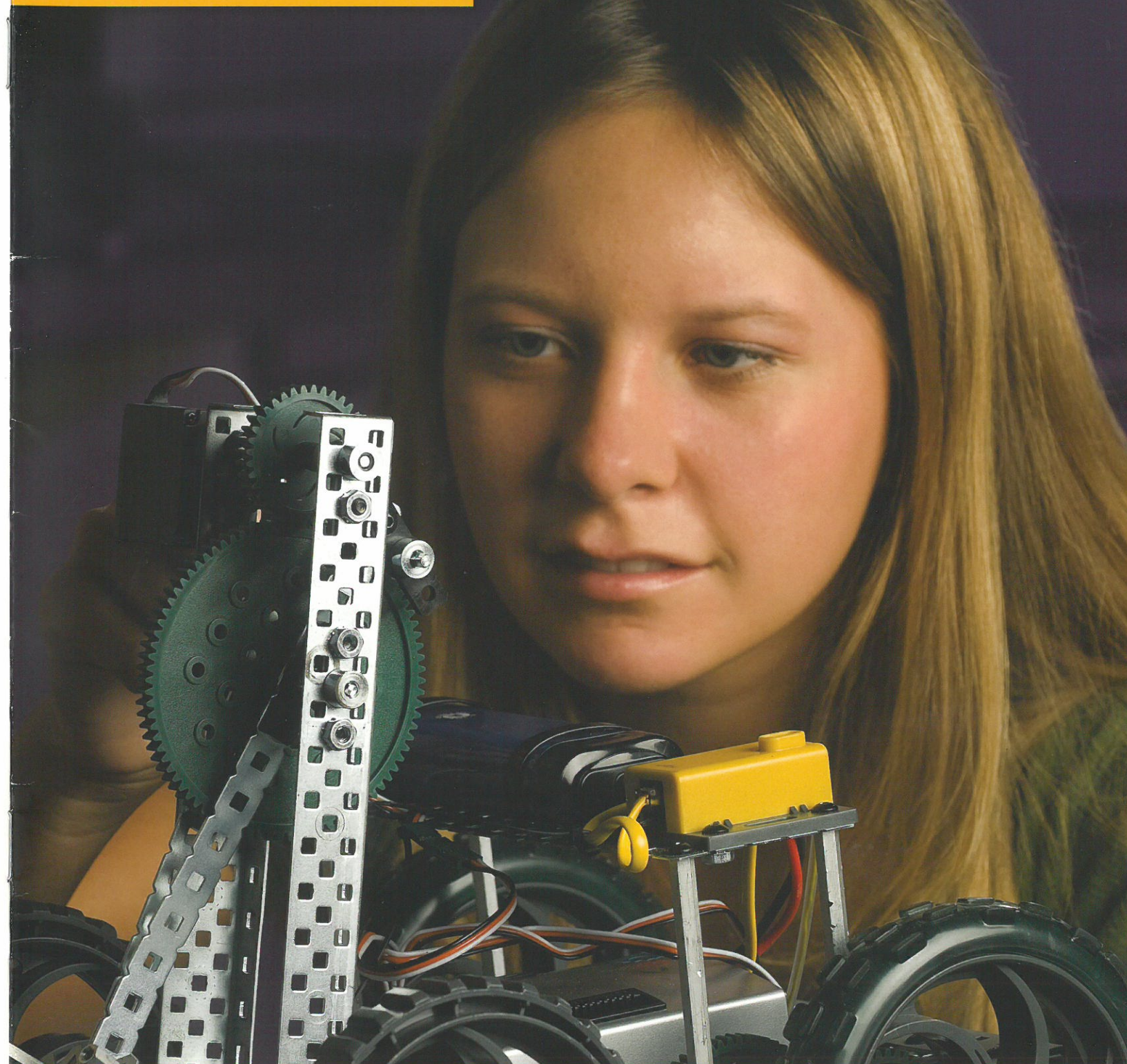
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# VCU Engineering

Fall 2007

Volume 2 • Issue 1



**focus on the future**

V i r g i n i a   C o m m o n w e a l t h   U n i v e r s i t y



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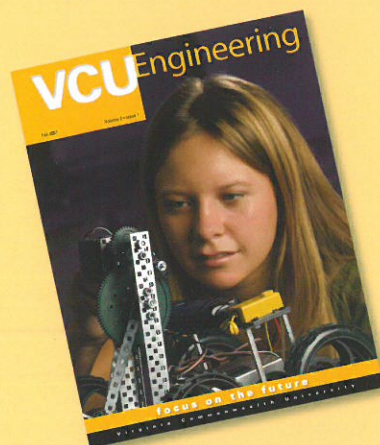
## BOARDS

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## *Celebrating Our Success*

On September 27, VCU celebrated the successful conclusion of its recent Campaign and announced that \$410,341,216 had been raised, exceeding its goal of \$330,500,000 by nearly \$80 million.



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**Contributors:** Bob Burke, Anita Hazel, Brian Thomas

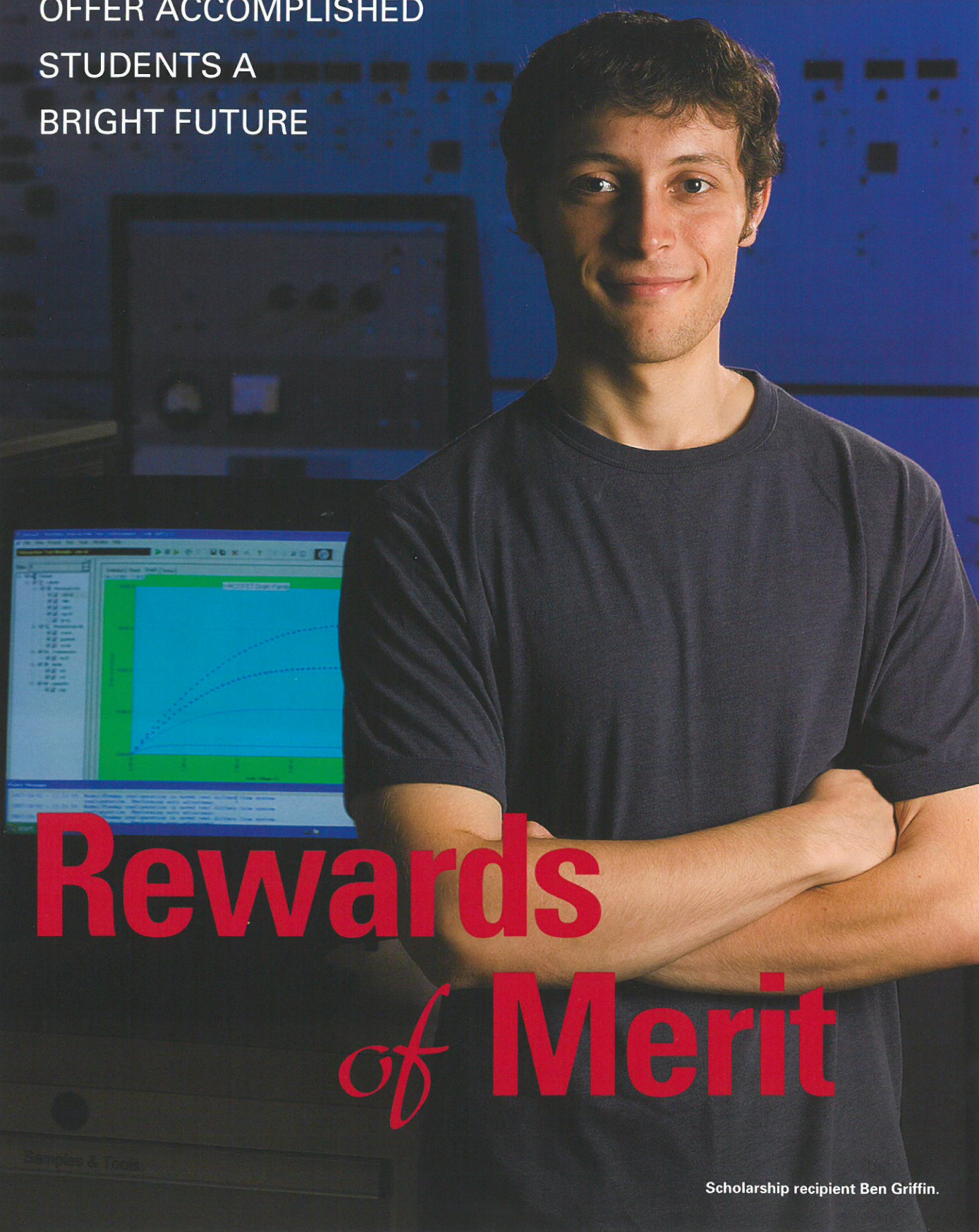
**Photography:** Alan Jones, Jennifer Watson, Doug Buerlein and Mark Sternheimer

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**On the cover:** Ashley Reed, 14, is photographed with a robotic car constructed during a week-long robotics summer camp held at the School. Ashley participated in the FIRST Lego League VEX camp as a middle school student. (Photo by Doug Buerlein)



VCU SCHOLARSHIPS  
OFFER ACCOMPLISHED  
STUDENTS A  
BRIGHT FUTURE



Scholarship recipient Ben Griffin.

# Rewards of Merit

**A**s a senior coming out of Gloucester High School in Virginia's Middle Peninsula, Ben Griffin had plenty of choices. With a near-perfect GPA and high SAT scores, colleges wanted him, and every application he mailed out was accepted.

Virginia Tech invited him to join its honors program, and he was tempted. But Griffin had also been accepted to Virginia Commonwealth University's School of Engineering and its honors program. He toured both schools and favored VCU. "It seemed more welcoming," he said.

What helped seal the deal for Griffin was VCU's offer of a Dean's Scholarship, which would cover half of his in-state tuition and fees. "That was a big factor," said Griffin, now 21 and in his final year at VCU. "Half my tuition equals thousands of dollars off."

In addition, Griffin earned the Robert J. Matrauch Merit Scholarship, named for the school's former dean. He won that by acing every course in his first term. The financial aid helped bring him to VCU, and the experiences he's had since then have convinced him that it was the right choice.

"I love the School of Engineering," said Griffin, who is one of its top students. He majors in electrical engineering and physics. "It's a research university. Almost every professor has their own research, and I like the willingness that professors have to work with undergraduates in their group."

But as Griffin and others like him exit VCU, who will replace them? The competition for the best and brightest engineering applicants is fierce. And for many families, the dollars will drive the final decision, said Dr. Russ Jamison, dean of the School of Engineering. "We're drawing from a demographic of middle-class families who are often too wealthy for financial assistance, but not wealthy enough to write the check," he said.

## Expanding Opportunities

VCU has plenty to offer students – including the new, 115,000-square-foot space in the Monroe Park Campus that the school will grow into in January. That building will have state-of-the-art lecture halls, more than 60 research and teaching labs, student meeting and study spaces, as well as classrooms and faculty offices.

Still, the reality is that the school's facilities – and the close-knit relationship between faculty and the students – isn't always enough. "It's our view that we can build it, but the students that we want are not necessarily in a financial position to come," Jamison said.

"Last year, the engineering school began a new merit-based scholarship program to expand its ability to draw top students. It awarded about 50 scholarships, and expects to match that number this year", Jamison said. The scholarships are renewable for four years for students who maintain a 3.0 GPA. In all, the scholarships offered last year provided more than \$1.5 million in financial assistance.

"The school's goal now is to expand the merit-based scholarship offerings. The pool of accomplished students graduating from high schools in Virginia and around the country is shrinking", Jamison said. "Most of these students have offers from other universities, so VCU has to level the playing field."



Tom Eilerson, president of EDC, and Brian Glass, the recipient of the unique scholarship that offers support for deserving students studying engineering and the creative arts.

## Programs Offer Unique Options

"VCU's engineering school can compete because it offers an academic and social environment that others don't have", Jamison said. It has an urban campus in downtown Richmond, a smaller school size with just under 1,200 students, and a diverse student body, which is 50 percent female and minority students. Plus, the Richmond area offers many opportunities to intern with businesses. Griffin, for example, spent last summer working with Qimonda, a semiconductor maker with a production facility in nearby Henrico County. He found that internship through an engineering school program that matches students with



major employers in the Richmond region.

Griffin said students comparing engineering schools should also pay attention to how VCU's school treats its new students. "It's all the hands-on experience you get," he said. "At a lot of other schools, at the earliest, your sophomore year is when you get to decide what you're going to study. Right off the bat at VCU, I was in electrical engineering. And in my 101 class, we were building things."

### Unusual Pairing Pays Off

The School of Engineering already offers a number of merit-based scholarships. Among them is one that underscores the school's innovative approach. The EDC Scholarship – provided by EDC Corp., a Virginia-based general contracting and construction management firm, invites applications from students with an interest in engineering and the creative arts. For those who qualify, it pays for half the tuition and fees. The scholarship began in 1998.

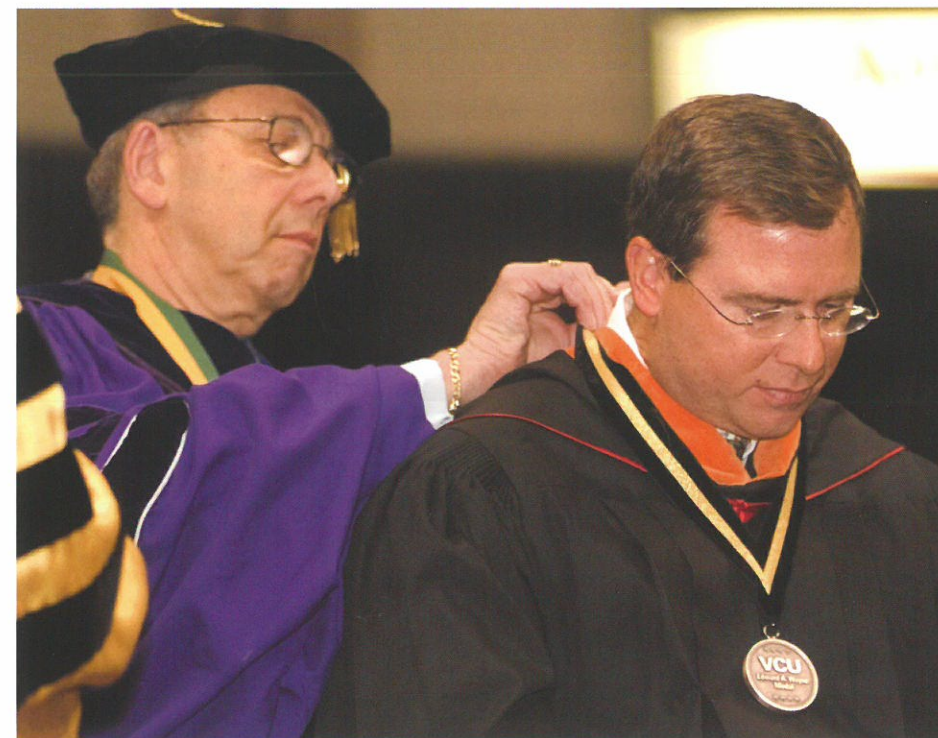
Thomas Eilerson, the company president and a member of the School of Engineering Foundation Board, knows that engineering and the arts is an unusual combination, but said it addresses an important need. "Being around engineers all the time, I'm always complaining that there's a lack of vision and a lack of creativity," he said. "This scholarship

promotes not only the engineering school, but also the relationship between the engineering school and the School of the Arts."

The most recent recipient of the EDC Scholarship is Brian Glass, who is majoring in computer science in kinetic imaging. VCU's art school has a strong national reputation, and the scholarship is helping him combine that with engineering studies. "I don't think a lot of places are offering a fine arts degree in audio and video animation," he says. Glass is in his second year at VCU. After completing his undergraduate degree, he plans to attend graduate school and pursue work in audio and video production.

Glass agrees with Eilerson's vision of mixing engineering with creative arts. "In order to design a really good product or groundbreaking device, you need to have some engineering capabilities and also a good creative side."

Glass has been paying for his own education through school loans, so the scholarship money made a huge difference. That's an example Jamison hopes to repeat. The engineering school will be able to build on the success it has had since it was launched 11 years ago, and can draw top students with its small size and unique academic environment, he says. "These are things that can seal the deal with students," he says. "But the foundation of that deal is financial."



VCU Rector Ed Bersoff presents Henry Becker with the Edward A. Wayne Medal, which recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions or provided exemplary service to VCU. Mr. Becker is a member of the School Foundation Board of Trustees and is President of Qimonda North America.

## Foundation Elects Two New Members

*The School of Engineering Foundation has elected two new members to its Board. Hugh Joyce, President of James River Air Conditioning Company, and Wayne Hunter, Managing Partner of Harbert Management Corporation will begin their three-year terms began July 1, 2007.*



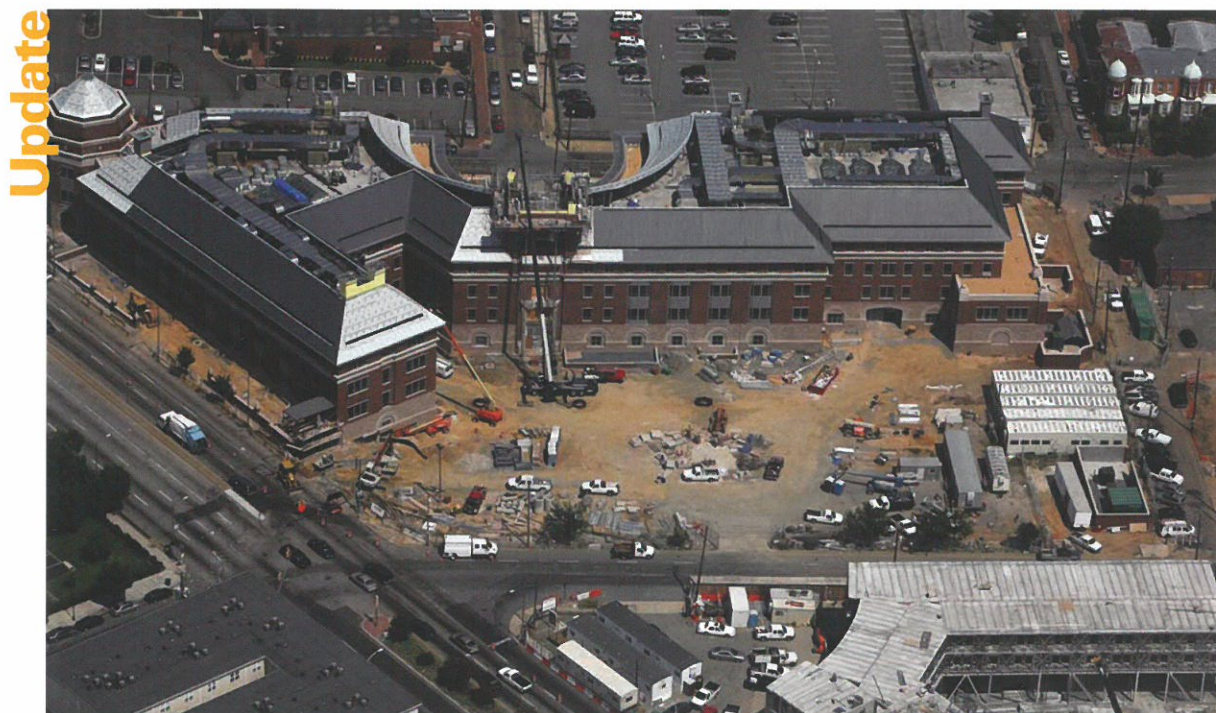
Hugh Joyce



Wayne Hunter

Hugh Joyce has been working in the family HVAC/R service business since 1980. Hugh started as an installation helper, then worked in service, sales, and management. He is currently the majority shareholder and President of the Company. James River and its affiliate, Whitescarver Engineering, service the Richmond, Virginia and Roanoke, Virginia markets respectively. Corporate sales are in excess of \$19.0 million. Hugh attended the University of Richmond and earned a B.S. Degree in Management with marketing and finance competencies. Additionally, Hugh is a past board member of ACCA National and past president of the Central Virginia ACCA. Other affiliations include Rotary, Richmond SPCA, BBB of Richmond, Boy Scouts, and the YMCA.

Wayne Hunter is a managing partner of the Venture Capital Investment Team of Harbert Management Corporation. Prior to joining Harbert in 2002, he was the Managing Director and Head of First Union's Technology Investment Banking Group. In addition, he was a member of First Union's Private Equity/Venture Capital Fund Investment Committee and served on First Union's Investment Banking Management Committee. He has more than 15 years of experience working with leading entrepreneurs and venture capitalists in the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic regions. Mr. Hunter received a J.D. from the University of Alabama School of Law and a B.S. degree from Auburn University.



After two years of construction, the new 250,000 sq.ft. building that will house the VCU School of Business and an expansion of the School of Engineering is scheduled to be completed in November. The departments of Mechanical Engineering and Computer Science will move across Belvidere Street into their new spaces. The expansion of the School of Engineering includes 48 research labs, 45 faculty offices, instructional labs, classrooms, and administrative offices.



## Programs Introduce Students to Engineering



VEX camp participants proudly display their robotic design.



Participants formed teams and worked cooperatively during the week long VEX camp.

### VEX Program

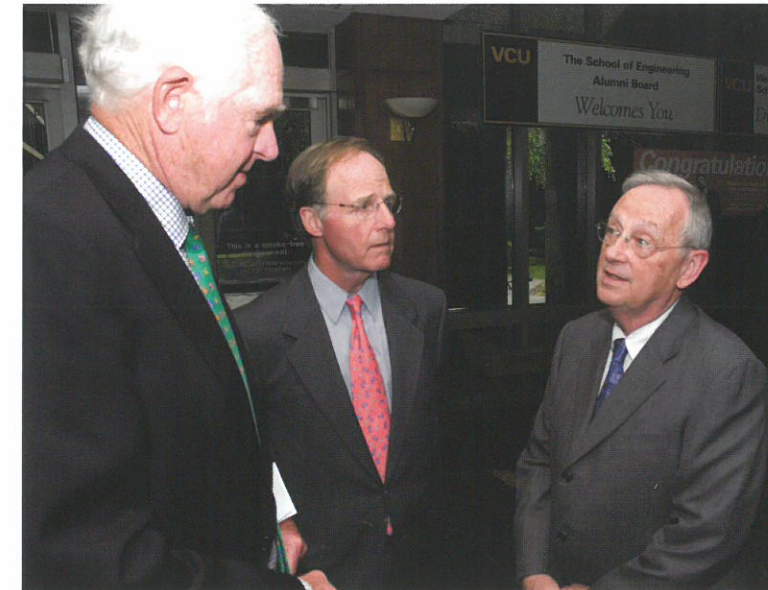
High schoolers from across the Richmond area gathered at the School recently for a VEX Robotics camp. Students worked with robotics mentors during the one-week camp session which culminated in a challenging competition for robots and students.

### RAPME Program

The School of Engineering hosted the RAPME (Richmond Area Program for Minorities in Engineering) Summer Engineering Institute in July. The program provides students with information about various fields of engineering in order to acquaint them with the requirements for pursuing a career in engineering. Middle school students participate in engineering related classroom projects, while high school students blend engineering and computer classes with robotics projects. All students enjoy visiting local area firms to witness first hand the work of engineers as well as attend lectures by practicing engineers in various fields.



## Qimonda Gives Record Gift to School of Engineering

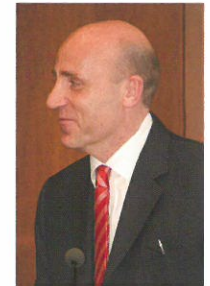


Dr. Eugene P. Trani, president of VCU, and School Foundation Board members Bill Goodwin and John Sherman.

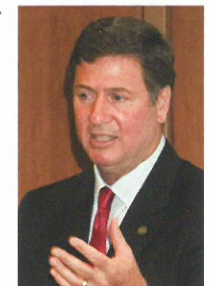
The School of Engineering recently announced the largest corporate gift in its history. The \$2 million unrestricted gift from Qimonda North America helped push the Campaign over its \$67 million goal.

Dr. Eugene P. Trani, President of VCU, Thomas Seifert, COO, Qimonda AG, and former Virginia governor George Allen spoke at the announcement event held May 16 in the School's Ethyl Auditorium.

Thomas Seifert, COO of Qimonda AG, announced the \$2 million gift and emphasized the company's commitment to the School.



George Allen, governor of Virginia during the establishment of the School, spoke about the need to encourage young people to study engineering and science.



Foundation board member Art Hurtado and Dean Russ Jamison.

## School Hosts First Career Fair

The School of Engineering hosted its first career fair in September with every available space filled by businesses ranging from pump and fluid product manufacturers to financial institutions. Companies set up display areas and their representatives met and talked with students throughout the day. Approximately 240 students pre-registered for the event and many more joined in and visited with recruiters and others from a wide variety of industries.

Company attendees expressed their delight at the opportunity

to meet School students and several held on site interviews for those that they felt were potential matches for available employment opportunities. The Career Fair will be an annual event and will move to the new School of Engineering expansion in fall 2008.







## Klenke's Team Soars in Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Competition

Bob Klenke, associate professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, led a team of students to a second place finish in the 5th Annual Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) Student

UAV competition held recently at the naval air facility at Webster Field in Maryland. The team designed and built an electric-powered model helicopter system to transport a camera to various locations enabling it to sense the environment without

having a person onboard. This application is particularly useful for military surveillance work and is the traditional way that UAV's are utilized.

Klenke and his team, comprised of graduate and undergraduate students, also focus on research involving the planes and helicopters they design. The group has developed their own jet-turbine powered aircraft now being used to test an autopilot system they designed for AirStar, a NASA program. The AirStar program uses a dynamically-scaled jet powered model of a passenger airliner to test new flight control laws designed to help a pilot fly an aircraft when it is damaged or experiences critical system failure. The student-designed autopilot system will be used to safeguard the \$500,000 model passenger airliner should it encounter any difficulties during flight.



Aerial view from the unmanned helicopter.



## Seven New Faculty Join School

The School of Engineering welcomed seven new faculty members to the 2007-08 academic year in September. Each department hired at least one new addition and, in the case of Computer Science, a new Chair, as well.



**Ou Bai** received his Ph.D. in engineering systems and technology from Saga University in Japan and also spent four years as a Fellow at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. His research work includes neurophysiological signal processing, brain imaging, brain/computer interface, and motor plasticity and rehabilitation. Bai is an assistant professor in biomedical engineering.

**Krys Cios** is a professor and chair of the Department of Computer Science. He obtained his Ph.D. in computer science from AGH University of Science and Technology in Krakow, Poland. Cios went on to receive his M.B.A. and D.Sc. degrees and comes to the School from the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center where he was a professor of computer science and engineering. His research work is focused on biomedical informatics, data mining, and learning algorithms.



**Yuichi Motai** is an assistant professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and received his Ph.D. from Purdue University in 2002. He previously studied in Japan and received his M.E. in applied systems science from Kyoto University. Motai's research interests are in medical imaging, computer vision, robotics, and human-computer interaction.

**Kayvan Najarian** attended the Amirkabir University of Technology in Iran where he received his M.Sc. and the University of British Columbia in Canada, where he received his Ph.D. in electrical and computer engineering in 2000. He is an associate professor of Computer Science and is interested in research involving biomedical signal and image processing, biomedical informatics, signal processing for finance and banking, and artificial intelligence.



**Hooman Tafreshi** is an assistant professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering and attended the Lappeenranta University of Technology in Finland where he received his Ph.D. in mechanical engineering. His research work focuses on modeling and experimentation with waterjets and nozzle cavitation, aerosol flows and nanoparticle filtration, nanoparticle focusing and deposition, fluid

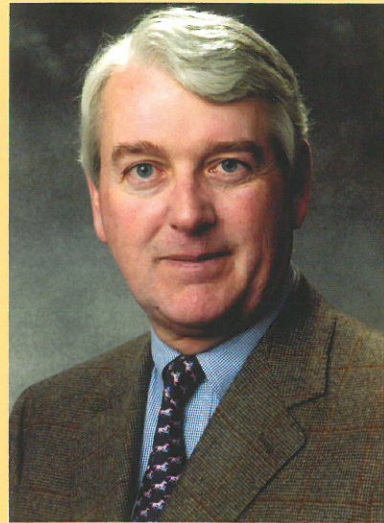
transport in fibrous porous media, heat and mass transfer, and molecular dynamics simulation of granular materials.

**Amy Throckmorton** attended the University of Virginia and obtained her B.S., and M.S. degrees and a Ph.D. in biomedical engineering there. She is an assistant professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering and does research involving experimental and computational fluid dynamics, turbomachinery design and applications, bench-to-bedside development of medical devices, artificial organs for the pediatric population, prediction and quantification of blood trauma and thrombosis in medical devices, and cardiovascular modeling and univentricular Fontan physiology.



**Vamsi Yadavalli** is an assistant professor in the Department of Chemical and Life Science Engineering and attended Pennsylvania State University where he received his Ph.D. in chemical engineering. He spent several years as a Fellow at the National Institutes of Health in Washington D.C. His research work is in the areas of single molecule protein biophysics, optical biosensors, functional biomaterials, surface science, and micro and nanofabricated devices.





## Dear Friends:

The VCU School of Engineering Foundation is fortunate to receive generous financial support from alumni, parents, faculty, staff, trustees, corporations, foundations, and other friends. Last year, more than \$6 million was contributed to the Foundation from a record 301 donors. This level of support is a testimony to the important role that the School of Engineering plays in our community and the impact it has on the lives of our students.

The Foundation is pleased to acknowledge those who have helped the School of Engineering achieve its success. The names of the donors who made gifts during the 2007 fiscal year are listed on the pages that follow. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list. If your name is omitted, misspelled or not listed appropriately, please contact the Foundation Office, (804) 828-2909.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,  
Clifford A. Cutchins IV  
Chair, Advancement Committee



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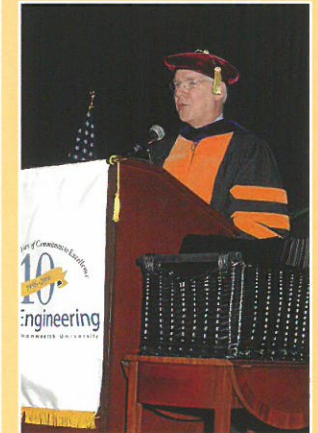
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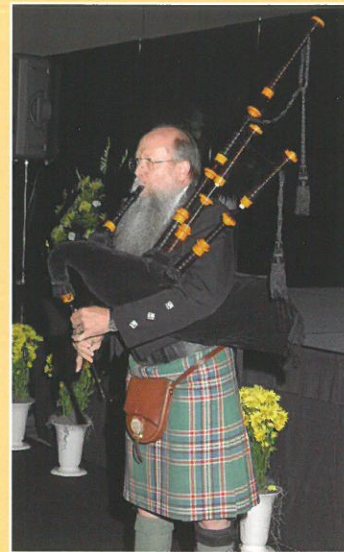
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Mary Perkinson

Mary Perkinson '03, ME, has been named to the Top Forty Under 40 by the Hampton Roads Business Journal. Perkinson is a mechanical engineer with Northrop Grumman Newport News where she has worked for four years and was nominated for the honor by her supervisor, Keith Miller.

Nominees for the award were evaluated for their vision and leadership, innovation and achievements, and strategies for success. Emphasis was also placed on their community service including the impact of volunteer work and their commitment to that work. Mary was recognized for her innovative leadership and implementation of best work practices at Northrop Grumman. She led the implementation of a wide variety of projects there including major renovations and environmental projects. Additionally, she is active with the Society of Women Engineers on a national and local level, and serves on the School of Engineering Alumni Board of Directors and the VCU School Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Before joining Northrop Grumman Newport News, Mary created and developed two businesses of her own, HavtaHavaHat, a company that designed custom and original hats for sale in galleries and stores, and MEP Design, where she served as a designer draftsman working with engineering firms and manufacturing facilities.

## Class of 2002 Reunion



The School of Engineering hosted the fifth-year reunion for the Class of 2002 in May 2007. Alumni had the opportunity to tour Phase II of the School of Engineering. Later, classmates and their guests joined the School's faculty and staff for an evening reception in the School's courtyard.

Plans for Class of 2003 Reunion are underway and information packets will be mailed within the next month.

*Pictured, clockwise from top, left:*

Chris Thompson '02, ME, and Abigail Kirk

Shannon Dowdy '02, EE, and Brittany Heyward

Waverly Jones '02, EE, and Dr. Rosalyn Hobson, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies

Jennifer King Sherman '02, ChE



## School Celebrates Graduates

The families and guests of School of Engineering graduates filled the 1,300-seat Richmond Center to near capacity on May 16, 2007 to be part of the seventh spring Diploma Ceremony.

88 undergraduate students and 17 graduate students received their diplomas. Dean Russ Jamison addressed the graduates and their guests after leading the academic procession which was piped into the Richmond Center by a bagpiper, a tradition at the School that began with its first diploma ceremony.



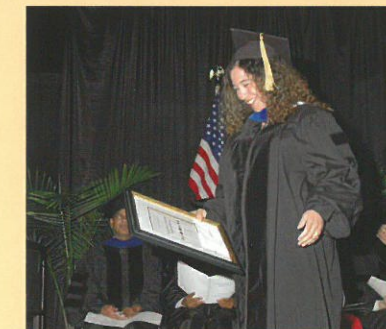
Candidates for graduation and the academic procession are led into the Richmond Center by bagpiper Bud Diehl.



The class of '07 waits to be seated for the awarding of their diplomas.



Dean Russ Jamison congratulates Dianne and Ken Wright on their receipt of the Dean's Distinguished Service Award given to recognize outstanding commitment to the School.



Karla Mossi was presented the inaugural Parents Award for Teaching Excellence by Parent's Council co-chairs Phyllis Cothran and Arnie Stolberg. Mossi is an associate professor of mechanical engineering.



Brad Crosby, '01, member of the Foundation Board of Trustees, addresses the graduates.



## 2000

**Ed Buchanan, ME**, obtained his P.E. license in January 2007. He is currently a Project Manager with URS Corporation in Richmond, VA. He serves on the School's Alumni Board and as Chair of the Central Virginia Section of ASME. Ed and his wife, Lori Kay, have a son, Evan.

**Steve Hertzler, ChE**, is a Patent Attorney with Nixon Peabody LLP in Washington, DC. He and his wife, Rebecca, have a daughter, Ally, and a son, Jake.

**Jason S. Walters, ME**, recently received his Professional Engineering licenses in New York. He holds three Master's degrees; his most recent is from Stony Brook University where he received a Master's degree in Waste Management.

## 2002

**Ronald A. Hall, EE**, and Latasha Brim, were married in August 2007. They currently reside in Northern Virginia. Ron is employed by the Department of State in Washington, D.C. Latasha is the Housing Development Manager of Loudon County.

**Waverly Jones, EE**, and Tabitha Jamison were married in Richmond in July 2007. Waverly is an Engineer II with Dominion. Tabitha is a teacher in the Isle of Wight County School System.

**Frank Palmieri III, ChE**, is a Graduate Research Assistant at the University of Texas, where he is pursuing his Ph.D. He recently presented his doctoral research at international conferences in Boston, Massachusetts and San Jose, California. Frank races with the UT cycling team and brews his own beer.

**Timothy M. Van Drew, EE**, received his Masters in Systems Engineering from George Mason University in December 2006.

**David Voros, BME**, is a Site Manager with Philips Medical Systems in Fredericksburg, VA. He is a new member of the School's Alumni Board.

## 2004

**James Estep, CS**, is a Systems Engineer at Edgepoint, Inc. in Midlothian, Virginia.

## 2005

**Brandon Pace, ChE**, is a Process Engineer at Delta-T Corporation in Williamsburg, Virginia.

## 2006

**Joshua L. McCroskey, ME**, and his wife, Jennifer, were married in October 2006. They currently reside in Bristol, Tennessee. Josh is a Manufacturing Process Engineer at Strongwell in Bristol, Virginia.

**Tin Myint, ME**, is an engineer with Dominion Power. He is a new member of the School's Alumni Board.

**Jessica Pruden, ME**, is a Product Development Engineer with Amsted Rail Industries in Petersburg, Virginia. She is a new member of the School's Alumni Board.

## In Memoriam

**Thomas Henderson**, 40, died on August 11, 2007. He was a native of Richmond, Virginia and was studying Chemical and Life Science engineering. Thomas, a rising junior, was a member of the National Society of Black Engineers as well as the American Institute of Chemical Engineers. He leaves behind a wife and two children. Thomas had many friends here and will be greatly missed.

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