



TOWN-N-GOWN | OCTOBER NEWSLETTER – 2026

TOWN-N-GOWN LEADERSHIP

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Vacant – Taking nominations

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University Liason

Veleka Gatling, PhD.

AVO, Community Engagement

UPCOMING EVENTS / DATES TO REMEMBER

- October 3 – TNG Tour of the USNS Comfort, details to be emailed
- October 6, 9:30am – Board meeting at Webb Center
- October 4-8 – ODU Literary Festival
- October 8-11 – Suffolk Peanut Festival
- October 10-11 – 70th Annual Virginia MOCA Boardwalk Art Show
- October 13 – U.S. Navy Birthday
- October 24 – Fleet Fest 2026
- October 24 – 12th Annual Oyster Roast
- October 30 – Retiree Summit, Career Fair and MWR Expo
- November 10, 9:30am – Board meeting at Webb Center
- November 11, 12:30pm – ODU Veteran's Day Observance

LT. COL. BRANDON A. SHAH'S LEGACY CLAIMS ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE AND PERMANENT HOME AT OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

Some legacies live in memories. Others become part of the people and places they touched. At Old Dominion University, Lt. Col. Brandon A. Shah's ('07) legacy will stand seven feet tall in granite, adorn the side of Rollins Hall, be worn across the jerseys of Monarch football players and echo through S.B. Ballard Stadium with the firing of the "Big Blue" howitzer cannon.



On September 4, hundreds gathered near S.B. Ballard Stadium as Old Dominion University unveiled a series of permanent tributes honoring Lt. Col. Shah, a Monarch alumnus who earned a bachelor's degree in sociology and a minor in military science and whose life was marked by leadership, service and commitment to others.

The ceremony also marked the formal announcement of the LTC Brandon A. Shah Leadership Foundation, created by his wife, Katherine Shah, to carry forward her husband's legacy by developing future leaders. "Lt. Col. Shah's impact was never measured simply by his title or rank," said Cathy Lewis, the University's community engagement liaison, as she opened the ceremony. "It was reflected in the lives he touched, the cadets he mentored, the colleagues he inspired, the family he loved deeply and the Monarch community he treasured."

[Read the Full Story Here](#)

Article By Kenya Godette & Virginia Hilton



VETERANS OBSERVANCE CEREMONY

NOVEMBER 10 - 12:30PM-1:30PM, ODU WEBB CENTER

To honor and recognize the service and sacrifice of ODU veterans to include students, faculty, staff and alumni within our campus and community, while fostering a respectful, inclusive atmosphere for reflection and appreciation.



ODU FOOTBALL

Vs. GEORGIA SOUTHERN

When: Thursday, October 15 – 7:30pm
Our Region. Our Reign. (Drone Show)

Vs. MARSHALL

When: Saturday, October 31 – Time TBA
Homecoming/Monarch Masquerade

DISCOUNT TICKETS AVAILABLE FOR TNG MEMBERS!

SEND REQUEST TO TOWNNGOWNODU@YAHOO.COM



49TH ANNUAL LITERARY FESTIVAL CELEBRATES GREAT

WRITING AND CREATIVE WONDERS

OCTOBER 4-8

The 49th Annual Old Dominion University Literary Festival, “Make Room for Wonder,” will run October 4-8, 2026, on ODU’s campus and at other Norfolk locations. Co-directed by John McManus and Michael Weber of the Old Dominion University Department of English, the festival — thought to be the longest-running of its kind in the United States — will feature readings, workshops, a curator’s tour, a film screening, an anthology launch and a game jam.

All events are free and open to the public.

Follow the festival on Facebook at ODU Literary Festival and on Instagram @olddominionmfa.

Literary Festival Full Schedule

2026 FALL HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES FAIR

OCTOBER 1

ODU WEBB CENTER, NORTH CAFÉ

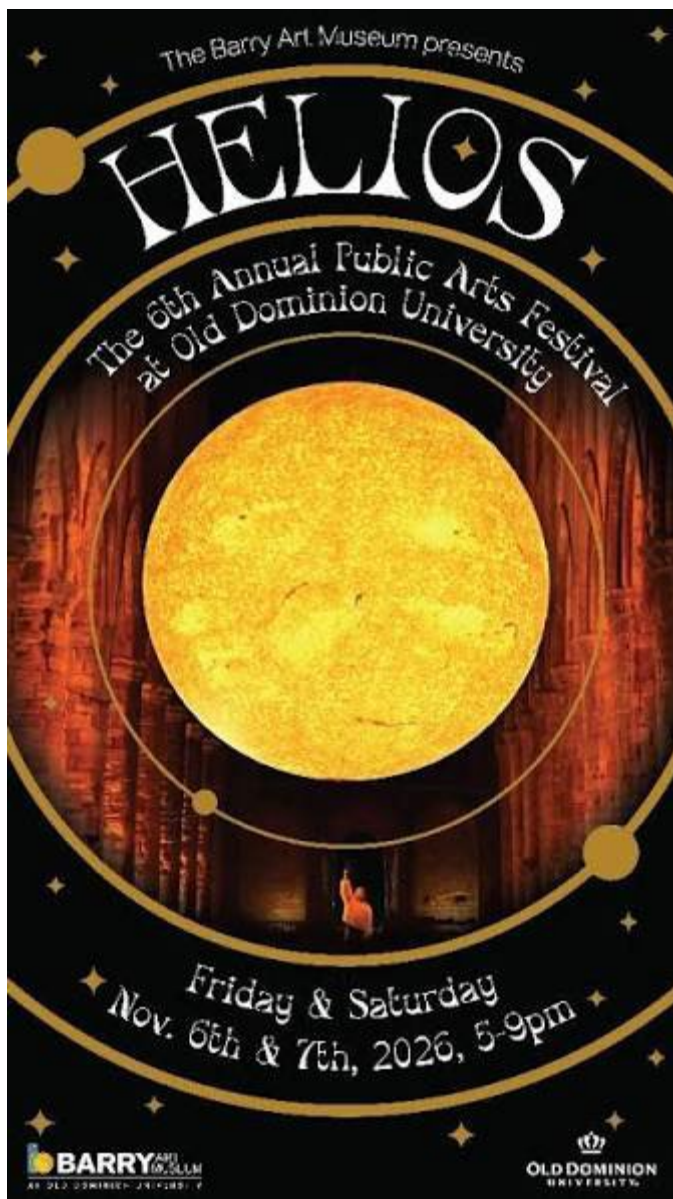
Join us at Old Dominion University’s 2026 Fall Health & Human Services Fair on Thursday, October 1, 2026 from 11:00 AM-2:00 PM in Webb Student Center, North & Central Cafe.

Hosted by the Center for Career and Leadership Development, this fair is a great chance for employers to meet and connect with students and alumni from a wide range of programs—including dental hygiene, exercise science, medical diagnostics, rehab sciences, speech-language pathology, counseling, and human services. This event is all about building connections, finding great talent, and getting your organization’s name out there.



HELIOS
Annual Arts Festival
Barry Art Museum

<https://barryartmuseum.odu.edu/exhibition/helios/>



@ THE LÊ PLANETARIUM

\$5 per person

www.odu.edu/planetarium

02 OCT	BAD MOVIE NIGHT: I MARRIED A MONSTER FROM OUTER SPACE (1958)
	BIRTH OF PLANET EARTH 07 OCT
14 OCT	TOUR OF THE NIGHT SKY 
	PHANTOM OF THE UNIVERSE 21 OCT
28 OCT	FIREFALL 



**OLD DOMINION
UNIVERSITY**



**MONARCHS
GIVE BACK**

**FOUNDED BY PRESIDENT HEMPHILL
& FIRST LADY ROSAS HEMPHILL**

WE'RE COLLECTING

150,000

**NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS AND
NEED YOUR HELP!**



SCAN TO DONATE OR VOLUNTEER
odu.edu/monarchs-give-back





AROUND TOWN

70TH ANNUAL VIRGINIA MOCA BOARDWALK ART SHOW

October 10-11, 10:00am-4:00pm

VB Oceanfront – Atlantic Ave and 2nd St

An outdoor fine art show on the Virginia Beach Boardwalk featuring more than 150 juried artists and contemporary craft, with the Atlantic as a backdrop. Free and open to the public.

HARVEST FAIR AT HUNT CLUB FARM

September 26 - November 1, 10:00am-4:00pm

Hunt Club Farm - 2388 London Bridge Rd.

Enjoy pumpkins, unlimited farm-tour hayrides, the Petting Farm, TreeWalk Adventure, a huge straw pile, and plenty of fall fun for the whole family. Weekends bring even more excitement with tasty treats, a live DJ, and games!

SUFFOLK PEANUT FESTIVAL

October 8-11

10:00am-10:00pm

Suffolk Executive Airport – 1410 Airport Road

Celebrate generations and create lasting memories at the 48th Annual Suffolk Peanut Fest, returning October 8–11, 2026, at the Suffolk Executive Airport. One of Virginia's favorite fall festivals, Suffolk Peanut Fest brings together live entertainment, family activities, thrilling attractions, delicious food, and plenty of peanuts for four unforgettable days. This year's theme, "Celebrating Generations – One Picture Perfect Memory at a Time!", highlights the traditions and shared experiences that have made Peanut Fest a cherished family event for nearly five decades.



12TH ANNUAL OYSTER ROAST

October 24

5:00pm-8:00pm

Young Sailing Virginia – 381 Fenwick Road
\$100-\$120

Join Youth Sailing Virginia on Saturday, October 24, 2026, for our 12th Annual Oyster Roast at the YSV Sailing Center at Historic Fort Monroe. Spend the evening enjoying fresh oysters, local beer and wine, and the company of fellow sailors, supporters, and friends while helping Youth Sailing Virginia continue to provide life-changing opportunities for our youth on the water.



[HTTPS://WWW.PILOTONLINE.COM/EVENTS/#!/DET
AILS/12TH-ANNUAL-OYSTER-
ROAST/19788638/2026-10-24T17](https://www.pilotonline.com/events/#!/DETAILS/12TH-ANNUAL-OYSTER-ROAST/19788638/2026-10-24T17)



TIDEWATER HIGHLAND GAMES

November 7 & 8 • 9:00am-5:00pm • *Historic Greenbrier Farms*
From \$10.38

Scotland Comes to Virginia! A full day of live music, Highland athletics, Scottish pipe bands, and family entertainment.



LINE DANCING UNDER THE TENT AT GREENBRIER FARMS

Saturdays until October 31 • 6:00pm-9:00pm • *Greenbrier Farms*

Grab your boots and join us at Greenbrier Farms for a fun night of line dancing under the tent! Whether you're a seasoned dancer or brand new to line dancing, everyone is welcome. Come dance, enjoy great food and drink from The Hive Farm Bar & Grill, and spend the evening with us on the farm!

THE HEART SELLERS • October 14-25 • *Wells Theater*

Thanksgiving, 1973. In a small apartment somewhere in America, two recent immigrants meet for the first time and experience their first, American Thanksgiving. What begins as an awkward visit becomes an evening of laughter, shared memories, and unexpected friendship.



<https://www.vastage.org/heartsellers>

VIRGINIA EARLY VOTING OFFICE LOCATIONS

Early voting for the November 3 election began on September 18. The last day to vote early in-person is October 31. All localities offer early voting. Voters are only allowed to vote early in the locality in which they are registered.

Each locality in Virginia sets its own early voting location(s). Some localities offer early voting only at the general registrar's office, while other localities have early voting in locations other than the registrar's office. To find all early voting locations and ballot dropbox information for your locality, contact your general registrar's office.

<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/early-voting-office-locations/>



NATIONAL DEFENSE FORCES

Fleet Fest 2026

October 24

10:00am-5:00pm

Naval Station Norfolk – Decatur Ave

Fleet Fest is Naval Station Norfolk's premier open house, inviting the public aboard the world's largest naval installation for a day of exploration, entertainment, and community connection. Guests can enjoy military static displays, live demonstrations, STEM exhibits, local vendors, food, family-friendly activities, and opportunities to meet Sailors while learning about the Navy's mission. The event celebrates the strong partnership between the Navy and the Hampton Roads community while honoring our nation's rich maritime heritage. Whether you're a longtime supporter or visiting for the first time, Fleet Fest offers something for all ages and is an unforgettable experience.



<https://www.navylifema.com/fleetfest>

Celebrate the Navy's Birthday

October 13

October 13 marks the birthday of the U.S. Navy, which traces its roots to the early days of the American Revolution. On October 13, 1775, the Continental Congress established a naval force, hoping that a small fleet of privateers could attack British commerce and offset British sea power.

The early Continental navy was designed to work with privateers to wage tactical raids against the transports that supplied British forces in North America. To accomplish this mission the Continental Congress purchased, converted, and constructed a fleet of small ships -- frigates, brigs, sloops, and schooners. These navy ships sailed independently or in pairs, hunting British commerce ships and transports.



Important Firsts in Naval History

1. **FIRST USE OF SUBMARINES:** While the Navy's first commissioned designs for a submarine were handed over in 1875, it wasn't until 1898 that the first Holland submarine launched successfully.
2. **FIRST USE OF MODERN BATTLESHIPS:** While America had battleships before the 1908 South Carolina class dreadnought, which started with the USS Michigan and was based on British ships, these were the first in the new era of battleships.
3. **FIRST USE OF NAVAL AIRCRAFT:** In 1911, the U.S. Navy bought its first airplane, the Curtiss A-1 Triad.
4. **FIRST AIRCRAFT CARRIER:** The first flight from the deck of a U.S. Navy cruiser in 1910 led to the 1927 Lexington-class aircraft carriers, the first operational aircraft carriers in the U.S. Navy.
5. **FIRST USE OF RIGID HULL INFLATABLE BOAT:** Introduced in 1992, these rubber boats were originally meant for life boats in the 1960s, but the Navy now uses them for SEALs due to their lightweight, high speed, all-weather specifications.



Retiree Summit, Career Fair & MWR Expo

October 30, 9:00am-1:00pm

Little Creek - Rockwell Hall Gym

3147 5th St., Bldg. 3147

Virginia Beach

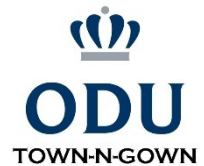
The in-person Retiree Summit, Career Fair and MWR Expo will be on Friday, October 30 from 9 AM to 1 PM at JEB Little Creek Rockwell Hall Gym. Military Retirees, transitioning military, family members and surviving spouses are all invited to attend. There will be over 30 employers on site as well as veteran resources, and a health fair (including flu shots).

We will also be holding a Virtual Retiree Summit beginning Monday, November 2 through Friday, November 6. Every day there will be webinars on different retiree/veteran topics. The topics that will be discussed include: Social Security Administration, Navy Household Goods, Department of Veterans Affairs, TRICARE for Retirees, Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP), Defense Finance Accounting Service (DFAS), Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP), Employment Opportunities, Thrift Savings Plans (TSP).

For more information or to sign up for any webinars visit www.navylifema.com/Summit.



TOWN-N-GOWN NOTES



Town-N-Gown Board Meetings

Members are always welcome at the board meetings as well as attending any associated scheduled tours. Upcoming board meetings:

Tuesday, October 6, 2026, 9:30am – Executive Dining Room in the ODU Webb Center

Tuesday, November 10, 2026, 9:30am – Executive Dining Room in the ODU Webb Center

Town-N-Gown Wants Your Help to Continue Growing!

Please share the following link with others who appreciate our mission- developing community friendships with Hampton Roads neighbors, military, and ODU faculty/ staff/ students/families.

<https://www.odutng.com/application>

Town-N-Gown would like to welcome our newest members:

Stephen Landowne

Town-N-Gown website is live! If you have not yet seen our website, take a minute to visit! The site has all the essential information about Town-N-Gown as well as history, photos of past events, upcoming events, and the previous issues of the TNG newsletter. Have a look at www.ODUTNG.com.



Our sincerest thanks to ***Colley Avenue Copies & Graphics*** for their ongoing support of Town-N-Gown. As a gift to our organization, Colley Avenue Copies & Graphics has generously printed and processed our flyers, programs, posters, banners, stationery, and business cards for many, many years. We are most grateful for the generous donation of their time, talent, and treasure!



TO JOIN OR RENEW

TOWN-N-GOWN MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership dues are \$25.00 and include a spouse/partner (single address).

Type of Membership (Check one): New ____ Renewal ____ (*All members must renew!*)

Names(s): _____

(List both names if a dual membership)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone (Home): _____ (Work) _____

(Cell) _____ (Please indicate your contact preference.)

Please circle your primary affiliation for T-N-G: ***Town*** ***National Defense*** ***Gown***

Email: _____

(Email addresses are very important for sending updates and special messages – please update TNG when you change addresses! Town-N-Gown does NOT share your contact information with any organizations other than the ODU Events Office to use for invitations.)

Make checks payable to **Town-N-Gown** and mail to:

Jo Hayden
261 N Blake Rd
Norfolk, VA 23505

For questions, contact Mary Lou Speckheuer at (757) 285-2722 | marylou110@cox.net

Thank you for continuing your support of Town-N-Gown at ODU!!!