



VIRGINIA FOUNDATION FOR
INDEPENDENT COLLEGES

UPDATE

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HAMPTON UNIVERSITY JOINS THE VFIC

HAMPTON UNIVERSITY, an HBCU located in Hampton, Virginia, officially became the seventeenth member of the VFIC on July 1, 2023. A dynamic, progressive institution of higher education, Hampton University provides students with a broad range of technical, liberal arts, and graduate degree programs. In addition to being one of the premier historically black universities in the world, the university is a tight-knit community of learners and educators, representing 49 states and 35 territories and nations.

In extending an invitation to join the consortium, VFIC board members recognized the aligned missions of Hampton University and the other sixteen schools: to teach a broadly pragmatic liberal arts and sciences education in environments that value and encourage ethical leadership and responsible citizenship.

“Our priorities align closely with the VFIC’s mission, which is to provide a top-quality and affordable education as we prepare tomorrow’s global leaders,” says LTG (ret) Darrell K. Williams, the thirteenth president of Hampton University. “Virginia’s private

colleges and universities offer a unique academic experience and are critical to the creation of a diverse and inclusive workforce.” Hampton University was founded on April 1, 1868, as Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute by Brigadier General Samuel Armstrong, Superintendent of the Freedmen’s Bureau of the Ninth District of Virginia. Symbolized by the historical Emancipation Oak, the school’s mission emphasized the lasting promise of education for all, even in the face of adversity. Today,

Hampton University is engaged in “Elevating Hampton Excellence,” a 2023-2033 strategic plan to elevate academic excellence, increase research and innovation, improve operations and infrastructure, and increase financial sustainability.



“The VFIC will certainly benefit from adding such an outstanding university to our ranks,” says Nancy Howell Agee, CEO of Carilion Clinic and chair of the VFIC. “At the same time, Hampton will also gain from collaborating with our other sixteen, leading independent colleges and universities in Virginia. We look forward to establishing a strong and longstanding partnership with our new member.”



EXCELENCIA CAMPUS TOURS ARE BACK!

After taking a two-year hiatus during COVID-19, the VFIC's popular Excelencia Campus Tour Program is back in action.

This special program helps connect and introduce Hispanic and other underrepresented high school students to VFIC colleges and universities. The VFIC works with partners at the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to provide groups of students with a view of the college experience by touring a VFIC campus for a day.

Between 2018 and 2020 the VFIC provided campus tours to 559 students from sixteen different high schools located across the Commonwealth. Not only did this effort provide Hispanic students with a glimpse of higher education and campus life, but it also sparked interest in VFIC schools.

This past fall, students from three high schools visited VFIC colleges and universities:

- > **October 23:** Nineteen students from Petersburg High School visited Marymount University.
- > **November 3:** Twenty-eight students from Brunswick High School visited the University of Richmond.
- > **November 28:** Twenty-four students from Hopewell High School visited Virginia Union University.

“As a previous partner with the VFIC, we were thrilled to see the Excelencia program come back. College tours are highlighted as a best practice, but due to the costs involved, many students are unable to visit campuses. Programs like yours expose more students to higher education and broaden their college options.”

MELISSA BENAVIDEZ

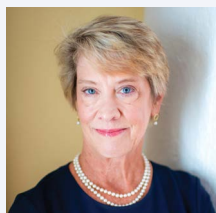
GEAR UP Virginia College Transition Specialist,
State Council of Higher Education

Additional Excelencia Campus Tour programs are planned for spring 2024. Students from five high schools will visit one of the following VFIC schools: Bridgewater College, Hampton University, Marymount University, or Virginia Union University.

NEW VFIC STAFF, TRUSTEES, AND SCHOOL PRESIDENTS



Teague Avey
Strategic Advisor & Head
of the Virginia Offices
Brown Advisory



Elizabeth Gamble Blaine
Director of Development
VFIC



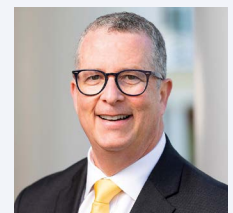
Gary D. Bonnewell
Senior VP, Financial
Advisor & Family Wealth
Director
Morgan Stanley



Kristen Erickson
Administrative Assistant
VFIC



Tracy Frist
Founder
The Farm at Sinking Creek



Jeffrey P. Stein
President
Mary Baldwin University

BRIGHTER FUTURES SCHOLARSHIPS

The VFIC is profoundly grateful for the financial support provided by the following companies, philanthropists, and trusts that have an endowed or named a Brighter Futures Scholarship program at the \$5,000 level or above. Their investment in our students during the 2022-2023 academic year pays dividends for decades to our communities and our schools.

Anonymous Scholarship (2)
AEP Foundation Scholarship
Altria Leadership Scholarship
Bank of America Charitable Foundation Scholarship
Belle Isle Scholarship
A. Lea Booth Scholarship
Camp Foundation Scholarship
Ruth Camp Campbell Foundation Scholarship
Ted and Laura Lee Chandler Scholarship
Council of Independent Colleges/
UPS Educational Foundation Scholarships
Walter and Beese Craigie Scholarship
Dollar Tree/Family Dollar Scholarship
Dominion Energy Scholarship
Ferguson Enterprises Scholarship
Bob & Charlotte Gammon Scholarship
HRH Endowed Scholarship
Inova Loudoun Hospital Scholarship
Landmark Foundation Scholarship
Luck Companies Scholarship
Markel Scholarship
Mars Foundation Scholarship
T. Justin Moore Scholarship
John D. Munford Scholarship
New River Electrical Scholarship
Moses D. Nunnally Foundation and Family Endowed Scholarship
Robins Family Scholarship
AC & WR Robins, Jr. Foundation Scholarship
Sentara Healthcare Scholarship
Newton B. Shingleton Foundation Scholarship
Barbara B. & Donald G. Smith Scholarship
Treakle Foundation Scholarship
Universal Corporation Scholarship
Williams Mullen Scholarship

If you would like to create a Brighter Futures Scholarship, please contact Mary-Beth Johnson at johnson@vfic.org.

“ASCENDING TO THE TOP” The VFIC Women’s Leadership Summit



Sixty women from twelve of our colleges gathered in Richmond on October 26 – 28 for the 2023 VFIC Women’s Leadership Development Summit. Over three days, women of all ages and from various backgrounds and professions shared ideas and developed strategies for becoming confident, effective leaders. Along the way, a number of trailblazing women offered leadership lessons drawn from personal experience.

“VFIC schools do an incredible job of developing the intellectual capacity of undergraduate women, helping them broaden their career options and prepare for life after college,” says Mary-Beth Johnson, chief operating officer of the VFIC and organizer of the summit. “Our strategy with this biennial summit is to help our women cultivate their leadership potential at the same time.”

One way the Women’s Leadership Development Summit accomplishes these goals is by encouraging women to reach for the top by routinely engaging in conversations about leadership earlier in their lives— and certainly before they begin their career journey.

During the conference, attendees participated in a variety of forums, discussions, and workshops. These sessions included “What Kind of Leader Are You,” “Using Conflict as a Catalyst for Individual and Organizational Growth,” “Mindfulness as a Life Skill,” and “Leadership Lessons from Trailblazing Women.” Presenters came from an array of sectors – corporate, nonprofit, and small business.

The summit was sponsored by generous support from Dominion Energy, Truist, Graham Holdings, and Christian & Barton.

“VFIC schools have always made a concerted effort to instill in their female undergraduates the determination and desire to embrace the challenge of leadership,” says Johnson. “This year’s summit – our third since launching the event in 2019 – demonstrates our commitment to helping women ascend to top leadership roles wherever they may be. Once there, they’ll be ready to perform brilliantly.”

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBER COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

BRIDGEWATER COLLEGE

In the current academic year, Bridgewater College welcomed 28 international students in a new class achieving its highest international student population in three decades.

EMORY & HENRY COLLEGE

Emory & Henry College and Mars Hill University have created an academic pathway for select Mars Hill students majoring in allied health science, biomedical sciences, and psychology to pursue admission into an Emory & Henry School of Health Sciences graduate program in addition counseling, clinical mental health counseling, occupational therapy, physician assistant studies, or physical therapy.

HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE

Hampden-Sydney signed a new graduate school agreement with Christopher Newport University that allows eligible H-SC juniors the opportunity to participate in CNU's Master of Science in Applied Physics and Computer Science program. This program prepares students for Ph.D. studies and industry careers.

HAMPTON UNIVERSITY

Hampton University's School of Science was awarded a \$1.7M grant from the Simons Foundation to help develop a new Stellarator Experiment Group to advance research in fusion plasma science. The funding will support the design and construction of a stellarator experiment, STAR_Lite, in partnership with the Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory.

HOLLINS UNIVERSITY

Hollins' study abroad and international internship programs continue to thrive and expand. Eighty-five undergraduate students (68% of whom received financial assistance) traveled to 15 different countries around the world. Two new faculty-led programs in Ecuador and Scotland have been added.

MARY BALDWIN UNIVERSITY

The doctor of nursing practice (DNP) programs at Mary Baldwin University's Murphy Deming College of Health Sciences received full accreditation from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. MBU now joins Virginia Commonwealth University and the University of Virginia as one of only three institutions that offer a nurse anesthesiology DNP on the east coast.

MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

Marymount received a \$1.5 million grant from the National Security Agency to build and run a cybersecurity clinic aimed at helping protect local businesses and nonprofits from cyber threats.

RANDOLPH COLLEGE

Randolph College inducted the first members of its new chapter of Alpha Alpha Alpha on November 8, National First-Generation College Student Day. Tri-Alpha celebrates the academic accomplishments of first-generation college students. Members receive mentoring from other first-gen students and, eventually, mentor younger students themselves.

RANDOLPH-MACON COLLEGE

Randolph-Macon launched its newly redesigned website this fall. The streamlined site features the College's new branding, which aims to tell Randolph-Macon's story under the theme "Up Close, Future Ready."

ROANOKE COLLEGE

After a hiatus from football of more than 80 years, Roanoke College announced Bryan Stinespring as the head coach of the Maroon's new program. Stinespring, previously the associate head football coach and offensive assistant at Virginia Military Institute, brings more than 30 years of Virginia coaching experience to the role, including 26 years under legendary coach Frank Beamer at Virginia Tech.

SHENANDOAH UNIVERSITY

Shenandoah University celebrated the naming of the Health & Life Sciences Building with a ceremony on October 26. This new building, which houses learning space for students in the School of Nursing, Division of Athletic Training, and College of Arts and Sciences, is now named the Cecil Pruitt, Jr. Health & Life Sciences Building in honor of Pruitt's loyal support and significant contributions to Shenandoah University.

SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE

The Sweet Briar Board of Directors appointed Mary Pope Maybank Hutson as the College's 14th president. Hutson, a member of the class of 1983, is the College's first alumna president.

UNIVERSITY OF LYNCHBURG

The University of Lynchburg now offers a Master of Healthcare Administration as a 12-month, asynchronous online degree program. At just over \$14,000, Lynchburg's MHA is the most affordable program of its kind in Virginia, giving students the opportunity to customize their degrees with electives.

UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND

A recent \$10 million gift to the University of Richmond will support scholarships for Robins School of Business students. The anonymous donation from a Robins School alumnus will establish an endowed scholarship fund to support students pursuing careers in finance, management, economics, marketing, analytics, and accounting.

VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY

Virginia Union University experienced an unprecedented 31% surge in undergraduate enrollment for the 2023-2024 academic year compared to the previous year. More than 1,200 undergraduate and 400 graduate students are currently enrolled.

VIRGINIA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

Virginia Wesleyan celebrated the completion of the Eleanor and Henry Watts Field House, particularly benefiting the university's three-time national championship softball program. The building honors Trustee Emeritus D. Henry Watts and his wife Eleanor, who have been longstanding supporters of the University.

WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY

Washington and Lee dedicated its new offsite solar array on September 28 on the grounds of the 17-megawatt offsite solar farm, known as Colice Hall, in North Carolina. The site is already generating power projected to total over 22,000 megawatt hours each year for the University, making a leap toward an energy-independent future.



SHENANDOAH UNIVERSITY

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

THE H. HITER HARRIS FAMILY AWARDS

Through generous endowments, the Harris family created special awards to recognize VFIC faculty whose professional history reflects a commitment to excellence in teaching undergraduates in a liberal arts and sciences environment. During the Harris Family Awards Presentation at the VFIC's annual fall luncheon, we recognized six faculty members from our consortium for their dedication to higher education and student success. Recipients of each award also received a stipend to support their scholarly research and professional development.

The Libby and Hiter Harris Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award



Audra L. Gollenberg, Ph.D., is Professor of Public Health and Department Chair of the Department of Human and Environmental Health and Policy at Shenandoah University. Gollenberg worked to build the new undergraduate public health program at Shenandoah University that trains students to be next-generation problem-solvers.



Morgan Wilson, Ph.D., is a Professor of Biology at Hollins University and teaches courses in both the biology and environmental studies programs. Trained as a physiological ecologist, Wilson has focused on the physiology and behavior of birds.

The H. Hiter Harris III Rising Star Award



Ryan Brindle, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Cognitive and Behavioral Science and Neuroscience at Washington and Lee University. His research examines the impact of mental stress on health and disease.



Aslan Lotfi, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Analytics & Operations at the Robins School of Business at the University of Richmond. Lotfi's current research studies the diffusion of a behavior of interest in a target population and factors influencing individuals to commit the behavior.

The H. Hiter Harris III Excellence in Instructional Technology Award



David Pfaff, is the Director of the Integrative and Quantitative Center (IQ Center) at Washington and Lee University. Throughout his tenure as manager of the IQ Center, Pfaff has been dedicated to facilitating innovative technology integration in academic settings and helping faculty enhance their courses and research.



Amanda Romjue, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Spanish and co-chair of the Department of World Languages at Emory & Henry College. Intercultural learning and accessibility are of the most vital importance for Romjue in her classes and her research.



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STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

MEI, '26 - University of Lynchburg, Major: Exercise Physiology

Mei, a member of Lynchburg's swim team, competed in the 2023 Parapan American Games, held in Santiago, Chile. She also swam at the 2020 Paralympic Games in Tokyo and is the U.S. record holder in the 50- and 100-yard breaststroke for SB8, a competition class for para athletes.



THE VFIC ANNUAL FUND

Thanks to the incredible generosity of so many individuals and organizations over the years, the VFIC has helped more students have access to higher education. We've also helped ensure that education is affordable, particularly for students underrepresented on today's campuses. By attending schools that place a premium on personalized instruction and advising, all VFIC students are more likely not only to complete their degrees on time but also secure a lucrative job upon graduation.

If you have already given to the 2023-2024 Annual Fund for Academic Excellence, thank you. If not, we hope you will consider joining our Honor Roll of Donors by initiating, renewing, or increasing an investment that will enrich lives across Virginia. Your financial support provides funding for scholarships for underrepresented students, educational programs, faculty research fellowships, library and technology acquisitions, capital projects, and so much more. Each tax-deductible gift benefits every one of the distinctive member colleges in a meaningful way.

DONOR LEVELS FIT ALL TYPES OF BUDGETS.

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\$50,000+ Benefactor's Circle	\$1,500+ Trustee's Circle
\$25,000+ Capstone Circle	\$1,000+ Millennium Society
\$15,000+ Chairman's Circle	\$100+ Century Club
\$10,000+ Lea Booth Society	\$1+ Friends
\$5,000+ President's Society	

Make your gift to VFIC today!

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www.vfic.org/donate