An Idea, a Vision, a Future

On April 26, Ángel Cabrera was inaugurated as Mason’s sixth president. In his speech, he shared his vision for the university. The Mason Board of Visitors approved the new vision at its meeting in March, which sets the framework for a strategic plan to be completed by December. The visioning process reaffirmed Mason’s commitment to freedom and learning, and reinforced and expanded the central institutional characteristics of the Mason idea—that Mason at its core is innovative, diverse, entrepreneurial, and accessible.

To the Statehouse

A busload of students, faculty, staff, and alumni journeyed to the Virginia State Capitol in Richmond on Lobby Day to meet with Virginia legislators. These 80 Mason representatives shared the university’s story and expressed gratitude to the legislators for the work they do. The group was introduced to both the House and Senate chambers, met Mason alumni who work at the Capitol, and had a group photo taken with Virginia governor Bob McDonnell.

Mason Is A-10 Bound

Mason entered into an agreement to join the Atlantic 10 Conference beginning July 1, 2013. As the premier basketball-driven conference in Division I, the Atlantic 10 conference placed a record nine teams in the NCAA Tournament, three in the NIT, and one in the College Basketball Invitational. Mason’s move to the Atlantic 10 will further showcase the program’s talent during record-tying five in the NCAA Tournament, three in the NIT, and one in the College Basketball Invitational. Mason’s move to the Atlantic 10 will further showcase the program’s talent during record-tying five in the NCAA Tournament, three in the NIT, and one in the College Basketball Invitational.

Rain, rain, don’t go away, was the concept behind Operation Rain Barrel, a partnership between Mason’s Arlington Campus and Office of Sustainability, and the Arlington Public School system. Twenty plain rain barrels—used to catch and hold rainwater for gardening and cleaning—were given to Arlington public school students to use.

Thanks to a $5 million gift from real estate developer Gerald “Jerry” C. Halpin, the T. T. Harris Family Living and Learning Community residence hall and dining complex opened at the Smithsonian-Mason School of Conservation (SMSC) in October. The new facilities are part of the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute complex in Front Royal, Virginia. The gift also established an endowment for the SMSC to further its work with endangered species and ecosystems.

Mason Milestones

An Idea, a Vision, a Future (continued)

University Professor of Environmental Science and Policy Thomas Lovejoy was awarded the 21st annual Blue Planet Prize, an international environmental award sponsored by Japan’s Asahi Glass Foundation. The Blue Planet prices are awarded each year to individuals or organizations that make outstanding achievements in scientific research to help solve global environmental problems. Lovejoy received the award for pioneering work in biodiversity science and conservation.

A strict but kind method of teaching genetics to biology students propelled Professor Ed Otto into the ranks of the top 10 best professors in the nation on the popular website RateMyProfessors.com. Otto is the assistant director for Mason’s undergraduate biology program and teaches 400 to 500 students each semester. Students cited Otto’s friendly demeanor, enthusiasm for his subject area, and caring attitude as reasons for the rating.

Peak Performance, a new sports-specific dining experience, was introduced this year at Southside. Peak Performance meals, served during dinner hours, are “clean and lean” foods that include proteins, vegetables, fruits, breads, healthy carbs, and plenty of vitamins, minerals, and fiber. The meals offer athletes, and anyone else looking for better menu choices, a way to eat healthier and stay in top condition.

Mason Milestones

A yearly review of noteworthy events

2012-13

2012-13 Quick Stats

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Degree programs: 198
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The Patriots for Patriots giving campaign took on new momentum this spring when university president Angel Cabrera offered to match gifts by contributing a dollar for every student donor. Tuition dollars pay for only 61 percent of a year’s expenses, and state and private funds must cover the rest. Cabrera’s gift will support undergraduate scholarship efforts.

Mason’s Board of Visitors authorized establishment of a campus in Songdo, South Korea, which will be a part of Songdo Global University Campus. The university is being built on land reclaimed from the Yellow Sea in the Incheon Free Economic Zone. Songdo Global University’s goal is to operate 10 different foreign universities on a single campus. Each institution will function independently, while collaboratively offering programs such as general education courses.

Professor Rita Chi-Ying Chang was presented the 2013 Outstanding Faculty Award by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and Dominion Resources. Chang, professor of counseling and development in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, is one of 12 state recipients of the Outstanding Faculty Award by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and Dominion Resources. Chang, professor of counseling and development in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, is one of 12 state recipients of the Outstanding Faculty Award by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and Dominion Resources.

When a high school student collapsed during a wrestling match in February, Mason graduate student Jeanne Ryder immediately helped administer Heimlich medical attention. A certified athletic trainer, Ryder was on site as part of the Advancing Health Professions Academy for Undergraduate Students (AHEOPS) project, a partnership between researchers in the college and the Prince William County Public Schools that helps schools develop effective medical care and concussion education to student-athletes, staff, coaches, and parents.

Nathan Siroch, a Ph.D. student in physics, identified one of the lowest mass supermassive black holes ever observed in the middle of a galaxy. With the help of other researchers and NASA’s Advanced Telescope, Siroch discovered the host galaxy of the black hole, called NGC 4178, located about 50 million light years from Earth.

Last summer with the help of a Research Experience for Undergraduates grant from the National Science Foundation and funding through the Office for Student Scholarship, Cre- dence, Athletics, and Research at Mason, anthropology and psychology major Emily Mann spent six weeks in Tanzania studying the way mobile technology is being used in a rural village and how it is tied to national development.

More than 50,000 YouTube viewers watched freshman Omar Zaki’s viral parkour video, in which he runs, jumps, flips, and seemingly flies across the Fairfax Campus. Parkour, often referred to as “street gymnastics,” is the practice of moving quickly and efficiently using only your body and surroundings to propel yourself.

After a year of excellent performances, the Mason Debate Team is ranked first in both the Crisis Examination Debate Association’s and the National Debate Association’s point standings. Directed by Professor Warren Deckert, the team began practicing last summer with an eye on the topic of federal funding for alternative energy. In this year’s

Stonewall Student

1st First Semester, the 19 students and six coaches on the team secured first-place victories in varsity and novices divisions, and the program across all divisions in nine tournament finals and semifinals.

School of Management MBA students Sean Barnes and Brian Dreyer won first place in the sixth annual David’s Busi- ness Plan Competition. The competition is an annual event that allows students to pitch business ideas, in only eight minutes, to a panel of judges and an audience of Mason faculty and students. Barnes and Dreyer pitched ideas for their proposed company, Market, an online platform enabling online and offline connections between sports fans.

Gordon Brown, John Bordenkecher, Shelley McIntosh, and Anthony Terrill came up with a plan to end hunger that was submitted for the Hult Prize, the world’s largest student movement for social good. Their strategy to create a nonprofit organization, A Place to Stand, would acquire buildings in depressed neighborhoods near homeless shelters. Each zero- footprint facility would be equipped with a cafe, clinic, fitness center, classrooms, laundry service, and apartments. While the group did not make it to the regional competition, they were inspired to continue developing their busi- ness plan for this ambitious project.

Jennifer Shkarev, a PhD candidate in the School of Public Policy, is the first Mason graduate student to receive the Fulbright-Nehru Doctoral Dissertation Research Award. Shkarev used the award to fund her work in Japan, where she researched the role of catastrophic events and institutional relationships in Japanese energy policy making.

Catherine Boudreault, Marcie Foster, and Christy Robin- son, all pursuing masters of public policy degrees at Mason, developed a business plan for a startup company that would allow students to pitch business ideas, in only eight minutes, to a panel of judges and an audience of Mason faculty and students. Barnes and Dreyer pitched ideas for their proposed company, Market, an online platform enabling online and offline connections between sports fans.

The London-based Times Higher Education magazine published its 2015-16 UK University Rankings, which comprised universities around the world that have been operating for more than 50 years. Mason was ranked number 50 in the world and eighth in the US, which comprised universities around the world that have been operating for more than 50 years. Mason was ranked number 50 in the world and eighth in the US. It was also ranked 50 for in-state students and 84 for out-of-