Colbert returns! But not to TV

Fans will take comedian, political satirist and late night television host Stephen Colbert wherever they can get him. In television purgatory since leaving The Colbert Report (he takes over for David Letterman on The Late Show Sept. 8), Colbert will give the commencement address at Wake Forest University on May 18.

“We are thrilled Stephen Colbert has accepted the invitation to speak at Wake Forest’s commencement ceremony,” said President Nathan O. Hatch. “I’m not sure what our graduates will enjoy more – how his creative genius reflects the exaggerated extremes of politics and contemporary life or how so many of us at Wake Forest will find ourselves on the receiving end of his jokes.”

The Washington Post, USA Today and Time have recognized Colbert’s commencement speeches at the University of Virginia (2013), Northwestern University (2011) and Knox College (2006) as being among the best ever.

A livestream webcast of the ceremony will be available at go.wfu.edu/wfu15.
Done with one-and-done?

President Nathan Hatch, former chair of the NCAA Division I Board of Directors, commented on freshman ineligible and the NCAA’s “I do think university presidents should be in a concerted way appeal to the NCAA and make clear that this is not a healthy relationship,” he said. “The fact that freshman ineligibility is being raised shows how deeply people are troubled by the one-and-done phenomenon. It makes a mockery of our hope that student-athletes are receiving an education. The professional teams don’t want to have to examine high school talent. They can just wait used.”

Freakonomics

Why doesn’t everyone get the flu vaccine?

Frederick Chen, an economist at Wake Forest, designed an online game to determine what motivates people to get vaccinated. While he admits that the game is not “super fun,” he argues that it provides some evidence for the kind of policies government might pursue to boost vaccination rates. “It’s more newcomers when we see things not working. But when a vaccine is working, nobody wants to talk about it.”

Thiel Fellow set to graduate in May

After one semester at Wake Forest, John Marbach accepted a $100,000 Thiel Fellowship set to graduate in May.

Law professor shares expertise on hate crime prosecutions

In a story about the tragic murder of three Muslim students in Chapel Hill, former federal prosecutor Kami Chavis Simmons, director of the criminal justice program at Wake Forest School of Law, told CNN: “In terms of being able to prove whether or not this was a hate crime or a boss-motivated crime, the prosecutors would have to show the motive, would have to show that Craig Hicks killed these three students because of their religion or race. And so in order to do that, police would be talking to anyone affiliated with Craig Hicks.

What we would want to know is whether or not he was a member of any group that espoused any hatred related to those groups? They’re trying to see if there was a motive, if he killed them because of their religion.”

The secret to raising smart kids

Research from assistant professor of psychology Lara Kammrath who looked at people’s mind-set related to how they deal with their problems was referenced in this story that looked at raising smart children and emphasized that a focus on process, not on intelligence or ability, is the key to success in school and in life.

People who believe they can’t meet lofty exercise goals often do nothing instead, according to Jeffrey Katula, an associate professor in the department of Health & Exercise Science, and this “all or nothing” mindset is common. “The more physical activity you do, the more of a response you’ll get,” explained Katula. “Some exercise is better than none, but more is better than that.”

Just how little exercise does it take to get healthier?

In October, staff from the N.C. Division of Water Resources sampled aquatic insects and other tiny animals in the river, determining that the size and diversity of the populations both upstream and downstream from the spill were similar. Dennis Leithy, a U.S. Forest Service fish biologist and research associate professor of biology, said past research has shown the tiny aquatic insects counted as part of the state’s study can survive in polluted water and sediment. The real concern, he said, is whether they will absorb the toxic metals from the coal ash, which over time would become concentrated in the fishes and birds that eat them.

Couples connect with the click of a mouse

When it comes to online dating, communication professor Jennifer Priem says it gives people a chance to present themselves in whatever way you like,” she said. “For those with higher levels of anxiety in face-to-face communication, they like having that mediated environment so that they can plan a message. We can present a certain part of ourselves so it’s an idealization, a censored self. You could play up certain characteristics and downplay others.”

How an adverse Supreme Court ruling would send Obamacare into a tailspin

Mark Hall, a professor of law, was cited for writing a series of papers examining the effects of reform on various state markets. If the court eliminates the subsidies, “it would be a big mess” in the affected states, he said. “We have learned pretty quickly that that policy environment doesn’t work well.”

National universities where the most accepted students enroll

Collages typically aim high for their yield, the percentage of accepted students who elect to attend. Students may choose to enroll based on prestige, affordability or academic and social fit. The average yield among the 261 ranked National Universities reporting data to U.S. News was 34.1 percent in fall 2013. Wake Forest was on the list and the data showed that 3,915 students were accepted for fall 2013 with 1,230 choosing to attend for a 31.4 percent yield.

The 8 best schools for international education in 2015

Wake Forest University is among eight colleges and universities that received NASPA’s 2015 Senator Paul Simon Awards for Campus Internationalization for excellence in international education. Wake Forest was recognized for its Workshop on Intercultural Skills Enhancement (WISE), a skills-based conference aimed at helping faculty, program coordinators, student advisors and staff develop intercultural skills and awareness.

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A round campus

Harris-Perry named director of Pro Humanitate Institute

Melissa Harris-Perry (’94) has been named the executive director of Wake Forest’s Pro Humanitate Institute. From environmental justice projects to research on urban food deserts, she has spent her career connecting academic work and service.

Swimming in the ‘Deac Tank’

While many of their classmates headed for the beach, 140 Wake Forest students piled into vans that would take them to locations across the country for the week of spring break. Taking its cue from a popular television show that would take them to locations across the country for the week of spring break.

Springing into action

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25 years later:

Symposium explores President Nathan Hatch’s book on American Christianity

A quarter century after it was published, scholars are still talking about the award-winning book, “The Democratization of American Christianity,” written by University President Nathan Hatch. A half-day symposium held on Feb. 6 featured seven of the country’s most distinguished scholars of early American religion reflecting on the influence of the book.

‘Naming Rights for the Rest of Us’ increases engagement and donations

In February, the Wake Forest Fund launched its tongue-in-cheek “Naming Rights for the Rest of Us” social media campaign to improve engagement with young alumni. Donors that month were entered into a drawing to have a name plate made and photographed with an “iconic” Wake Forest item.

Using Twitter, Instagram and Facebook to generate excitement for the contest, the “Naming Rights for the Rest of Us” website garnered 12,650 page views with 94 percent of those being first-time visitors. The average time spent on the naming rights website was nearly five minutes compared with an average time on the overall campaign website of under one minute. Young alumni giving in February jumped from $4,961 in 2014 to $9,857 in 2015.

Examples of items “named” during the campaign included:

- Ashley Millhouse (’12) was chosen as the recipient of Netta’s Skillet. She honored her late friend Betsy Martin (’12) with the naming rights.
- Thanks to Berkley Sweetapple (’11), Kevin Cox’s floor outlet in the ZSR library.
- Charlotte Said (’17) was the recipient of the popular floor outlet in the ZSR library.
- Thanks to Berkley Sweetapple (’11), Kevin Cox’s floor outlet in the ZSR library.
- Thanks to Berkley Sweetapple (’11), Kevin Cox’s floor outlet in the ZSR library.

STEM careers ‘speed-dating’ style

Wake Forest’s first STEM Slam brought together students who were looking for job opportunities with companies who were looking for potential employees. If that sounds like your typical career fair, it wasn’t. The STEM Slam was a combination of speed dating and career networking, or “speed networking.” The students who participated included traditional STEM majors, as well as non-STEM students who may have STEM-related hobbies or side interests.

There’s a place for liberal arts students in STEM companies! Yes!

Donation supports Wake Forest athletes

Wake Forest alumni and former football and baseball player David Couch (’84) has committed $4 million in support of the Wake Forest baseball program and Sports Performance Center.
The School of Business continues to receive coverage about the decision last fall to accelerate its evening and weekend offerings for professionals who want to earn an MBA while working full time. Prior to the decision – part of a trend to fit the needs of the modern student and the business world – Charles Iacovou said when he took over as dean he did a “deep dive … to understand our current situation and the landscape around us.”

According to a new study from assistant professor of accounting Ya-wen Yang, the IRS estimated that in 2006, corporate-tax evasion was responsible for around $67 billion in losses. Though corporate ethics and morality have been studied at length, the new study takes a look at a different characteristic of a company’s leadership – gender – as a means of determining how ethically a company’s high-ups behave when it comes to paying taxes and reporting income.

Some Wake Forest University students are using bats as climbing partners with the stock market. Last fall, more than 8 million students from 20 of North Carolina’s independent colleges and universities posted healthy gains in central to great teams and collective effort.”

Study claims $63.5B impact for N.C. higher ed

WFU Innovation Quarter wins recognition

Wake Forest Innovation Quarter has been recognized as one of the nation’s best examples of historic rehabilitation projects for 2014 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the National Trust Community Investment Corp. The groups said their awards “highlight exemplary” historic rehabilitation projects that utilized the federal historic tax credit to revitalize America’s cities and small towns.

A study commissioned by the state’s public, private and community colleges estimates the surrounding region during the 2012-13 fiscal year.

Wake Forest president backs campus Imam

President Nathan Hatch released a statement of public support for the University’s associate chaplain for Muslim Life, Khalid Griggs. In a message that went to the Wake Forest community, Hatch wrote that Griggs had his “full support” and is “an experienced, well-respected religious leader whose pastoral care and interfaith engagement assist Muslim students and people of all backgrounds on our campus.”

Griggs wrote an open letter of his own in which he said, “I support the constitutional government of the United States and have never advocated, nor would I ever support, violence against it.”

He also said, "I want people to know that I have repeatedly and publicly denounced violent acts in the name of Islam and decry a tendency to blame all Muslims for the extremities of a few."

In response to the open letters, Griggs and University leaders have denounced violent acts in the name of Islam and decry a tendency to blame all Muslims for the extremities of a few.

Some Wake Forest University students are using bats as climbing partners with the stock market.

Wake Forest University students won the 2015 NCICU Ethics Bowl, a two-day competition at the Campbell University School of Law in Raleigh. The event attracted more than 100 students from 20 of North Carolina’s independent colleges and universities.

Eleven Wake Forest students are using bats as climbing partners with the stock market.

Wake Forest University president Backs Campus Imam

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In response to the open letters, Griggs and University leaders have received messages of support from many Wake Forest alumni.

WFU students Win Ethics Bowl

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Wake Forest University students are using bats as climbing partners with the stock market.
Remembering Ed Christman

For years, longtime Chaplain Edgar D. Christman welcomed freshmen to Wake Forest with his “What’s in a Name” speech, in which he wove many of their names into his remarks to make them feel part of their new community. No chaplain has ever been more aptly named, or lived up to his own name more than Christman, who is remembered for his compassion in helping generations of students feel at home at Wake Forest.

The Winston-Salem Journal wrote a story about Chaplain Christman’s life that ran on Christmas day and later ran an editorial honoring him.

“He has been a chaplain to everybody – to those of another faith, to those of no faith, to those on the road somewhere.” - Provost Emeritus Ed Wilson.

Christman, who was 85, died surrounded by the love of his family. He could weave a story with charm, courage and humor. As the Wake Forest University chaplain for more than 30 years, he put countless students at ease with those stories. “When there were people in need, he took care of us,” one of those students, Joe Clontz, once told me.”

Life trustee Petro “Pete” Kulynych dies

Petro “Pete” Kulynych, a life member of the Wake Forest University Board of Trustees and former founding director of Lowes Cos. Inc., died Jan. 20 at his home in Wilkesboro. He was 93. Kulynych was also a life member of the Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center Board of Visitors.

Postal service honors Maya Angelou with postage stamp

Wake Forest University faculty, staff and alumni were among those present for the dedication ceremony of the Dr. Maya Angelou Forever Stamp in Washington, D.C. on Tuesday, Apr. 7. They included Presidential Endowed Chair in Politics and International Affairs Melissa Harris-Perry (‘94), who served as the master of ceremonies; Assistant Provost for Diversity and Inclusion Barbee Oakes (‘80); Assistant Dean for College Development Wade Stokes (’83); and alumnus Robby Gregg (’83).

Who doesn’t love a ranking?

For the sixth consecutive year, U.S. News & World Report has ranked the Wake Forest University School of Business Part-time Master of Business Administration programs No. 1 in North Carolina, and the second consecutive year at No. 20 in the nation.

The National Jurist ranked the School of Law among the nation’s best for practical training.

College Factual rated Wake Forest No. 2 on the top 10 list of N.C. colleges and universities; AND Best Master’s Programs, named Wake’s online master’s in counseling degree program among the top 40.