



COMPASS



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This bitter isn't can shy. PAGE

THUMBS UP! | PROFILE

NOW A MANAGER AT J&J, THIS ODU ENGINEERING GRAD IS ENDOWING SCHOLARSHIPS

By Lia Russell | *The Virginian-Pilot*

When Norfolk native Toykea Jones graduated from Old Dominion University with a master's degree in environmental engineering in 2005, she landed a great job at Johnson & Johnson and worked her way up the corporate ladder.

Jones, 33, is now a global supply chain manager, traveling the world on the company's behalf to streamline processes and maximize efficiency. Last year, she traveled to nine countries in Europe and Asia.

"I feel so fortunate to have an amazing job with a wonderful company," said Jones, who now lives in New Jersey.

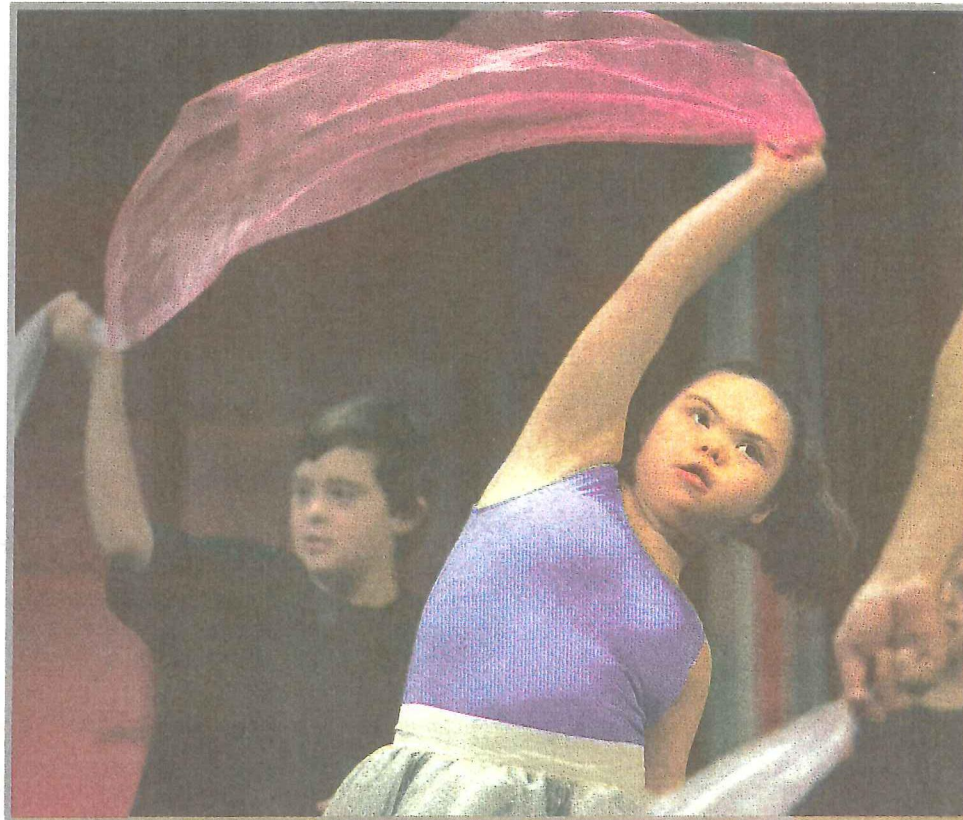
Jones has traveled far figuratively as

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COURTESY PHOTO

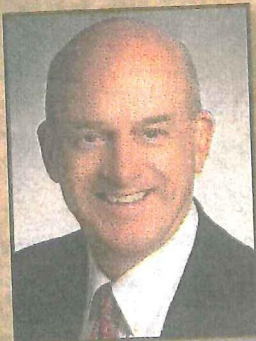
Toykea Jones graduated from ODU in 2005 and has since endowed two \$25,000 scholarships at the school. She is a global supply chain manager with Johnson & Johnson.



THE N. PHAM | THE VIR

do you wanna dance?

CHILDREN IN Todd Rosenlieb's adaptive dance class for children with Down syndrome had their first community dance performance at last Thursday's Faith Inclusion Network (FIN) of South Hampton Roads' Gifts of the Heart Celebration. The celebration was held at First Presbyterian Church, 820 Colonial Ave., and was FIN's largest fundraising event of the year. The Faith Inclusion Network of South Hampton Roads is a nonprofit organization that helps families affected by disabilities find places of worship that cater to their specific needs. Pi Jessica Floyd, center, and Graham Payne, left, were among the performers. *More photos, Pa*



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JONES

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well as literally. Growing up in Norfolk public housing, her parents always told her education would be her ticket to success. The message stuck.

She had plenty of college options after graduating from Booker T. Washington High School in 1999, but attended ODU to stay close to her family. She wouldn't have been able to attend had it not been for the generosity of others who funded scholarships that paid her tuition, room and board.

"If someone hadn't helped me go to college, who knows what I would be doing," Jones said.

Now Jones is living her dream, and she wants to help other young people achieve theirs.

In 2010, with a \$25,000 endowment, she established the Toykea S. Jones Endowed Scholarship in Engineering at ODU from which a scholarship of approximately \$1,000 is awarded annually



On Saturday, Toykea Jones will speak at ODU's Scholar's Day for incoming freshmen.

to a qualifying sophomore engineering student. The recipient must be a Norfolk high school graduate, have a 3.0 GPA and be able to prove financial need.

In 2012, she started the Toykea S. Jones Foundation, which awards a \$1,000 scholarship annually to a graduating senior from a Norfolk high school who plans to major in engineering at a Virginia university or college.

Last month, Jones endowed a second \$25,000 scholarship at ODU - the Toykea S. Jones Endowed Scholarship in Maritime and Supply Chain Management, for a qualified sophomore.

"When I realized last year that the engineering scholarship was going to be fully endowed, I thought, 'Well, it's time to start another one,'" Jones said with a laugh. "I was a little scared when I started the first one in 2010,

because, at the time, it was a big financial commitment for me, but I feel very confident in starting the second one."

Because of her professional success and her eagerness to mentor others, Jones was invited to serve on the board of directors of the ODU Batten College of Engineering & Technology.

"It's such an honor and it's very humbling being in the company of so many successful people," she said. "We're shaping the university and putting programs in place for future leaders."

Oktaay Baysal, dean of the engineering school, said Jones is setting an example as an emerging philanthropist and champion of higher education.

"In addition to her clear passion for education, Toykea's strong and enduring work ethic has supported her drive to better herself and to create opportunities for others," Baysal said. "ODU engineering is proud to call her not only one of our own but also one of our valued advisors."

On Saturday, Jones will be the keynote speaker at ODU's

University Scholar's Day event for admitted incoming freshman students. She will share her story with attendees, hoping to inspire young people to make their mark.

"I feel like I'm helping shape the future of Johnson & Johnson with potential talent from ODU," she said. "My message is 'You don't have to follow my steps directly, but be the best that you can be.'"

Jones' family in Norfolk is proud of her achievements, but they're more proud that she is reaching out to help others and make a difference in the community where she was raised.

"My mother always says that I'm special," Jones said. "But I always give thanks to her, because she taught me it's all about giving back and showing gratitude to those who've helped me along the way."

For more information about the Toykea S. Jones Foundation or to apply for a scholarship, visit www.toykeajonesfoundation.com

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