TOWN-N-GOWN | *NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER – 2026*

TOWN-N-GOWN LEADERSHIP

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Vacant – Taking nominations

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AVO, Community Engagement

UPCOMING EVENTS / DATES TO REMEMBER

- November 3 – Election Day
- November 6 & 7 – Helios: Annual Public Arts Festival at the Barry Art Museum
- November 10, 9:30am – Board meeting at Webb Center
- November 10, 12:30pm – ODU Veteran's Day Observance Ceremony
- November 11, 12:30pm – ODU Veteran's Day Observance
- November 20, 1:00pm – TNG Tour of Macon and Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences
- November 20 – Holiday Trail of Lights opening night.
- November 21, 7:00pm – Grand Illumination Parade
- November 28 – ODU Football vs. Southern Miss. Final game of the 2026 regular season. *Final Salute/Military Appreciation*

IT WAS NOVEMBER – THE MONTH OF CRIMSON SUNSETS... – L. M. MONTGOMERY

Around Campus

Town-N-Gown Attends Fleet Fest

A wonderful event overall. Very well organized and worth the time. The CO's Chalet was great! Everyone was super nice and the food and drink accommodations were wonderful. All of the ship tours and the LCAC tour were very cool to see and experience the ships up close. Something for everyone. - James Reed

Maria and I had the most wonderful time. The Commander's chalet was fantastic. Great food, open bar, fire pits, great music from BuckshotVBc. Met and spoke with so many new faces and just enjoyed ourselves. Nice patriotic vibe! Everyone walking around was so friendly and nice. Came home with a few goodies also! - Rich Priester

WOW!! The CO chalet was open at 10 am serving full breakfast plus open bar. Lots of displays, booths, and tandem Hawkeye flyover. Standing in line to tour the USS Nimitz was too long but worth it. After lunch at the chalet, our granddaughter enjoyed the petting zoo; especially hugging the alpaca. She may have hit all the numerous bounce houses too. - Jim Levick

Town-N-Gown Tours the USNS Comfort Medical Shipt – October 3

Tour of Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences

November 20, 2026 - 1:00-2:30 pm

Guided by Laurie Harrison, Director of Community Engagement,
Walking tour, beginning at Garage A - parking fee courtesy of VHS
Highlights - Waitzer Hall, Lester Hall, Cancer Research Labs
RSVP by November 18th to townngownodu@yahoo.com

ODU Madrigal Singers Banquet

December 4, 2026 – 6:30-8:30pm
Goode Theatre – 4601 Monarch Way
Group Price - $35 Each
Non-dining alternative - $5 each with seating in mezzanine
RSVP by November 20 to townngownodu@yahoo.com

A festive seasonal celebration featuring music provided by the ODU Madrigal Singers, Collegium Musicum, and Alta Capella. Special pre-concert performances will take place in the lobby beginning at 6:00pm. Options for a plated three-course meal or for non-dining seats.

ODU Football

Vs. Southern Miss

When: Saturday, November 28 – Time TBA
Final Salute/Military Appreciation

DISCOUNT TICKETS AVAILABLE FOR TNG MEMBERS
Send Request to townngownodu@yahoo.com

ODU Basketball

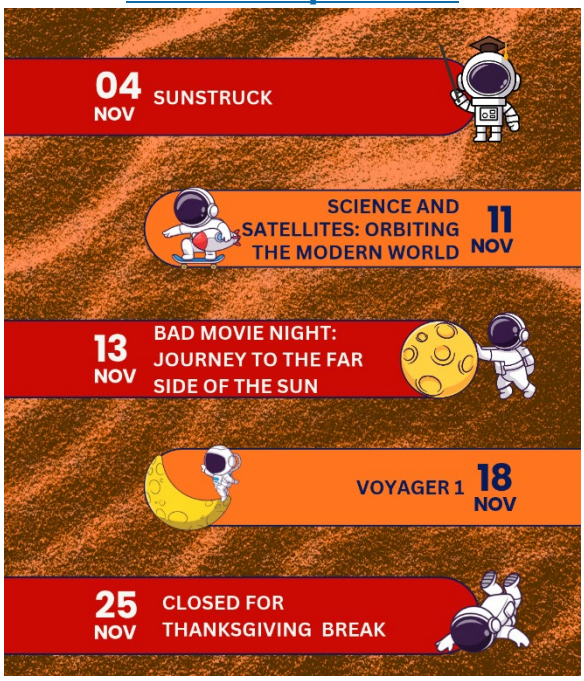
at Chartway Arena

Nov 2 - Vs. Western Michigan
Nov 4 - Vs. Regent
Nov 11 - at Norfolk State
Nov 14 - Vs. Longwood
Nov 24 - Vs. Hampton

The Lê Planetarium

$5 per person

www.odu.edu/planetarium



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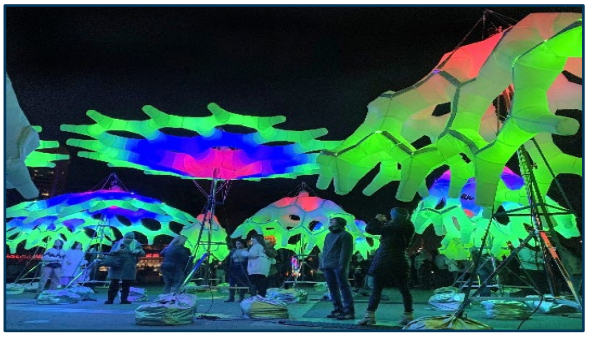
ODU 2025-2035 Master Plan

Old Dominion University is carefully realigning and thoughtfully redefining our footprint by modernizing existing spaces and customizing new spaces

The **master plan** outlines a visionary but practical set of ideas that coordinate physical change across the sites of Old Dominion University. It is an opportunity for Old Dominion to leverage what is working, re-examine challenges, and prioritize goals to guide future physical development. The master plan provides near- and long-term objectives that adapt and respond to unexpected future changes. It serves as an extension of the University's strategic plan to meet the educational needs of our University community and beyond through a commitment to student success, excellence, community engagement, and lifelong learning.

Read More About ODU's Master Plan

6th Annual Arts Public Festival at the Barry Art Museum



Join us for **Helios: The 6th Annual Public Arts Festival** at Old Dominion University — a celebration of our campus's remarkable research, creative talent, and synergistic collaboration taking place **Friday and Saturday, November 6th and 7th, from 5-9pm**. The festival serves as a platform for the intersection of art and science, while inviting attendees to engage with innovative projects and enjoy immersive experiences. At its heart is our belief in fostering community engagement and dialogue through the transformative power of art in public spaces.

For this year's festival, we're excited to welcome back Luke Jerram, the artist behind the *Museum of the Moon* and *Mars* artworks featured at our 1st and 2nd Public Arts Festivals in 2021 and 2022. *Helios*, his newest piece, is an inflatable sculpture of the Sun at a scale of 1:200 million, and it will be making its first appearance in North America at our festival. When viewed at night, *Helios* will be illuminated from within and its surface will appear to be animated by solar storms.

Based out of the United Kingdom, Luke Jerram is an internationally-acclaimed, multidisciplinary artist who specializes in installations and immersive public art. Helios, like Museum of the Moon and Mars before it, will tie the sciences back into our festival not only through the artwork itself, but through the campus and community partners who will help us engage attendees of all ages.

Event is free with free parking at 41st St garage.

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

Website:
www.odutng.com

Email:
townngownodu@yahoo.com

OYSTER & SOUTH FESTIVAL

November 8 – Presented by the Chesapeake Sheriff *at Greenbrier Farms*
November 14 – Presented by The Chesapeake Hope Foundation at Chesapeake City Park
1:00pm-4:00pm

All-you-can-eat delicious seasonal oysters steamed and fried, BBQ, hot dogs, unlimited beverages, live local music by Stacie Stephens and EverAfter, local vendors, merchandise for sale, and plenty more harvest time fun! Buy tickets through site on Facebook.

CHESAPEAKE JUBILEE FALL CRAFT MARKET

November 7
10:00am-4:00pm
Chesapeake City Park – 900 City Park Drive
Free Admission/Free Parking

Mark your calendars for the best craft market in the area! 100+ crafters and direct sellers for you to shop! Food and beverage concessions. Bring the family and make a day of it!

Website:
www.odutng.com

Email:
townngownodu@yahoo.com

Holiday Trail of Lights

November 20 – January 3
Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center

After 31 years of lighting up the Virginia Beach Oceanfront, the iconic drive-through Holiday Lights at the Beach is joyfully transforming into something even brighter, the new Holiday Trail of Lights, now hosted exclusively at the Virginia Aquarium. Get ready for a reimagined holiday experience that invites you to celebrate the season in a whole new way. Get ready for a reimagined holiday experience filled with dazzling displays and festive coastal cheer, plan your visit now and make this season unforgettable!

Where Wonder Grows: Sanctuary

October 17 – December 16
Mount Trashmore Park

Sanctuary transforms the landscape into an immersive environment of movement, color, light and sound. The exhibit will be on view Oct. 17-Dec. 16 during regular park hours. Special illuminated evening access will be offered until 8 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays (excluding Halloween), giving visitors the chance to experience the installation's changing effects after dark.

Grand Illumination Parade

November 21, 7:00pm
Downtown Norfolk

This year's theme is **Ruby Radiance,** celebrating the brilliance, warmth, and energy that represent this beloved regional tradition for its 40th anniversary. Inspired by the richness of jewel tones and the glow of illuminated streets, participants are encouraged to interpret radiance in creative ways, including color, movement, texture, and light. Let your imagination shine, your organization sparkle, and capture the magic of a truly dazzling milestone celebration.

Santa's Stocking Old Fashioned Craft Bazaar

November 14 and 15 | Princess Anne Recreation Center
November 21 and 22 | Kempsville Recreation Center
9:00am-4:00pm on Saturdays; 10:00am-3:00pm on Sundays

Crafters will be selling unique handmade items, everything from stocking stuffers to fine works of art, all at budget-friendly prices. The bazaar offers free admission and free on-site parking to shoppers.

Warner, Anthropic Launch New AI tool to Help Military Families Find Resources

Sen. Mark Warner reported back Friday on his efforts following a June roundtable in which military families brought concerns about active-duty and veteran life in Hampton roads.

On the list were a $110 million investment in childcare facilities, efforts to lower processing times for fee allocations and a bill to let dependents stay on their parents' Tricare health coverage until age 26. Warner also is striving to extend the work opportunity tax credit to military families.

Versatility for spouses while their loved ones are on deployment was another top concern.

"Flexibility with the workplace, and particularly if your spouse is working for the freaking government, should not be a heavy lift," Warner said.

About 120 attendees joined Warner and other panelists at Old Dominion University, including Daniela Hines, executive director of the local Blue Star Families chapter; Welton Chang, a manager for public benefit at Anthropic; Department of Veterans Services Commissioner John Maxwell; and Tessa Davis, Child & Youth Programs Director at the Armed Services YMCA. Warner announced the launch of a new AI tool to connect families to transition resources.

AI company Anthropic is spearheading the project, with input from Hampton Roads military families, military and veterans service organizations.

The Military Family and Veteran Assistant is a connector that can be added to Claude, Anthropic's AI model. Military families can access the connector with a free Claude account.

The pilot program is being billed as a local guide for military resources and is only available in Hampton Roads. But the program may be scaled up across the country.

Users can input the types of services they are seeking, such as childcare and healthcare. The model is populated with current information about several local military and veterans service organizations, but also draws on Claude's knowledge base. It can send emails and make to-do lists, and in the future, Warner said, he hopes users will be able to take direct action steps such as booking Ubers to and from childcare.

The tool asks about the family's situation in order to provide help that fits, and it picks the closest resource.

"It's so difficult when families are really struggling to move from duty station to duty station to find their tribe, to find their people," said Michelle Norman, founder and CEO of Partners in Promise. "This is going to help so very much. This is going to impact so many families and make their lives easier."

Warner, who describes himself as "obsessed" about AI, told attendees not to be intimidated by the tool.

"It's really easy," Warner said. "What this really is good at is putting it in plain English. Governmentese, bureaucratese is the worst damn thing to ever try to navigate."

Two attendees asked Warner and the panelists about how the tool would handle mental health concerns raised by users. One asked how the assistant will recognize when a veteran needs human support and connect them to an appropriate qualified professional.

"This is absolutely something that we have to get right," said Chang. "The current version of the pilot tool is focused on spousal employment, childcare, care for military families. As we move into other areas, working alongside our partners, we'll get things in a better place."

By Emma Brown, The Virginian-Pilot

Veterans Day Celebrations Throughout Hampton Roads

Wednesday, November 11

The MacArthur Memorial is proud to host the City of Norfolk's annual Veterans Day Ceremony, which includes special guest speakers and a wreath laying. The ceremony begins at 2:00pm and will be held inside the MacArthur Memorial Museum, 198 Bank St, Norfolk. Admission is free.

The Virginia Zoo Express will be offering free train rides to all veterans from 9:30am to 4:00pm. This offer is only available to veterans and can be redeemed at the train station only on November 11, 2026.

Little Creek Racers (LCR) invites all BBSA skippers and spectators to join for its annual Veterans Day Race on Saturday, Nov, 14, 2026. This fun, friendly race is the LCR's way of celebrating and honoring the men and women who have served our country. The race will take place just north of Little Creek Inlet. Organizers say, "Whether you're a regular racer or just looking for a good excuse to get out on the water one more time before winter, this is the perfect way to spend Veterans Day. First warning is 9:55am and race is expected to last approximately 2 hours. Come race, cheer on your fellow sailors, and help us honor our veterans."

Colonial Williamsburg Fifes and Drums, along with members of local veterans' groups, will lead a procession at Capitol Circle. Martha Washington will open the procession with remarks before joining the march to Palace Green. The program will culminate with a moving commemoration honoring the men and women who have served our nation. All veterans are warmly welcomed and encouraged to participate as we come together to remember their service, honor their sacrifice and celebrate the ideals they helped protect. Programming begins at 3:30pm.

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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.

Event is free and open to the public. Paid parking available at 49th St garage.

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, November 10, 2026, 9:30am – Executive Dining Room in the ODU Webb Center
***Tuesday, December 1, 2026, 9:*30am –** Executive Dining Room in the ODU Webb Center

In Search of Board Members

The Town-N-Gown Board of Directors is in search of three new members to fill recently opened seats. If you, or anyone you know, is interested, please reach out to townngownodu@yahoo.com. To serve on the Board, you must have been an active member for at least one year.

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 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!

Website:
www.odutng.com

Email:
townngownodu@yahoo.com

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!!!