



# COMMENCEMENT

*Richard S. Reynolds Graduate School*  
*Robins School of Business*

*May 12, 2018*



Dear Graduates:

It is a pleasure to gather with you today to celebrate your remarkable accomplishments at the University of Richmond. This program notes many of those achievements, yet such lists can only hint at the range of success and opportunities that you have collectively realized.

This ceremony marks an important milestone; it also celebrates a beginning — indeed, a commencement — of the “lives of purpose” for which your education has prepared you. Our hope is that your time at Richmond has challenged you intellectually, animated a lifelong curiosity, and introduced you to new perspectives and experiences. We have also sought to give you the opportunity to build lasting friendships with faculty, staff, and fellow students from whom you will continue to draw knowledge and inspiration.

We are grateful for the contributions you have made to the University and to those whom you have assisted in the surrounding communities. It has been a privilege to have you in our community of scholars, and we look forward with anticipation to the differences you will make as leaders in your professions, communities, the nation, and the world. As you extend your appreciation to family and friends who have supported you on this path, know that when the last strains of *Pomp and Circumstance March No. 4* have played and you have departed Queally Hall with your classmates, you will always have a home here at Richmond.

My best wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ronald A. Crutcher".

Ronald A. Crutcher  
President

# COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

PRESIDING

**Dr. Jeffrey W. Legro**

*Executive Vice President and Provost*

Academic Processional March and National Anthem .....	Beth E. Martin
Invocation.....	The Reverend Dr. Craig Kocher <i>University Chaplain and Jessie Ball duPont Chair of the Chaplaincy</i>
Welcome .....	Dr. Legro
Introductory Remarks .....	Dr. Nancy A. Bagranoff <i>Dean, Robins School of Business</i>
Introduction of Commencement Speaker .....	Dr. Randle D. Raggio <i>Associate Dean, Robins School of Business</i>
Student Commencement Speaker.....	Amber Elena Answine, GB'18
Commencement Address.....	Ting Xu <i>Founder, Evergreen Enterprises</i>
Presentation of Degree Candidates.....	Dr. Bagranoff
Conferring of Degrees .....	Dr. Legro
Benediction .....	Dr. Kocher



## *Other Participants on the Dais*

Debra L. Fisher, <i>Associate Director of The Richmond MBA</i> .....	Commencement Reader
Kristen A. Ball, <i>Senior Associate Registrar</i> .....	Assisting with Diplomas
John Edward Bryan, GB'18 .....	Robins School of Business Banner Bearer

*Banner bearer is the graduating student with the highest grade point average.*

## *Students in Completion of Degrees*

### MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION GRADUATES — AUGUST 16, 2017

Nicholas Anthony Baldaino Jr. .... Richmond, Va.  
B.S., James Madison University

Stuart Edward Burgh ..... Richmond, Va.  
B.S., Virginia Commonwealth University

Daniel Hunter Catley ..... Richmond, Va.  
B.A., James Madison University

Jason D. Fitzke ..... Richmond, Va.  
B.S., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Cameron Alan Holmes ..... Stafford, Va.  
M.S., East Carolina University  
B.S., East Carolina University

Brandy Marie Johnson ..... Richmond, Va.  
B.S., Randolph-Macon College

Dianna Jean Kelly ..... Midlothian, Va.  
B.B.A., Eastern New Mexico University

Emma Lande Leonard ..... Richmond, Va.  
B.A., University of the South

Eric Kyler Mayton ..... Lawrenceville, Va.  
M.S., Virginia Commonwealth University  
B.S., University of Virginia

Ryan James McGowan ..... Richmond, Va.  
B.S., University of South Carolina

Kevin O'Neill ..... Richmond, Va.  
M.S., University of Central Florida  
B.S., University of Central Florida

Julie Catherine Riley ..... Richmond, Va.  
B.A., Virginia Commonwealth University

Lauren Vann Shotwell ..... Clinton, N.C.  
B.S., North Carolina State University

### MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION GRADUATES — JANUARY 3, 2018

Andrew Joseph Basile ..... Fredericksburg, Va.  
B.S., University of Mary Washington

Georgia Grace Gristwood ..... Richmond, Va.  
B.S., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

George Leslie Handler IV ..... Mechanicsville, Va.  
B.S., Virginia Military Institute

Rahim M. Karim ..... Vancouver, British Columbia  
B.A.S., University of Richmond

Kristen Elizabeth Killea ..... Richmond, Va.  
B.B.A., James Madison University

Gregory Robert Millette ..... Wilton, Conn.  
B.S., Stonehill College

### MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION CANDIDATES — MAY 12, 2018

Amber Elena Answine ..... Hershey, Pa.  
M. Arch., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
B.S., Cornell University

• Eryn Leigh Berquist ..... Greensburg, Pa.  
J.D., University of Richmond  
B.A., James Madison University

• Meghan Leigh Boyle ..... Richmond, Va.  
B.A., Virginia Commonwealth University

John Edward Bryan ..... Richmond, Va.  
B.A., University of Virginia

• Julian Cha ..... Richmond, Va.  
B.S., Virginia Commonwealth University

• Dennis Washburn Craft ..... Richmond, Va.  
B.A., University of Virginia

• Heidi Marie Drauschak ..... Exton, Pa.  
J.D., University of Richmond  
B.S., American University

Bryan Christopher Figura ..... Richmond, Va.  
M.A., Bowling Green State University  
B.A., Longwood University

Hemantkumar Gai .....Pune, India  
M.S., Rochester Institute of Technology  
B.E., University of Pune

•Zarinah Hasin Fareed Graham.....Richmond, Va.  
B.S., Hampton University

•Benjamin M. Greenberg.....Stony Brook, N.Y.  
B.S., Pennsylvania State University

•Lindsay Nicole Kennedy.....Henrico, Va.  
M.S., Virginia Commonwealth University  
B.S., Virginia Commonwealth University

John Carter Lester .....Richmond, Va.  
B.S., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Sherryl Patricia O’Neill..... San Francisco, Calif.  
B.S., University of Phoenix

Jonathan Duncan Pitchford ..... Chesterfield, Va.  
J.D., Washington & Lee University  
B.A., Centre College

Bikram Saini.....Richmond, Va.  
M.D., St. Petersburg State Medical Academy

•Cassidy Lee Wagner ..... Pendleton, S.C.  
M.S., Shenandoah University  
B.S., Clemson University

•Robert James Wagner .....Bluffton, Ohio  
B.S., United States Naval Academy

## Biographies

### COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

**Ting Xu**, a Shanghai, China, native, founded Evergreen Enterprises in her Richmond, Virginia, suburban home in 1993 with \$20,000. From a small decorative flag line, Evergreen has grown to be one of the leading gift, garden, and home decor companies in North America, with over 1,400 employees. Under Xu’s leadership the company has completed numerous successful acquisitions including the 2010 purchase of Plow & Hearth, a multichannel retailer of home, garden, and children’s products; the 2012 purchase of Team Sports America, a provider of licensed sports novelty items; and the 2014 purchase of VivaTerra, a multichannel retailer of high-design, eco-friendly home decor.

Xu serves on various boards including the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond Center Stage, and Virginia Commonwealth University’s School of Business. She is an advocate for Chinese-American relations, sponsoring events like the VMFA’s Forbidden City and Terracotta Warriors, the Richmond Ballet’s Road to China, and numerous political and economic development events locally and in China. Xu is an active angel investor in a variety of industries including consumer products, health care, financial services, and technology in both the U.S. and China. She lives in Goochland, Virginia, with her husband Frank.

### STUDENT COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

**Amber Elena Answine** graduated from Cornell University with a Bachelor of Science in hospitality administration and a minor in real estate, followed by a Master of Architecture from Virginia Tech. Amber began her professional career at Marriott International where she participated on the team responsible for launching the AC Hotels by Marriott brand in the U.S. She moved to Richmond to work for Apple Hospitality REIT on their CapEx team in 2014 and started the Richmond MBA in fall 2016. During her MBA, she served as the women’s chair of the MBA Leadership Council and is proud of the programs and events that resulted from dedicated collaboration with the MBA administration.

After graduation, Amber is moving to New Orleans to work with hospitality start-up, Sonder. Her overarching aspiration is to become an active social entrepreneur building companies with purpose.

## *Honors*

### **OMICRON DELTA KAPPA**

The purpose of Omicron Delta Kappa as an honor society is to celebrate excellence in academics and integrity of character. The society exists because those who founded it believed that there are achievements worthy of celebration: academic work of extraordinary quality and exemplary leadership.

Amber Elena Answine  
Jonathan Duncan Pitchford

## *Awards*

### **OUTSTANDING M.B.A. GRADUATE OF THE YEAR**

Each year faculty members in the M.B.A. program nominate graduating students for the Outstanding M.B.A. Graduate of the Year Award. All nominations are received, reviewed, and selected by the University of Richmond's M.B.A. Alumni Society.

Amber Elena Answine

## *Academic Regalia*

The Commencement ceremony is the means by which an institution publicly acknowledges and honors the accomplishments of those who have satisfactorily completed one or more programs of study. Although usually a solemn occasion, it is not without color and pageantry. The academic attire is of special significance to the participants, as each part of the regalia represents academic accomplishments and traditions.

Commencement attire has its origin in the universities of twelfth-century Western Europe. Gowns and hoods were probably designed for warmth in the damp, unheated lecture halls. The first American institution to use this garb was King's College, now Columbia University, copying the British academic dress in the eighteenth century. Other colleges adopted the attire shortly thereafter, modifying and personalizing it. As the number of colleges and universities increased during the post-Civil War years, so did the styles of the academic attire. A need for uniformity was recognized, and in 1895, the Academic Costume Code was established. Academic regalia basically remained unchanged until 1960, when a committee of the American Council of Education issued revised guidelines.

There are three articles of approved academic attire: cap, gown, and hood. The Oxford cap, or mortarboard, is nine inches square on a soft pointed cap. It matches the gown in color and material with a similar color tassel. The doctoral cap is velvet with a gold tassel. The gown for the baccalaureate degree, and all higher degrees, is usually black. The designs of the gowns are basically the same with varying degrees of fullness, sleeve length, and trim as determined by the academic level, the doctoral gown having velvet panels down the front and three velvet bars on the sleeves.

The most recognizable symbol of degree is the hood. Hoods vary in length from the three-foot bachelor's (not worn at Richmond) to the four-foot doctoral hood. The hood is lined with the colors of the institution that conferred the degree and is trimmed in the color representing the academic field of study as designated by the Academic Costume Code. During the ceremonies today, Master of Business Administration candidates will be wearing hoods trimmed in drab.

In addition to the approved academic attire, faculty members who have rendered a quarter century or more of service to the University will be wearing the 25-Years-of-Service Medallion inscribed with the official University Seal.

The University of Richmond hopes you enjoy the color and pageantry of these Commencement Exercises.

## *University Motto*

*Verbum Vitae et Lumen Scientiae* means "word of life and the light of knowledge."

