Leading Change

Dean’s Report
2019–2020
Dear Jepson Family and Friends,

This year began like many others and ended like no other. We eagerly dived into the academic year with its familiar rhythm of classes, speakers, alumni gatherings, research, and sporting and cultural events. Then came the coronavirus pandemic.

The pandemic presented a challenge unlike any we have faced as a School and a University. In mid-March, the University made the difficult decision to move to remote learning out of concern for the health of our community. The change was unanticipated and unwelcome. Yet together, we rose to the challenge. Our faculty and students adapted their teaching and learning to fit the new circumstances.

More change lay ahead. The pandemic triggered an economic downturn, exacerbated existing social inequities, and catalyzed social unrest. Your generosity during the University’s annual UR Here Giving Day and our collective commitment to creating a more just, equitable society ensure we will emerge from these tumultuous times even stronger.

I am inspired by and grateful for the steadfast, courageous leadership I have witnessed from our students, faculty, and alumni. Members of the Jepson community are the leaders of today and tomorrow. Rest assured, we are in good hands.

Sandra J. Peart
DEAN AND E. CLAIBORNE ROBINS DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR IN LEADERSHIP STUDIES
PRESIDENT, JEPSON SCHOLARS FOUNDATION
Spider Women’s Basketball forward Jaide Hinds-Clarke, ’20, was a standout both on and off the court. Her leadership on diversity and inclusion initiatives, particularly in support of minority and LGBTQ individuals, won her recognition on campus and in the city of Richmond. The University awarded her the Dr. Leonard S. Goldberg Award for Good Citizenship.

The leadership studies curriculum explores how leaders have navigated change throughout history. Students apply concepts learned in class to lead change on campus and beyond.

Dan Mahoney, ’20, led campus-wide efforts to promote mental health awareness, sexual misconduct awareness, and recycling. The recipient of the Mace Award for the University’s outstanding student, he hopes to lead positive social change by working in the political arena.

Afghan native Lina Tori Jan, ’20, championed the rights of immigrants, refugees, minorities, and women through her campus activism, community service, and Jepson internship with an international women’s rights nonprofit. She received the School’s Servant Leader Award and, thanks to the Jepson Scholars Program, a full scholarship to pursue a public policy master’s degree at the University of Oxford this fall.

Eliana Fleischer, ’20, the recipient of the James MacGregor Burns Award, the School’s highest honor, sees law school in her future. She studied British law at the University of Cambridge through the Jepson at Cambridge summer program and explored American immigration law through her Jepson internship. Eliana received the School’s Fredric M. Jablin Award for Undergraduate Research to undertake her senior honors thesis on how the criminal justice system fails to hold police accountable in the deaths of unarmed Black men.

Her Jepson independent study, “The Afghan Diaspora in Pakistan,” took Mehreen Usman, ’20, to Lahore, Pakistan, where she interned with the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. She later presented her research at the Jepson Research Symposium. Mehreen was awarded a prestigious Fulbright grant to complete an English Teaching Assistantship in Malaysia in 2021.

Student Changemakers

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Rana Dajani, a molecular biologist from Jordan and the School’s 2019–21 Zuzana Cmelikova Visiting Scholar, brings a global perspective to campus. She has received international recognition for her research on the genetics of trauma, her advocacy for women in science, and her promotion of global childhood literacy through the nonprofit she founded, We Love Reading.

Associate professor Julian Hayter, an expert on African-American history and politics, has been the go-to scholar for reporters covering the removal of Confederate statues and the Black Lives Matter protests in Richmond. He has shared his insights in interviews with CNN, CBS, NBC, NPR, National Geographic, The Economist, USA Today, the Associated Press, and the Richmond Times-Dispatch among others. In April, he appeared in episode six of “The Innocence Files,” a Netflix docuseries on wrongful conviction.

Statue of Gen. Robert E. Lee on Monument Avenue, Richmond

THE UNIVERSITY RECOGNIZED FOUR JEPSON FACULTY MEMBERS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR:

Associate professor Jessica Flanigan, appointed the Richard L. Morrill Chair in Ethics and Democratic Values, is collaborating with leadership studies student Alec Greven, ’21, on a free speech initiative for college campuses.

Associate professor Javier Hidalgo received the University’s Distinguished Educator Award in recognition of his creative teaching techniques on argument mapping and historical role playing.

Professor and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs Crystal Hoyt was appointed the Colonel Leo K. and Gaylee Thorsness Endowed Chair in Ethical Leadership. Her ground-breaking research on growth mindsets explores how people’s beliefs in their ability to modify their behavior can help them achieve desired results.

David Wilkins, who joined the faculty in August as the most recent E. Claiborne Robins Distinguished Professor in Leadership Studies, is a leading scholar of Native politics and governance.

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Alumni battle COVID-19

Whether in the business, nonprofit, education, or government sector, Jepson alumni have been leading their organizations in the rapidly evolving response to the coronavirus pandemic. Featured here are four Jepson alumni in health care who are on the front lines of the war against the virus.

“How do we give patients a good death during a global pandemic?” asked Lindsay Flanagan, ’14. The pediatric oncology nurse practitioner took some time away from her job at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia to work with adult COVID patients in a N.J. hospital intensive care unit.

“Medical students have tried to help during this pandemic, from creating face shields and acquiring PPE donations for hospital staff, to organizing a program to help facilitate remote communication between folks caring for coronavirus patients and their families,” said John Sobieski, ’14. He is a rising fourth-year medical student at Cooper Medical School of Rowan University in Camden, N.J.

“The leadership I brought to bear was to remain calm,” said Patrick Oliver, ’98, about his experience working as an emergency room physician in the initial phase of the pandemic, when hospitals were facing heightened anxiety and uncertainty.

“Change Influencers

The campus community and the broader public flocked to the School’s signature speaker events to gain new insights into how the world is changing and adapting on multiple fronts. Topics included the delivery and consumption of news, interaction with the internet and social media, and democratic politics and governance.

Four speakers addressed the topic “Digital Dystopias: Truth and Representation in the Internet Age” as part of the annual Jepson Leadership Forum. One speaker, Derek Thompson, staff writer at The Atlantic, told a captivated Forum audience, “Consumer spying is a natural part of life in the digital world.”

Describing the Electoral College as “the devil you know,” University of Notre Dame political scientist Joshua Kaplan kicked off the annual Marshall Center Lecture Series with a discussion of the pros and cons of Electoral College reform. He was one of four speakers who discussed leadership and democracy as part of this year’s lecture series.

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Jepson School benefactor and University of Richmond alumnus Robert S. Jepson Jr. was inducted as a Georgia Trustee at the Georgia Historical Society’s Trustees Gala in Savannah on Feb. 15. Pictured here with Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp (left) and Georgia Historical Society President and CEO W. Todd Groce (right), Jepson (center) received Georgia’s highest honor in recognition of his visionary leadership and lifelong commitment to bettering the lives of others.

The Jepson faculty published seven books and 20 peer-reviewed chapters and articles between July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020. In addition, they penned 12 opinion pieces that appeared in local, regional, and national media publications.

**FACULTY BOOKS**

Terry Price wrote “Leadership and the Ethics of Influence.”

Peter Kaufman wrote “On Agamben, Arendt, Christianity and the Dark Arts of Civilization.”

Jessica Flanagan co-wrote “Debating Sex Work.”

Don Forsyth wrote “Making Moral Judgments: Psychological Perspectives on Morality, Ethics, and Decision-Making.”

Kristin Bezo and George Goethals co-edited “Leadership, Populism, and Resistance.”

Sandra Peart co-wrote “Towards an Economics of Natural Equals: A Documentary History of the Early Virginia School.”

Gill Robinson Hickman co-wrote “When Leaders Face Personal Crisis: The Human Side of Leadership.”

Members of the Class of 2020, comprising 75 majors and 15 minors, logged just over 29,000 hours fulfilling their course service-learning requirements and Jepson internships. In addition, 54 studied abroad, 13 were Science Leadership Scholars, and two received a full scholarship through the Jepson Scholars Program to pursue a one-year master’s degree at the University of Oxford.

Seniors completed their required Jepson internship in business, education, finance, government, health care, journalism, law, and science and research. Angling enthusiast Jamie Tyler interned in the sales department of Yellow Dog Flyfishing Adventures in Bozeman, Mont.

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Although our Spiders celebrated Commencement virtually this year, the School will invite them back to campus for an in-person celebration when it is safe to do so.

Twenty seniors presented their research, including 10 honors theses, at the Jepson Research Symposium, held virtually this year. In February, Professor Crystal Hoyt, Ayele d’Almeida ’20, and two recent UR graduates co-presented research on beliefs about criminality at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Convention in New Orleans.

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To support the Jepson School’s mission to educate students about leadership as it was, as it is, and as it should be, visit Jepson.richmond.edu/support.