

## COMING UP:

DEC 19-20 EXAMS  
DEC 21 ALL DAY ELECTIVE  
DEC 24 TO JAN 4 BREAK  
JAN 7 INTERSESSION  
JAN 21 HOLIDAY  
FEB 2 PROJECT FORUM  
FEB 4 2ND SEMESTER  
BEGINS



# RVGS Newsletter

Issue 4 November/December 2018

## Dr. McGuire Inspiring Students "How To Learn"

On November 19, 2018, **Saundra Yancy McGuire**, an internationally recognized chemical educator, author, and lecturer, provided strategies to RVGS students on how to become successful in their coursework and careers.

To support the personal development of RVGS students, Dr. Saundra McGuire provided advice and recommendations based on the 2018 student version of her book, *Teach Yourself How to Learn*.

Dr. McGuire conducted a faculty session on teaching STEM students how to learn. And on **November 18, 2018**, she provided guidance to RVGS parents on ways they can support and encourage their child in leading a well-balanced and productive life.

Dr. Saundra Yancy McGuire, Director Emerita of the LSU Center for Academic Success and Retired Assistant Vice Chancellor and Professor of Chemistry has traveled the globe promoting sure-fire strategies to help students, including those underrepresented in science and math professions, to be successful in their coursework and careers. Before joining LSU in 1999, McGuire spent eleven years at Cornell University, where she received the coveted Clark Distinguished Teaching Award. Her book, *Teach Students How to Learn: Strategies You Can Incorporate into Any Course to Improve Student Metacognition, Study Skills, and Motivation*, was released in October 2015 and is a Stylus Publishing best seller.

Dr. McGuire received a Bachelor of

Science degree in Chemistry, magna cum laude, from Southern University, a Master's degree from Cornell University, and a Ph.D. in chemical education from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, where she received the Chancellor's

Citation for Exceptional Professional Promise.

Her most recent accolades include the 2017 American Chemical Society Award for Encouraging Disadvantaged Students to Pursue Careers in the Chemical Sciences, the LSU Women's Center 2017 Esprit de Femme Award, and induction into the LSU College of Science Hall of Distinction. She also received the 2015 American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Lifetime Mentor Award and the 2014 Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers (NOBCCHE). She is an elected Fellow of the ACS and the AAAS. In November 2007 the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring was presented to her in a White House Oval Office Ceremony.

She is married to Dr. Stephen C. McGuire, a professor of physics at Southern University. They are the parents of Dr. Carla McGuire Davis and Dr. Stephanie McGuire, and the doting grandparents of Joshua, Ruth, Daniel, and Joseph Davis.

Thanks to the generous donation of the RVGS Foundation for co-sponsoring Dr. McGuire's visit to the Roanoke Valley.



## Counselor's Corner

November was a fun month at RVGS! Please see below for two of our special events. I have also been in Chemistry classes meeting with each of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade students. We've been talking about stress levels and healthy habits including the importance of sleep. Many of our students are feeling more stressed than usual now as they are looking ahead to the upcoming exams, which take place on December 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Please help support them during this time by reminding them the importance of self-care. As always, please let me know if I can help in any way.

During the Week leading up to Govie Gala, students participated in our annual **Penny Wars** competition in the morning as a senior fundraiser. The monies raised go towards purchasing graduation pins for the seniors and to meet any additional student needs that arise this year. Each AM1 class competed in the war by placing money in the various AM1 class jars. Each penny earned the class 1 point and all other denominations were negative points (i.e. Dimes would equal -5, and Quarters would equal -25). Classes could win by either having the most positive points or by collecting the most money. Mrs. Fisher's class was the winner of the most points and Mrs. Roark's class raised the most money. A total of \$466.48 was raised. The two winning classes were rewarded with a breakfast on Friday, November 30<sup>th</sup>.

## Message from the Director

Winter certainly opened with a roar! The unexpected lost school days are difficult so close to exams, but hopefully the students used the opportunity to have a little fun, catch up on some exam studying, and get some rest.

The student sessions with Dr. McGuire provided our student community with some excellent advice on how to maximize the impact of study and homework time. Hopefully that is coming in handy during the run up to exams! To further build on those recommendations, we followed up with handouts summarizing homework and study strategies, discussions of the importance of sleep, and the introduction of the RVGS Technology Pledge. I'm excited to report that nearly half our study body has signed on with the pledge, committing to avoid technology distractions during homework time and in the late evenings. I think that is an impressive rate of voluntary participation for teenagers to put away their phones a devices!

We also introduced another new program— "RVGS Determined Scholars". This new award is given to students demonstrating a growth mindset in their academic work and a commitment to following through on goals. Students are encouraged to nominate themselves or their peers. Select sets of nominated students will be interviewed on a rolling basis throughout the year to determine recipients. Awarded students will receive a pin and their name will be added to a displayed list of honorees. We encourage students to submit nominations through the school website. Students shouldn't be bashful to self-nominate—after all, you know best whether you are pursuing your goals and follow growth-minded habits.

I wish everyone a safe and enjoyable holiday season!



## AP Physics 6th Annual Pumpkin Launch

As the teams entered the field dressed in their togas, they were ready to compete in the Annual Pumpkin Launch. Each team worked between three to twelve hours over three weeks to build the perfect pumpkin

launching trebuchet. Dr. Holt's AP Physics teacher hosted the 6th Annual Pumpkin Launcher contest. While the winning team did not break last year's launching record, they managed to launch their pumpkin 157 feet to be declared the winners. Congratulations to **Anthony Laconte, Walker Long, and Kevin Kelly** on your epic victory!

Left: Kevin, Anthony, and Walker strut their stuff.

Far right: Jonah Keyser-Rothgery, Wes Givens, Charlie Wallace, Brooklyn Shelton, Allison Henion, and Ashley Dillion



## Spirit Week Themes—November 12—16.

### Pajama Day—Monday



### Hawaiian Day—Tuesday



### Goth Day—Wednesday



### Meme Day—Friday



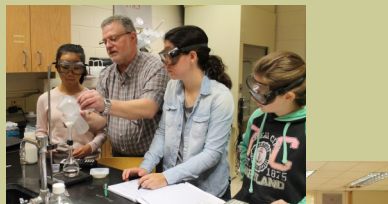
### Throwback Thursday—



### RVGS Collaborates with VA Tech

**Joanne Villers** and **Steve Smith** worked with Dr. Kendra Sewell, a professor at Virginia Tech, on developing curriculum for chemistry classrooms that can introduce and apply the concepts of solution concentration and molarity. This semester, they introduced their

of a stock (10x) solution of PBS. The solution the students made was given to Dr. Kendra Sewell's research lab at Virginia Tech to help with their research on birds.



classes to Molarity Lab – Phosphate Buffered Saline. Much biological research depends on the use of phosphate buffered saline, commonly referred to as PBS. Physiological saline is a solution of salts (and sometimes sugars) intended to act as a medium for growing or maintaining live tissue. The students' job was to make 250 mL or 500 mL

### The Lukes—Speakers at 2018 Business Hall of Fame Junior Achievement SWVA

Earlier this year, the Roanoke Times published a story about the entrepreneurial spirit of two of our students, **Luke Gardner**, and **Luke Seuss**, founders of **Lukes' Kombucha**. Junior Achievement (JA) Director, Katherin Elam and her staff, saw the article and inquired about their participation in any JA Programs in elementary or middle school. Because both Lukes participated in a JA Program in elementary school, they were asked to speak at the 2018 SW VA Business Hall of Fame last month. The annual event recognizes and honors individuals from the community who has made an impact. Over 400 individuals from various businesses and community organizations attended the event. Before the Lukes' speech, they provided samples of their product. **Lukes' Kombucha**, which went on sale at Sweet Donkey Coffee House in February.



The RVGS would like to thank Junior Achievement of Southwest Virginia for inviting Luke Gardner and Luke Seuss to speak at the 2018 SW VA Business Hall of Fame.

# Alumni Spotlight on John W. Elliott, III



Although I know him well, I asked my son, John “JJ” Wallace Elliott, III, to share some highlights of his life after graduating from RVGS

in 2004. While attending PHHS, JJ played basketball, football and ran track. Because he moved to Roanoke from Iowa as a ninth grader, he attended the RVGS at the beginning of 10th grade.

### What were your goals after leaving RVGS?

I was interested in a lot of subject areas and industries but knew I needed to have a focus. Therefore, my goals were to pursue undergraduate and graduate degrees in Computer Science, become a generalist in the Software Development subject area, and work at a reputable organization, like a Google or Microsoft.

### What have you accomplished in the first five years after graduation?

I completed my undergraduate degree at the University of Virginia in Computer Engineering (a combination of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering courses). After UVA, I started the first year of my professional career at a small company in the D.C. area called Metier, as a Software Developer, building project management software for Government clients.

### What is your current role?

After working at Metier for four years (2008-2012), and then Booz Allen Hamilton for almost two years (2012-2014), I landed a job with Google (2014-present) and moved to the San Francisco area. My role then, and now, is a **Technical Solutions Consultant**, which is the technical arm of Google’s sales

organization. I provide technical consulting and support to the largest clients using Google’s advertising products.

### What is your career aspiration in the next 5-10 years?

My goals are to continue excelling in the Technical Services area by developing new product solutions that will assist our clients and revolutionize the ad industry; to manage a team; to help build more leadership skills, and to create a new revenue stream within our organization.

### Have you acquired any special skills or received any special recognition or honors?

Over my professional career, I’ve received dozens of professional honors. The most recent was the development of a new ad format that could help streamline our clients’ day to day operations and will provide more details in their ads.

### How has your Gov. School experience assisted your professional, educational and personal growth?

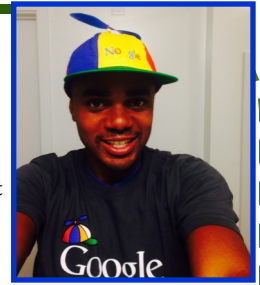
Through my three years at the RVGS, I was challenged both educationally and personally. Educationally, I had access to the best teachers in the area, who cared about your success and went out of their way to help you succeed. They also challenged you in the classroom if they thought you were not working to your full potential. Personally, I met so many motivated and intelligent students, which kept me motivated and focused on my goals. I also obtained a wide array of knowledge, which makes me more marketable when competing for entry into college, and applying for jobs. Without having my experience at the RVGS, I don’t think I would have grown as much as I have today.

### Any advice you would like to share with current students?

We say this at Google and in the Tech Industry:

*Understand that the only constant in life is change. It’s always great to have an idea of what you want to do in the next 5-10 years, but be ready to pivot based on what’s going on in your life, in a particular industry, or generally within the world.* I had a general idea regarding my goals, but things changed along the way.

As we grow personally, professionally, and socially, your ideas will change and grow as well. Understand different perspectives from the people you encounter, or even the people you might potentially meet in the future. This has helped me gain friendships and allowed me to think outside the box when it comes to new solutions within my team. The more open you are to understanding perspectives, the easier it will be to get along with peers.



By Siclinda Canty-Elliott

## GOVIE GALA—NEON STYLE

By Kathy Sebolt



Our annual **Govie Gala** was held on Monday, November 19<sup>th</sup>. The Govie Gala is not only a fun school event, but also serves as an opportunity to collect canned food for our local food bank. Students were asked to bring five canned food items to donate as their admittance into the dance. Six hundred seven (607) pounds of food were donated to Feeding America SWVA. The theme this year was Neon Glow Party, and the turn-out was great! **Kenny Malloch** was our DJ, and the students and faculty enjoyed the evening immensely.

**Caleb McMurtry** (PHHS) and **Ryan Smith** (PHHS) were chosen as the 2018 Govie Gala Royalty! And a special thanks to the **Govie Gala Decorating committee** - the decorations were awesome!

