

Alumni Association News

Connect with your fellow Dukes

BY LARRY CAUDLE JR. ('82), *president, JMU Alumni Association*

As the doldrums of winter pass and spring begins to appear within my sights, I cannot help but reminisce about the Quad bustling with activity against a backdrop of blooming trees and flowers, and the smell of freshly-cut grass. This is my favorite time to visit JMU. I typically coordinate my visit with the annual Spring Scrimmage, which is the culmination of the four-week period known as spring football practice. And no visit would be complete without taking in at least one performance at our state-of-the-art Forbes Center. Finally, nothing beats a leisurely walk through campus where the excitement and anticipation of success that May brings is palpable.

These thoughts begin to formulate as I leave campus each year after attending our February Alumni Association Board meeting. The board meets three times each year on campus — in September, February and June. The September meeting is always scheduled on a home football weekend and the June meeting is held in conjunction with the ever-growing Madison Alumni Conference — a conference and celebration for JMU volunteers from all areas of the university including Admissions, Duke Club and the Alumni Association. In contrast, the February meeting occurs in the depth of winter when outside activities are limited and students, staff and faculty have not yet settled into the final sprint to May. The February meeting thus presents the board with its annual opportunity to visit new facilities and meet with President Alger, who updates us on the latest university news.

'Three things all great alumni do: update your info, make a gift and attend alumni events.'

— LARRY CAUDLE JR. ('82)



JMU Alumni Association Board members (l-r): Eric Bowlin ('02), Larry Caudle Jr. ('82), Heather Easley Hedrick ('00) and Lucy Hutchinson ('06) at the 2014 Madison Alumni Conference.

taking and houses offices and facilities for the Learning Center (tutoring), Disability Services, Health Center, Orientation, Centennial Scholars, Information Technology, Financial Aid and the Registrar. The fourth floor of the center features eight of the university's newest, most innovative classrooms, which are referred to as the EPIC Center (Enhancing Pedagogy through Innovative Classrooms). All rooms feature wall-to-wall writable whiteboard surfaces, multiple projection points, movable teaching stations and flexible furniture. Professors across the university complete an application that requires them to demonstrate how the proposed use will benefit students and improve the teaching process. Professors must then participate in at least two focus groups to develop best practices for how to best use the spaces. I encourage you to return to Madison this spring and take a tour of the Student Success Center.

In the meantime, consider three things all great alumni do: update your info, make a gift and attend alumni events. Join the JMU Online Community where you can connect with thousands of JMU alumni, including those with whom you may have lost contact. Remember that no gift is too small — make your gift an annual tradition. As the saying goes: Every Duke! Every Year! Finally, commit to signing up for and attending an event in your area or on campus this spring and connect with your fellow Dukes!

Mixed Media

BOOKS, MUSIC & FILM

The River Pilots

BY ROBERT NATT ('15)
AND ZACH WILEY

RECORDED AT WHITE STAR SOUND IN CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA Natt, a senior in JMU's Adult Degree Program, and Wiley announced the release of their self-titled full-length album, *The River Pilots*, in February. The duo got together several years ago and discovered a common interest in minimal instrumentation with a focus on songwriting. The album has rich vocals with an intermingling of vintage folk and rock with modern chords on 13 tracks. CD available at <http://theriverpilots.com> and download at iTunes.

The River Pilots

Teens Text Sex

BY BECKY GREISSE ('98)
FEATHERWEIGHT PRESS, 2014
ISBN-13: 978-1608209491

A snapshot of questions and answers from the Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy's teen text message line, where youth can text any question and get honest, accurate information about birth control, sexual decision-making, STDs, pregnancy, relationships and more. While geared towards a young audience, parents and others can use the book as a conversation starter and a refresher for sexual health information. All proceeds from the book go to ACAP.

