Welcome to the 11th edition of the College of William & Mary's Office of Economic Development newsletter - CONNECTIVITY.

Time has passed quickly since our last issue this summer. It is amazing to think that in a few short days we will gather with family and friends to celebrate Thanksgiving.

In the spirit of the season, I would like to share a couple of the many things I have to be thankful for—both personally and professionally.

Being part of the William & Mary community enhanced my desire to go on an international service trip. This summer, my 14-year-old daughter and I got to fulfill that desire in Jamaica where we spent a week in the small town of Old Harbour Bay. It was a great week! My William & Mary experiences also helped me to think about how to have a substantive impact on the community we served “after we returned home.” Both my daughter and I look forward to a return trip to Old Harbour Bay.

As Chair of the statewide University Based Economic Development group (UBED), I worked alongside my colleagues at Virginia’s public institutions of higher education, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) to create a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and operational strategy that facilitates greater interaction between the groups to attract new businesses and expand existing businesses in Virginia. This benefits William & Mary by increasing employment opportunities for our graduates, sponsored research at the College, and overall interaction with the business community.

I believe these two examples demonstrate the symbiotic nature of my experiences in the Office of Economic Development. While the work of the office helps to frame what William & Mary is, the university in turn helps to frame who I am. This is the essence of CONNECTIVITY.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue. Please send me your feedback about this newsletter and on ways the Office of Economic Development and Technology & Business Center can better serve you. Fill out the contact card to let me know your thoughts.

I look forward to hearing from you!

Thanks,

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William & Mary Receives $25-Million Award
The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has selected William & Mary to lead a five-year award of up to $25-million to increase global aid transparency through the creation of the AidData Center for Development Policy. The Center will create geospatial data and tools to enable the global development community to more effectively target, monitor, and evaluate foreign aid.

William & Mary Receives Grand Challenges Explorations Grant
William & Mary is a Grand Challenges Explorations winner, an initiative funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. John Swaddle, professor of biology, and Mark Hinders, professor of applied science, will pursue an innovative global health and development research project, titled “Employing sonic nets to exclude pest bird species from crops.”

VIMS Staff Help Launch Gloucester Blueways Water Trails
Outdoor enthusiasts have a new destination for fishing, kayaking, and adventure within Tidewater Virginia with the launch of Gloucester Blueways, a system of 5 water trails spanning more than 40 miles. Marcia Berman, Program Manager for the Comprehensive Coastal Inventory Program at VIMS, took part in the project along with VIMS’ Geographic Information System Program/Analyst Karinna Nurcz.

Safer, More Efficient, Fusion-Generated Electricity is on the Horizon
Saskia Mordijck, a research assistant professor based in the Computer Science Department at William & Mary, has received funding from the U.S. Department of Energy to continue her investigation of fusion energy. “There’s always been this sense that fusion is fifty years away,” Mordijck says, but she adds that the horizon for safer and more efficient fusion-based electricity in our homes is really, truly getting closer.

Who’s in the Office of Economic Development—Brenna Vorhis, Graduate Assistant (Master of Public Policy Program)
Favorite Book: Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte; Favorite Color: Green; Favorite Movie: Singin’ in the Rain; Favorite Piece of Music: Beethoven’s 7th Symphony; Instruments Played: Flute and Piccolo; Most Admired U.S. President: George Washington; Pets: Orange Tabby Cat (Heath) and Betta Fish (Max)