



BOARD OF VISITORS

EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

**FRIDAY JANUARY 26
3:30 - 5:00
SMITH HALL BOARD
ROOM**

**External Relations Committee
Agenda Items
26 January 2024**

<u>Government Relations Update</u>	Page
1. McGuireWoods Consulting Report	1
2. New General Assembly Members (Strategy for Outreach)	2
3. Governor's Introduced Budget and Budget Amendments	34
4. Higher Education Legislation	36
5. JLARC Study of Higher Education Cost Efficiency	59
6. Local Government Relations Update	61

Communications and Marketing Update

1. Regimental S5 Captain Report
2. Quarterly Activity Report
3. Marketing Update

Museum System Update

1. VMI Museum
2. Jackson House Museum
3. New Market Battlefield State Historical Park and Museum

Closed Session Topics

1. Naming Opportunity Resolution
2. New Market Medal Resolution
3. Jonathan Daniels Award
4. ANC Monument Relocation

McGuireWoods Consulting **2024 Session Changes Overview**

Election Analysis

The 2023 General Assembly Elections bring the largest single-year turnover in the General Assembly during modern times. All 140 seats in the Virginia legislature were on the ballot but a handful of competitive seats decided the majority in each chamber.

After winning 21 seats in the Senate and 51 seats in the House, the Democrats now hold the majority in the General Assembly. Democrats had previously controlled the legislature as well as the executive branch but lost their majority in the House and Governor's mansion following the 2021 election. This will be the first time in over two and a half decades where Virginia will have a Republican governor and a Democrat controlled General Assembly.

Republican Delegate Leslie (Les) Adams and Republican Senator Frank Ruff both announced their resignations following the end of their current term. These resignations left two vacancies, which were decided on January 9th, 2024, in a special election set by the Governor. Republican Eric Phillips replaced Delegate Les Adams in the 48th House District. Former legislative aide and Republican Tammy Mulchi replaced Frank Ruff in the 9th Senate District.

New and Familiar Faces

The 2024 session will bring one of the largest classes of freshman members in recent history. The House will have **37** new members from all areas of the Commonwealth, including Jed Arnold who won a special election earlier this year. The Senate will have **18** new Senators.

Eight sitting members of the House of Delegates are joining the upper chamber. These include Emily Brewer, Chris Head, Suhas Subramanyam, Tara Durant, Danica Roem, John McGuire, Angelia Williams Graves, and Schuyler VanValkenburg.

Additionally, several former legislators are returning to the General Assembly. Josh Cole and Alex Askew are returning to the House after being unseated in 2021, while Nadarius Clark will return after resigning his House seat earlier this year to run in a different district. Glen Sturtevant is returning to the Senate after losing to Ghazala Hashmi in 2019. Former congressman and state senator Tom Garrett will represent House District 56. Lashrecse Aird, who was defeated in her 2021 campaign for the House, and Jennifer Carroll Foy, who resigned from the House to campaign for Governor in 2020, will both return to the legislature in the Senate.

Leadership Changes

In the Senate, six out of eleven committee chairs retired and some of the most influential committees, such as Commerce and Labor and Finance and Appropriations, have less than half of the membership returning in 2024.

Caucus Leadership

The House Democratic Caucus voted unanimously to elect **Delegate Don Scott as speaker-designee**. The full House of Delegates voted to officially confirm him on the first day of the 2024 legislative session. Scott is U.S. Navy veteran and trial lawyer from Portsmouth who has been a member of the House since 2020, serving as caucus minority leader since 2022. **Delegate Charniele Herring** will serve as Majority Leader and **Delegate Kathy Tran** was elected as Caucus Chair.

Meanwhile, House Republicans elected current Speaker **Todd Gilbert**, as their next Minority Leader. Gilbert, who has served in the House of Delegates since 2006, faced a challenge for the position by former Majority Leader, Terry Kilgore. **Delegate Amanda Batten** was re-elected as Caucus Chair and **Delegate Michael Webert** was re-elected as Republican Whip.

Senate Democrats have chosen **Senator Scott Surovell** as their new Majority Leader for the Democratic Caucus. **Senator Mamie Locke** will serve as Caucus Chair and **Senator Adam Ebbin** will serve as the Caucus Vice Chair. **Senator Barbara Favola** and **Senator Lamont Bagby** were chosen as Democratic Whips, while **Senator Aaron Rouse** was chosen as the Caucus Secretary. With multiple senior senators not seeking reelection, this new leadership includes both long-time and comparatively new members.

Senate Republicans selected **Senator Ryan McDougle** as Minority Leader and **Senator Mark Obenshain** as Caucus Chair. Senators **Bill Stanley** and **Bryce Reeves** will serve as Whips for the Republican caucus. Senator McDougle previously served as Caucus Chair and represents Virginia's 26th district that encompasses Hanover and portions of the Middle Peninsula.

New Committee Chairs

House Democrats announced that **Delegate Luke Torian** will once again serve as Chair of the House Appropriations Committee. Torian previously chaired the committee from 2019 to 2021. **Senator Louise Lucas** will serve as the Chair of Senate Finance and Appropriations. She previously served as Chair of the Senate Education and Health Committee. Now holding that role is **Senator Ghazala Hashmi**, a former community college administrator. **Delegate Sam Rasoul**, the furthest west (Roanoke) serving Democratic, now chairs the House Education Committee.

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Virginia General Assembly New Member Biographies

Incoming Senator Bios

Senator-Elect Timmy French (R-1)



Timmy French won the State Senate seat for the Strong Republican 1st district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent Frederick County, Shenandoah County, Warren County, Winchester City, and Clarke County.

French is a lifelong farmer from Shenandoah County, Virginia, co-owning beef, poultry, dairy, and row crop operations. His campaign emphasized the importance of farmers and police officers, education, religious freedom, pro-life values, political openness, combatting drug addiction, lowering taxes, Second Amendment rights, lowering taxes, and the expansion of telehealth services.

Senator-Elect Christopher Head (R-3)



Christopher Head won the State Senate seat for the strong Republican 3rd district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent Botetourt County, Staunton City, Rockbridge County, Waynesboro City, Alleghany County, Buena Vista City, Lexington City, Craig County, Covington City, part of Roanoke County, part of Augusta County, and part of Bedford County.

Head was formerly the delegate representing the 17th district of Virginia. He had been a member of the Virginia House of Delegates since 2012, serving as the Vice Chair of the Health, Welfare, and Institutions committee as well as a member of the Privileges and Elections, Commerce and Energy, and Rules committees.

In addition to his political career, Head owns a family business with his wife, Betsy, that provides non-medical in-home care to seniors in Roanoke and Lynchburg. He also co-founded and Chairs the Business Development Caucus, is a member of the National Rifle Association (NRA) and spends time volunteering with his Baptist Church.

Senator-Elect Tammy Mulchi (R-9)



Tammy Mulchi won the State Senate seat for the Strong Republican 9th district of Virginia following the January 9th special election. This special election came as a result of former long-time Senator LFrank Ruff's announcement of resignation. Mulchi will represent Pittsylvania County, Danville County, Halifax County, Mecklenburg County, Nottoway County, Charlotte County, Lunenburg County, and part of Prince Edward County.

Mulchi, a Mecklenburg County resident, was Ruff's former longtime legislative aide, and she received his endorsement to run for his seat. She also served as legislative aide to Delegate Tommy Wright. Mulchi currently serves as a member of the Clarksville Town Council.

Senator-Elect John McGuire (R-10)



John McGuire won the State Senate seat for the Strong Republican 10th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent Powhatan County, Goochland County, Fluvanna County, Appomattox County, Buckingham County, Amelia County, Cumberland County, part of Hanover County, part of Louisa County, part of Prince Edward County, and part of Henrico County.

McGuire was formerly the delegate representing the 56th district of Virginia where he had been a member since 2018. He served on the House Education, Privileges and Elections, and Transportation committees.

Outside of his political career, McGuire served for 10 years as a Navy SEAL. He also runs a small business, SEAL Team PT Inc., which is a fitness organization dedicated to helping teams become stronger.

Senator-Elect Glen Sturtevant (R-12)



Glen Sturtevant won the State Senate seat for the Republican-leaning 12th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent Colonial Heights City and part of Chesterfield County.

Sturtevant graduated from Catholic University for his undergraduate degree and George Mason University's Antonin Scalia Law School. He and his wife live with their four adopted children in Richmond. Because of this, he founded the non-profit Richmond Public Schools Education Foundation which works with the private sector to support educational excellence in the school system. Sturtevant served on the Richmond School Board until his 2015 election to Virginia State Senate where he was a member of the Commerce and Labor, General Laws and Technology, Judiciary, and Local Government committees. In his professional life, Sturtevant is a practicing attorney with the Rawls Law Group in Richmond.

Senator-Elect Lashrecse Aird (D-13)



Lashrecse Aird won the State Senate seat for the Democratic-leaning 13th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent Prince George County, Petersburg City, Hopewell City, Sussex County, Charles City County, Surry County, part of Henrico County, and part of Dinwiddie County.

From 2016 to 2021, Aird was a member of the Virginia House of Delegates representing the 63rd district. In this role, she was a member of the Appropriations, General Laws, and House Health, Welfare, and Institutions committees. She was named legislator of the year in 2021 by the Virginia Education Association.

Aird graduated from Virginia State University as well as University of Virginia's Sorenson Political Leadership Program and Virginia Commonwealth University's Minority Political Leadership Institute. She was the chair of the Fourth Congressional District Committee for the Democratic Party of Virginia as well as serving on the board for the Sorensen Political Leadership Institute, Sports Backers, Chippenham Johnston-Willis Hospital and the Virginia League of Planned Parenthood. Professionally, Aird serves as the Chief of Staff to the President at Richard Bland College of William and Mary.

Senator-Elect Schuyler VanValkenburg (D-16)



Schuyler VanValkenburg is an incoming member of the Virginia State Senate and will represent Senate District 16 which encompasses a portion of Henrico County. VanValkenburg defeated incumbent Senator Siobhan Dunnavant.

Prior to winning his race for Senate, VanValkenburg was a member of the Virginia House of Delegates since 2018, where he most recently served on the Education, Privileges and Elections, and General Laws Committees.

VanValkenburg graduated from University of Richmond and later attended Virginia Commonwealth University where he completed his Master's degree in history. He currently is a History and US Government teacher in Henrico County.

Senator-Elect Emily Jordan (R-17)



Emily Jordan, formerly Emily Brewer, won the race against Democrat Clint Jenkins for the competitive 17th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent Suffolk City, Isle of Wight County, Southampton County, Brunswick County, Greensville County, Franklin City, Emporia City, part of Portsmouth City, part of Dinwiddie County, and part of Chesapeake City.

Jordan was previously a member of the Virginia House of Delegates since 2018 where she had represented the 64th district of Virginia. In this role, she had served as the Chair of the House Communications and Technology and Innovation committees and had been a member of the Appropriations and General Laws committees.

In her professional life, Jordan started her career providing media training for public safety and government officials before becoming a small business owner. She is also a founding member of the Virginia Future Caucus and received the Emerging Leadership Award by the Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership in 2020.

Senator-Elect Christie New Craig (R-19)



Christie New Craig won the State Senate seat for the Republican-leaning 19th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent part of Chesapeake City and part of Virginia Beach City.

Christie had served as Chief of Staff for the now-retired State Senator John A. Cosgrove since 2002, and her run replaced Senator Cosgrove's seat. Prior to this role, she was a law enforcement officer for the Chesapeake Sheriff's Office starting in 1987. Christie was a small business owner of a catering business for 15 years, a tree farming business since 20154, as well as a member of the Chesapeake School Board and the Chair of Chesapeake Public Schools from 2013-2016.

In 2016, Christie graduated from the University of Virginia Sorenson Political Leadership Program. She is also a graduate from the Chesapeake Police Academy.

Senator-Elect Angelia Williams Graves (D-21)



Angelia Williams Graves won the State Senate seat for the Strong Democratic 21st district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent part of Norfolk City.

Angelia was formerly the delegate representing the 90th district of Virginia, where she had been serving since 2021. In this role, she was a member of the Public Safety, Counties Cities and Towns, and Agriculture Chesapeake and Natural Resources committees.

She has an Associate of Science degree from Tidewater Community College in Business Administration and a Bachelor of Science in Business with a concentration in Marketing from Old Dominion University (ODU). Angelia is also a graduate from the University of Virginia (UVA) Sorenson Institute of Political Leadership. In her professional life, she is the Principal Broker and Owner of Homes by Angelia Realty and Property Management Company.

Senator-Elect Danny Diggs (R-24)



Danny Diggs is an incoming member of the Virginia State Senate and will represent Senate District 24, which is comprised of portions of Newport News City and James City County, as well as York County, Williamsburg City, and Poquoson City in their entirety. Diggs defeated incumbent Senator Monty Mason.

Before running for the Virginia Senate, Diggs served as the York-Poquoson Sheriff for more than two decades.

Senator-Elect Tara Durant (R-27)



Tara Durant won the race against Democrat Joel Griffin for the competitive 27th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent Fredericksburg City, part of Stafford County, and part of Spotsylvania County.

Durant earned her B.A. in Political Science from Coe College before attending the University of Baltimore School of Law.

In her professional life, Durant worked at the United Way, later going on to become an elementary school teacher. She has served on the Board of the Fredericksburg Area Service League and PTO Board as well as the Citizens Review Panel

with United Way. Durant had previously been a member of the Virginia House of Delegates since 2022, representing the 28th district of Virginia. In this role, she was a member of the Education, Transportation, and Finance committees.

Senator-Elect Danica Roem (D-30)



Danica Roem won the race against Republican Bill Woolf for the competitive 30th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. If elected, she will represent Manassas City, Manassas Park City, and part of Prince William County.

Previously, Roem had been a member of the Virginia House of Delegates since 2018, where she represented the 13th district of Virginia. In this role, she served as a member of the House Communications, Technology and Innovation, Counties, Cities and Towns, and General Laws committees.

Roem graduated with a degree in Journalism and went on to work for the Gainesville Times following graduation. Prior to her election to the Virginia General Assembly, she spent 10.5 years reporting the news, nine of which were in Prince William County.

Senator-Elect Russet Perry (D-31)



Russet Perry won the race against Republican Juan Pablo Segura for the competitive 31st district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent part of Loudoun County and part of Fauquier County.

Perry earned two degrees from George Washington University and went on to earn her Law degree from the Georgetown University Law Center. While attending law school, she worked at the Georgetown Law Domestic Violence Clinic.

In her professional career, Perry serves as a prosecutor in the Loudoun County Commonwealth's Attorney's Office. Prior to this, she served as a CIA Officer, earning multiple awards for her work.

Senator-Elect Suhas Subramanyam (D-32)



Suhas Subramanyam won the State Senate seat for the Strong Democratic district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent part of Loudoun County.

Subramanyam was formerly the delegate representing the 87th district of Virginia, where he had been serving since 2020. In this role, Subramanyam was a member of the House Education, Counties Cities and Towns, and Transportation committees.

Subramanyam graduated from Tulane University, afterwards going onto get his law degree from Northwestern University School of Law. He served on Capitol Hill as a health care and veterans policy aide and clerked for the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, where he helped re-introduce the DREAM Act and worked on criminal justice reforms. Subramanyam was also a White House technology policy advisor to President Obama. He also serves as a volunteer EMT/Firefighter in his hometown of Loudoun.

Senator-Elect Jennifer Carroll Foy (D-33)



Jennifer Carroll Foy won the State Senate seat for the Strong Democratic 33rd district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent part of Prince William County and part of Fairfax County.

Jennifer represented the 2nd district in the Virginia House of Delegates from 2018 to 2020. In this role, she was a member of the House Courts of Justice, House Finance, and Health Public Safety committees.

Jennifer was one of the first women to attend and graduate from Virginia Military Institute. She went on to obtain a master's degree from Virginia State University and a law degree from the Thomas Jefferson School of Law. In her professional life, she started her career as a magistrate judge and later moved onto becoming a public defender.

Senator-Elect Stella Pekarsky (D-36)



Stella Pekarsky won the State Senate seat for the Strong Democratic 36th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent part of Fairfax County.

Pekarsky graduated from George Mason University with a degree in Government and Politics. She began her career as a substitute teacher in Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), eventually moving on to teach full time at FCPS. She served on the Fairfax County School Board in 2020 and was one of the parent leader advocates of More Recess for Virginians who successfully lobbied legislators to provide developmentally adequate recess for children. She also served as an advisory board member to BRAWS (Bringing Resources to Aid Women’s Shelters), President of Rocky Run PTA, VP of Outreach for Fairfax County Council PTA, member of the NAACP Education committee, At-Large appointee to the Fairfax County Schools Student Health Advisory Committee, and Sully District appointee on the Fairfax County Public Library Board of Trustees.

In addition to teaching, Pekarsky and her husband co-founded a small business known as Skyway Air Taxi, a local air charter company.

Senator-Elect Saddam Azlan Salim (D-37)



Saddam Azlan Salim is won the State Senate for the Strong Democratic 37th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent Fairfax City, Falls Church City, and part of Fairfax County.

Saddam attended Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) and George Mason University (GMU), going onto graduate from GMU with a Bachelor of Science in Public Administration. He went onto obtain a master’s degree in public administration with a concentration in public and non-profit finance from GMU.

In his professional life, he has worked at PenFed Credit Union, Kearney and Company, and the United States Institute of Peace as a financial consultant. His current role is a Senior consultant advising federal clients at 11th Hour Service. He is currently the second Vice Chair of the 8th Congressional District Democratic Committee, Vice President of Fairfax Young Democrats, Co-State Director for South Asians for America, and is a Board Member of DemBiz Council.

Incoming Delegate Bios

Delegate-Elect Adele McClure (D-2)



Adele McClure won the seat for the Strong Democratic 2nd district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent part of Arlington County.

McClure attended Virginia Commonwealth University, where she served as Student Body President. For the past several years, McClure has served as the Executive Director of the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus (VLBC), and her leadership in this role was recognized when she was named to the 2019 Forbes 309 under 30 List for Law and Policy and received the National Black Legislative Staff Leadership Council Top 22 of 2022 award.

Her professional life includes roles such as Special Projects Manager and Associate Director of Eviction Prevention for the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and Policy Director in the Office of the former Virginia Lt. Governor. She also has worked for Deloitte Consulting, the International Monetary Fund – Fiscal Affairs Department, and the Association of the United States Army.

Delegate-Elect Jed Arnold (R-6)



Jed Arnold is a member of the Virginia House of Delegates and currently represents the 6th district which is comprised of Carroll County, Wythe County, and a portion of Smyth County. He assumed office in September of 2023, after winning a special election. In the November 7, 2023, General Election, he was re-elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in the new 46th District which was created by the recent redistricting process. The 46th District includes all of Smyth, Grayson, and Wythe counties along with a portion of Pulaski County.

Arnold received his law degree from the Appalachian School of Law. From 2015 - 2023, he served as the legislative assistant to Delegate Jeff Campbell.

Delegate-Elect Karen Keys-Gamarra (D-7)



Karen Keys-Gamarra won the seat for the Strong Democratic 7th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent part of Fairfax County.

Keys-Gamarra attended Tulane University and then earned her Law degree from Washington University School of Law. She is a graduate of EMERGE Virginia and is a member of the George Mason University Carter School of Political Leadership Advisory Council Board.

Keys-Gamarra began her law career in private practice but moved to non-profit organizations focusing on employment and labor law. She served at Eastern Missouri Legal Aid, EEOC (St. Louis), and Teamsters for a Democratic Union in addition to being a former Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer. Keys-Gamarra was elected as the At Large Member of the Fairfax County School Board in 2017 and was reelected in 2019 for a term ending December 31, 2023.

Delegate-Elect Laura Jane Cohen (D-15)



Laura Jane Cohen won the seat for the Strong Democratic 15th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent part of Fairfax County.

Cohen graduated from the University of Georgia and started her career working for the Democratic Lt. Governor and Secretary of State of Georgia. She worked on Capitol Hill for several disease prevention organizations and went on to become director of outreach for a national Parkinson's non-profit.

In her professional life, Cohen was a preschool teacher for several years before becoming a long-term substitute for Fairfax County Public Schools. She was later elected as local school board member as well as being a small business owner for several years running a vintage home décor shop.

Delegate-Elect Rozia Henson (D-19)



Rozia Henson won the seat for the Strong Democratic 19th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent part of Prince William County and part of Fairfax County.

Henson graduated from Virginia State University with a degree in Political Science. He later went on to receive his Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Maryland University College. In his professional life, he is a federal contractor and Program Manager for the Department of Homeland Security and has a small business as a consultant.

Henson served as a Legislative Aid in 2014 to Senator Henry L. Marsh and is an active member of the Prince William County Democratic Committee. He was elected as Senior Vice Chair of the Prince William County Democratic Committee and Vice President of the Prince William Young Democrats. Henson also serves as Commissioner of the Historical Commission and liaison for Voter Protection representing Prince William County for the Democratic Party of Virginia.

Delegate-Elect Josh Thomas (D-21)



Josh Thomas won the race against Republican John Stirrup in the competitive 21st district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent part of Prince William County.

After 9/11, Thomas joined the Marine Corps and served for five years. After his service, he earned his Law degree from the College of William and Mary.

In his professional life, Thomas currently works as an attorney. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he joined Virginia's Medical Reserve Corps to help combat the health and economic impacts of the disease. He advocates for the rights of Veterans, the LGBTQA+ community, and securing asylum for those fleeing from Afghanistan.

Delegate-Elect Ian Lovejoy (R-22)



Ian Lovejoy won the race against Democrat Travis Nembhard for the competitive 22nd district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent part of Prince William County.

Lovejoy graduated from Concord University before going on to earn his Master's in Sociology from Virginia Tech. He taught at Radford University prior to moving to the private sector where he served as Director of Operations of WSR Solutions and managed Home Instead Senior Care. Lovejoy founded Reliant Hiring Solutions, earning Small Business of the Year Nominee in 2020, and supports the arts by managing the

Lovejoy Gallery on Main.

Lovejoy was elected to the Manassas City Council in 2012 and served as Chairman of the Manassas City Economic Development Committee. He has also served as President of the Manassas City Public Schools Education Foundation, Board Member at the Caton Merchant House, Member of Friends of SERVE and Chairman of the Tri-County Walk to End Alzheimer's.

Delegate-Elect Kannan Srinivasan (D-26)



Kannan Srinivasan won the seat for the Strong Democratic 26th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent part of Loudoun County.

Srinivasan has a Bachelor's degree in Commerce from Vivekanada College at the University of Madras, India, and an MS in Accounting from Old Dominion University. He also attended the Sorenson Institute of Political Leadership at the University of Virginia.

In his professional life, Srinivasan has served as the chair of the Virginia State Medicaid Board (DMAS), appointed by Governor Terry McAuliffe in 2017 and re-appointed by Governor Ralph Northam in 2021. He also served on the Loudoun Fiscal Impact Committee and the Loudoun Economic Development Advisory Commission, as a Board member of the Loudoun Free Clinic in Leesburg, VA, and the George Washington University Heart and Vascular Institute, as Treasurer of the Loudoun County Democratic Committee, and as Treasurer of Capital IIT – a worldwide alumni foundation for the Indian Institute of Technology, and Wheels Global Foundation. He was the recipient of the Unsung Hero Award from the AAPI Caucus of the Virginia Democratic Party, where he has served as Secretary.

Delegate-Elect Atoosa Reaser (D-27)



Atoosa Reaser won the seat for the Strong Democratic 27th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent part of Loudoun County.

Reaser earned her Law degree from the George Mason University Law School and went on to pursue a career in public service. In her professional life, she is a member of the Virginia State Bar, the Loudoun Bar Association, and the Virginia Women Attorneys Association. She served as Deputy Town Attorney for the Town of Herndon, a general practice litigator, Associate General Counsel, and was appointed by the Virginia Supreme Court as guardian ad litem.

Living in Loudoun County, she has previously been appointed by the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors to serve on the Community Policy and Management Team, which administers services to at-risk youth and families.

Delegate-Elect Marty Martinez (D-29)

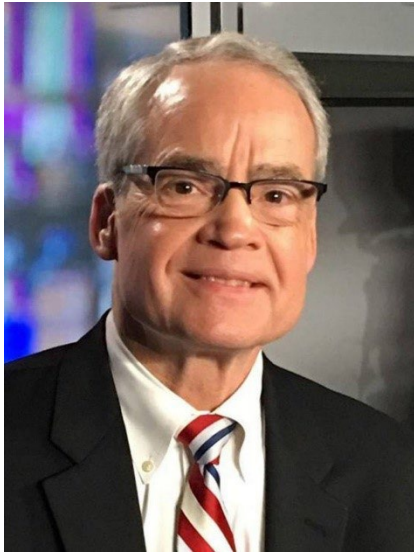


Marty Martinez won the seat for the Democratic-leaning 29th district of Virginia. He will represent part of Loudoun County.

Martinez served for seven years in the United States Air Force and, following his honorable discharge, earned B.S. degrees in Economics and Computer Science from Portland State University.

Martinez and his wife moved to the Town of Leesburg in 1993 and worked as a government contractor supporting the Federal Aviation Administration. He then went on to serve as the Vice Mayor of the Town of Leesburg from 2004 to 2006 and was reelected as Vice Mayor in 2019. He has been a member of the Leesburg town council since 2002.

Delegate-Elect Geary Higgins (R-30)



Geary Higgins won the seat for the Republican-leaning 30th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent part of Loudoun County and part of Fauquier County.

Higgins earned a degree in Business Administration from Clarion University. He was elected to represent the Catoctin District on the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors in 2011 and re-elected in 2015-2019, where he served as Chair of the Board’s Transportation and Land Use Committee and was a member of the Joint Board of Supervisors / School Board Committee. He also served as the Catoctin Representative on the Loudoun County School Board from 2000-2004, where he was the Chairman of the Personnel Services Committee and served on the Discipline Committee and the Legislative and Policy Committee. He has previously been a Board Member

for the Loudoun Museum.

In his professional life, he is the former Vice President of Labor Relations for National Electrical Contractors Association in D.C. He was also an arbitrator for the Council of Industrial Relations, owns a Consulting Business, and is the Republican Chairman of the 10th Congressional District.

Delegate-Elect Delores Oates (R-31)



Delores Oates won the seat for the Strong Republican 31st district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent Clarke County, part of Warren County, and part of Frederick County.

Oates was born in Front Royal and attended Warren County High School. She has served as a mentor to teen mothers and has volunteered in various church groups, youth athletic organizations, and civic groups. She lives with her husband in Warren County, where she raised her three children.

Her campaign focused on lower taxes and inflation, defending 2nd Amendment rights, safeguarding elections, securing U.S. borders, and pro-life values.

Delegate-Elect Will Davis (R-39)



Will Davis won the seat for the Strong Republican 39th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent Franklin County, part of Roanoke County, and part of Bedford County.

Davis graduated from Bridgewater College and earned his law degree from Regent University in 1988. He has practiced law in Rocky Mount since 1999.

Davis lives in Franklin County with his wife and two daughters. He is a member of the Franklin County Gun Club, a Board Member of Habitat for Humanity, a member of the Franklin County Bar Association, and former President for Revitalization, a Rocky Mount non-profit.

Delegate-Elect Chris Obenshain (R-41)



Chris Obenshain won the seat for the Republican-leaning 41st district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent part of Montgomery County and part of Roanoke County.

Obenshain earned his Law degree from the University of Virginia School of Law, where he was the Chairman of the UVA Chapter of the Federalist Society. He also served 19 years in the U.S. Army Reserve and was mobilized to active duty to defend Soldiers facing Courts-Martial and other legal and administrative actions.

Obenshain has worked on Capitol Hill with Senator George Allen, as Assistant Attorney General under Attorney Ken Cuccinelli, and as a prosecutor in Radford and Montgomery County.

Delegate-Elect Eric Phillips (R-48)



Eric Phillips won the seat for the Strong Republican 48th district of Virginia in the January 9th special election. This special election came as a result of former Delegate Les Adams' announcement of resignation. Phillips will represent Martinsville City and parts of Pittsylvania County and Henry County.

Phillips sits on the Board of Directors for the Boys and Girls Club of the Blue Ridge as well as Board of Directors for the Uptown Partnership. He is the chair of the Henry County-Martinsville Republican Committee, the vice-chair of the 9th Congressional District region-6, and a member of the State Central Committee.

As a small business owner, Phillips also serves as the Chairman of the City of Martinsville's Industrial Development Authority, the Chairman-elect of the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, and as a member of the Blue Ridge Innovation Corridor committee. He and his wife, who have three children, live in Henry County.

Delegate-Elect Eric Zehr (R-51)



Eric Zehr is a member-elect of the Virginia House of Delegates, representing the 51st district, which encompasses portions of Campbell, Bedford, and Pittsylvania Counties. He defeated incumbent Delegate Matt Fariss who ran as an Independent.

A small business owner, Zehr previously represented the Campbell County Board of Supervisors from 2014 to 2018, was a chairman of the Republican party from 2015 to 2018 and served on Campbell County Social Service board from 2014 to 2018.

Delegate-Elect Tim Griffin (R-53)



Tim Griffin won the seat for the Strong Republican 53rd district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent Amherst County, part of Bedford County, and part of Nelson County.

Griffin graduated from Lynchburg Christian Academy and later went on to graduate from Liberty University. He returned home after attending Appalachian School of Law to serve under Virginia Supreme Court Justice Cynthia Kinser and U.S. District Court Judge James Turk.

In his professional career, he has served as an Assistant Commonwealth’s Attorney and a Constitutional and Election law Attorney. Griffin has also served as Chairman of the Bedford County Republican Committee for the past three years.

Delegate-Elect Katrina Callsen (D-54)



Katrina Callsen won the seat for the Strong Democratic 54th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent Charlottesville City and part of Albemarle County.

Callsen attended Yale University where she worked in the Yale Office of Public Affairs and, following graduation, joined Teach for America and taught middle school math in Massachusetts. She went on to obtain her Law degree from the University of Virginia School of Law.

In her professional life, she practices law as the Deputy City Attorney for Charlottesville and is the Chair of the Albemarle County School Board.

Delegate-Elect Amy Laufer (D-55)



Amy Laufer won the seat for the Democratic-leaning 55th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent part of Albemarle County, part of Louisa County, part of Nelson County, and part of Fluvanna County.

Laufer earned her Bachelor's degree in Geology from the University of Wisconsin. She volunteered in Jamaica for the U.S. Peace Corps. Laufer went on to earn a Master's degree in Secondary Science Education from Teachers College at Columbia University, and attended UVA's Sorenson Institute of Political

Leaders Program and Emerge VA Bootcamp.

Laufer launched Virginia's List in 2014, dedicated to supporting Democratic Women running for state office. She is currently a board member for the Social Services Board of Albemarle County, Arc of the Piedmont, VA State Senate Disability Commission, and the Charlottesville National Organization for Women. She also served as the Chair of Albemarle County Democrats until 2022, and currently trains women who run for school board across the Commonwealth.

Delegate-Elect Tom Garrett (R-56)



Tom Garrett won the seat for the Strong Republican 56th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent Appomattox County, Buckingham County, Cumberland County, part of Fluvanna County, part of Goochland County, part of Prince Edward County, and part of Louisa County.

Garrett served in the United States House of Representatives from 2017 to 2019 as the representative for Virginia's 5th Congressional District. In this role, he was a member of the Foreign Affairs, Homeland Security, and Education and Workforce committees. He was also a member of the Freedom Caucus. Garrett also served in the Virginia Senate from 2012 to 2017. In this role, he was a member of the Education and Health, General

Laws and Technology, Judiciary, Privileges and Elections, and Transportation committees.

Garrett earned both his Bachelor's degree and Law degree from the University of Richmond. After his undergraduate career, he served as an artillery officer in the United States Army. After earning his Law degree, he served as the Assistant Attorney General for Virginia. He also served as the Louisa Commonwealth's attorney from 2008 to 2012. Currently, he works as a defense attorney and is a cofounder for firms working in global energy development.

Delegate-Elect David Owen (R-57)



David Owen won the race against Democrat Susanna Gibson for the competitive 57th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent part of Henrico County and part of Goochland County.

Owen earned his B.S. in Civil Engineering from the University of Virginia. After graduation, he became a construction engineer with Texaco USA. Currently, Owen is a general contractor and small business owner, starting on the commercial and industrial side but eventually moving to residential construction.

Owen has been a member of the Richmond Home Building Association and the Home Building Association of Virginia, serving as the Legislative Chairman, PAC Chair, Treasurer, and President in 2021.

Delegate-Elect Paul Milde (R-64)



Paul Milde won the seat for the Republican-leaning 64th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent part of Stafford County.

Milde was elected to the Stafford County Board of Supervisors in November 2005 and served his third and final term on the Board in 2017 as Chairman, representing the Aquia District.

Additionally, Milde is the founder and Chairman of Save Crow's Nest, a campaign to protect Crow's Nest Peninsula. Professionally, he owns and operates his own business, CIP Finishes, and is a licensed pilot.

Delegate-Elect Joshua Cole (D-65)



Joshua Cole won the race against Republican Lee Peters for the competitive 65th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent Fredericksburg City, part of Stafford County, and part of Spotsylvania County.

Cole served as the representative in the Virginia House of Delegates for district 28 from 2020 to 2022. In this role, he was a member of the Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources, Education, and Public Safety committees.

Cole attended Liberty University in pursuit of a Bachelor’s degree. He currently serves as a pastor and is the former President of the Stafford County NAACP. He has also served as a behavioral aid for students in Richmond Public Schools, as special assistant to the CEO of GCubed Inc., and as Chief of Staff in the Virginia House of Delegates.

Delegate-Elect Hillary Pugh Kent (R-67)



Hillary Pugh Kent won the seat for the Strong Republican 67th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent King George County, Westmoreland County, Northumberland County, Lancaster County, Richmond County, and part of Caroline County.

Hillary graduated from Randolph Macon College and went on to earn a Master’s degree from Virginia Commonwealth University. She serves as the Vice President of her family’s beverage distribution business, Al Pugh Distributing.

Hillary has served on several local non-profit boards, including Warsaw Richmond County Main Street Program, Northern Neck Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Board member, Lewis-Ledwith Free Health Clinic Board member, YMCA Board member, and the Town of Warsaw Economic Development Management Committee.

Delegate-Elect Chad Green (R-69)



Chad Green won the seat for the Republican-leaning 69th district of Virginia. He will represent part of York County, part of James City County, part of Gloucester County, and part of Newport News City.

Green obtained his undergraduate degree from the University of Alabama and went on to earn his Law degree from the Cumberland School of Law at Samford University. He is also a licensed waterman, boat captain, and published author.

Since 2015, Green has served on the York County Board of Supervisors, where he was Chairman for two years and Vice Chairman for one year. In his community, he has served as the former President of the Grafton Kiwanis Club, a Board of Directors member for the Victory YMCA and the York County Waterways Alliance, and a member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Delegate-Elect Mark Earley, Jr (R-73)



Mark Earley won the seat for the Republican-leaning 73rd district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent part of Chesterfield County.

Mark graduated from Virginia Tech, studying History, Political Science, and English. After graduation, he served in former Governor Bob McDonnell's administration, primarily assisting with the Prisoner and Juvenile Re-entry Council. He went on to earn his Law degree from the University of Virginia School of Law in 2015, which he used to clerk for a federal judge in the Eastern District of Virginia.

In his professional life, he spent many years practicing law with a large firm, but ultimately joined his father and brother in their small, family run practice in Richmond. Mark and his wife live in Midlothian with their two children and have been foster parents for six children over the past two years.

Delegate-Elect Debra Gardner (D-76)



Debra Gardner won the seat for the Strong Democratic 76th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent part of Chesterfield County.

Gardner earned a B.A. in Sociology from North Carolina Central University and a master’s degree in public administration from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). She went on to teach graduate courses at VCU in executive leadership.

Gardner’s current and former Board memberships include Smart Beginnings Board of Directors, Homeward Board of Directors, Senior Connections Board of Directors, the Virginia Drug Treatment Court Advisory Committee, the Virginia Substance Abuse Services Council, and the Domestic Violence Prevention Advisory Board. In her professional life, she has served at the chief deputy level for three state agencies.

Delegate-Elect Michael Jones (D-77)



Michael Jones won the seat for the Strong Democratic 77th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent part of Richmond City and part of Chesterfield County.

Jones attended the University of Colorado and went on to serve on City Council in Richmond. In this role, he has chaired the Council’s Finance Committee and most recently has served as the Council President. He also led the fight to gain local control of the Confederate Monuments in the City of Richmond.

Jones also pastors churches in Richmond, where he lives with his wife, two daughters, and son.

Delegate-Elect Rae Cousins (D-79)



Rae Cousins won the seat for the 79th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent part of the City of Richmond.

Cousins is currently an attorney at BrownGreer, a local Richmond law firm, where she manages the administration of multi-million- and billion-dollar settlement programs for people injured by harmful drugs and medical devices and environmental disasters. She has worked on programs including the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Settlement Program and the PG&E Fire Victim Trust, to ensure those harmed receive the resources they deserve to rebuild their

lives. Cousins has a passion for voter registration, an issue that she has led efforts in through the Obama administration, the Democratic Party of Virginia, and the Richmond City Democratic Committee.

Cousins graduated from the College of William and Mary, then attended Howard University School of Law. She is a fourth generation Richmond resident who grew up in the Church Hill area and continues to live in the area with her daughter.

Delegate-Elect Destiny LeVere Bolling (D-80)



Destiny LeVere Bolling won the seat for the Strong Democratic 80th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent part of Henrico County.

Destiny earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, International Relations, and Latin American Iberian Studies, allowing her to become a fluent Spanish speaker. She went on to earn her Master's degree in International Affairs from George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs.

In her professional career, she works as the Communications Director of Virginia AFL-CIO and owns three small businesses. She has also completed the EMERGE Virginia program, serves on Virginia's Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Commission, is the Secretary of the Board of the Commonwealth Institute, and is on the Northern Neck Baptist Association's Youth Advisory Council. Additionally, Destiny chairs the Virginia State Conference NAACP's Labor and Industry Committee.

Delegate-Elect Nadarius Clark (D-84)



Nadarius Clark won the seat for the Democratic-leaning 84th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent Franklin City, part of Suffolk City, part of Isle of Wight County, and part of Chesapeake City.

In 2021, he became the youngest Democrat ever elected to the Virginia General Assembly. In this role, he served as a member of the Communications, Technology and Innovation and Public Safety committees.

Clark graduated from Virginia Union University in Richmond. He founded the charter chapter of Generation Now Network, an organization committed to faith-based activism, advocacy, and education. Clark went on to lobby in D.C. for Medicare and Medicaid expansion. In his professional life, he works for Gateway Services in Suffolk as a mental health counselor.

Delegate-Elect Baxter Ennis (R-89)



Baxter Ennis won the race against Democrat Karen Jenkins for the competitive 89th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent part of Chesapeake City and part of Suffolk City.

Ennis served in the United States Army for 21 years in the media-intensive 82nd Airborne Division. Following his retirement from the military, he led the public relations department for a major university, later starting his own newspaper.

Currently, Ennis serves on the Chesapeake Hospital Authority and is the President of the Hampton Roads Leadership Prayer Breakfast. He has previously served as the President of the Chesapeake Rotary Club, the Virginia Beach Forum, and on the Mayors Commission on Veterans Affairs. In 2018, he published a book titled “When Leadership Mattered: Inspiring Stories of 12 People who Changed the World”.

Delegate-Elect Bonita Anthony (D-92)



Bonita Anthony won the seat for the Strong Democratic 92nd district of Virginia in the 2023 election. She will represent part of Norfolk City and part of Chesapeake City.

Anthony earned her B.S. in Electrical and Electronics Engineering from Old Dominion University. She later went on to earn her Master of Divinity from Virginia Union University and Master of Engineering from Old Dominion University

Anthony has educated children from pre-K through university. She worked for Old Dominion University for 17 years, serving as the Director of Engineering Student Success from 2017-2022. Anthony currently serves as the Executive Director of Retention and Persistence at Virginia State University. She is also an engineer and built aviation infrastructure up and down the East Coast. She pioneered innovative civic engagement programs through her church and STEM education programs in many Hampton Roads school districts to encourage students from the community to engage with these professions.

Delegate-Elect Phil Hernandez (D-94)



Phil Hernandez won then seat for the Democratic-leaning 94th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent part of Norfolk City.

Hernandez is a first-generation college student, graduating from William and Mary. After graduation, Hernandez served as a Senior Policy Analyst in President Obama's White house Domestic Policy Council. He has also worked as a civil rights attorney.

Currently, Hernandez is the Senior Vice President for Policy and Advocacy for a nonprofit organization, where he has worked to raise teacher pay and increase funding for K-12 public schools.

Delegate-Elect Alex Askew (D-95)



Alex Askew won the seat for the 95th district of Virginia in the 2023 election. He will represent part of Virginia Beach City and part of Norfolk City.

He previously served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 2020 to 2022. In this role, he was a member of the Communications, Technology and Innovation, Counties, Cities and Towns, and Privileges and Elections committees. Askew also served as the Chief of Staff for the Virginia House of Delegates.

Askew graduated from Hampton University after attending Virginia Beach Public Schools. He worked for nearly seven election cycles on local, state-wide, and national campaigns and projects following his graduation. He is an active member of New Jerusalem Ministries, a founding Board member of the New Leaders Council Virginia, a Board member for the Democratic Business Alliance of South Hampton Roads, and a 2018 graduate of the University of Virginia’s Political Leaders Program.

Michael Feggans (HD-97), Democrat



Michael Feggans is an incoming member of the Virginia House of Delegates and will represent the 97th district, located in Virginia Beach. Feggans defeated incumbent Delegate Karen Greenhalgh.

Feggans is a retired U.S. Air Force veteran, former intern for Democratic U.S. Senator Mark Warner, and founder of a cybersecurity business in Virginia Beach. He earned a bachelor's degree from Park University in 2010, a graduate certificate from Virginia Tech in 2014, and a graduate degree from Norfolk State University in 2019.

MEMORANDUM

TO: External Relations Committee

FROM: COL Kimberly Parker

SUBJECT: New General Assembly Members (Strategy for Outreach)

DATE: 11 January 2024

The General Assembly convenes for the 2024 Legislative Session with new membership in both chambers at historic levels. In fact, some have said that one would need to go back almost a century to find this level of attrition from a single election. Between the two chambers, there are 54 new members – 18 senators and 36 delegates.

Given the large amount of turnover, higher education institutions in concert with the Virginia Business Higher Education Council (VBHEC) are working to introduce new members to college presidents and begin to forge relationships. VBHEC hosted a Meet and Greet for new members on Monday, 8 January in the new General Assembly building. New members were invited to a reception with college presidents and liaisons. The group heard from Kirk Cox, former Speaker of the House and now president of VBHEC, Mr. Dennis Treacy, chair of VBHEC and Mr. Taylor Reveley, chair of the Council of Presidents. MG Wins traveled to Richmond to participate in this event.

Likewise, VMI is actively working to introduce new members to our institution. A Forging 21st Century Leaders one pager (attached) was developed to facilitate discussion on the new plan with key leaders as well as a means of introduction with new members. The Superintendent maintains an active schedule of visits to Richmond for every Session, but also will add days to his schedule to allow time for meetings with freshman delegates and senators. The Cadet Legislative Visit and Legislative Reception will be key to these efforts as well. In addition, the Agencies are collaborating with the Government Relations Team to coordinate outreach to all General Assembly members. This effort will use geo-fencing to push positive messages about VMI to all members while they are in Session.

No efforts are as fruitful as hosting members on Post and giving them the opportunity to receive a briefing from MG Wins, tour facilities and interact with our cadets in the Barracks. So those efforts will continue, and we look forward to hosting new leaders and new members on Post.



Forging 21st Century Leaders

Strategic Plan 2024–2034

Strengthen Academic Excellence

Produce the nation and commonwealth's future leaders with a world-class education and training regimen.

- » Implement effective pedagogical approaches to promote student engagement and enhance academic achievement.
- » Integrate new technology into our educational and organizational processes.
- » Recruit, retain, and promote distinguished faculty with expertise in emerging fields.
- » Strengthen high-impact practices and experiential learning, such as undergraduate research, global learning, internships, and service-learning activities.

Prepare Exceptional Leaders

Execute the premier leadership development program in the nation and develop a Corps of Cadets that is mentally tough, academically astute, and physically fit, with the Honor System, Regimental System, Class System, and Rat Line as the foundational backbone.

- » Teach, coach, mentor, guide, and direct cadets through the VMI model of training to help them develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to become effective leaders.
- » Ensure cadets receive mentally and physically challenging experiences that lead to meaningful personal and professional development.
- » Prepare cadets for a wide variety of opportunities for service upon graduation, such as commissioning in the U.S. armed forces and employment, governmental agencies or private industry.
- » Increase opportunities for the VMI community to serve, debate ideas candidly and civilly, and nurture esprit de corps.
- » Explore the value-added opportunity of adding graduate programs and professional or advanced certificates.



Foster Esprit de Corps

Facilitate a supportive, respectful, and professional operating environment for cadets, faculty, staff, and alumni.

- » Advance efforts that foster a safe, diverse, and inclusive environment.
- » Provide a supportive work environment that enhances employees' well-being through effective recruitment, onboarding, development, engagement, and compensation.
- » Deepen VMI's connection with alumni, donors, and parents.

Recruit Top Cadets and Boost Success

Recruit and retain talented cadets who embody VMI's core values of honor, courage, and excellence.

- » Adopt and integrate a strategic enrollment management model that integrates admissions, financial aid, marketing, and cadet support into one unit.
- » Be among the top 5 Virginia public institutions in retention and graduation rates.
- » Provide quality support services to the Corps of Cadets.



Deliver 21st Century Infrastructure

Invest in facility maintenance, operations, physical plant, and auxiliary facilities to advance VMI's academic, military, and athletics priorities.

- » Strengthen and enhance overall sustainment, restoration, and modernization of facilities to support 21st century requirements.
- » Advance capital investment.



- » Best College Nationally, ranked by value: **No. 5** (2022)
- » Best Public School Nationally: **No. 6** (2022)
- » Best Small College Nationally: **No. 3** (2020 most recent ranking)—*Money magazine*



Georgetown University study ranks VMI **No. 1 for Return on Investment** among public liberal arts colleges nationwide. (2021)

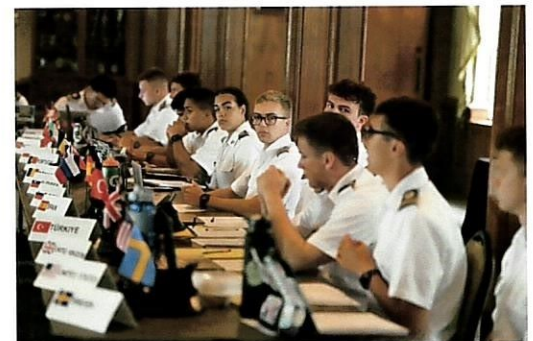


National Colleges and Universities: No. 158, among top 20% (out of 801) **U.S. News and World Report** ranked VMI in the top four public liberal arts college in the nation for the 18th year, behind only the nation's federal service academies.

- » **No. 4 in National Public Liberal Arts Colleges**
- » No. 70 in National Liberal Arts Colleges
- » No. 21 in Best Undergraduate Engineering Programs (where doctorate is not offered)



VMI meets 100% of the financial need for Virginia cadets and aims to meet a significant portion of the need for out-of-state cadets



MEMORANDUM

TO: External Relations Committee
FROM: COL Kimberly Parker
SUBJECT: Budget Amendments
DATE: 12 January 2024

Attached are the budget amendments that VMI submitted in both chambers of the General Assembly. These amendments represent priorities within the strategic plan and reflect the priorities articulated for higher education by the Governor and his Administration.

Delegates Terry Austin and Ellen Campbell, both members of House Appropriations, are patroning the Institute's amendments in the House. Delegate Austin agreed to patron the Moody Hall request and the Associate Dean request. Delegate Campbell is carrying the Internship Coordinator and Global Education support staff requests.

In the Senate, freshman Senator Jennifer Carroll Foy '03 agreed to carry all four of our requests. BG Clark also reviewed the requests with Senator Chris Head, the Virginia Senator for our area.

Virginia Military Institute Budget Amendments FY 24-26 Biennium

Operational Requests

Associate Dean for Academic Support - \$170,000

The Institute plans to adopt a strategic enrollment management approach that would bring the offices of Admissions and Financial Aid under one umbrella and foster collaboration on the recruitment and retention of cadets. The academic support functions critical to this approach, including The Math Education Resource Center, Miller Academic Center, and Writing Center, would be coordinated by this position. The Associate Dean would also oversee the employment of predictive analytics to improve early identification and intervention efforts for academically at-risk cadets.

Employer Relations/Internship Coordinator - \$70,000

This position will allow VMI to meet the growing demand for internships, enhance cadet support, strengthen industry connections, streamline administrative processes, and enable program expansion to enhance its ability to provide every cadet an opportunity for a meaningful internship experience.

Global Education Support Staff - \$70,000

This position will serve as the lead for international support for F-1 and J-1 visa students and scholars with responsibilities as a Designated School Official and Alternate Responsible Officer. The position will advise international students on the maintenance of immigration status, maintain immigration records in compliance with federal law and regulations, plan and execute international student orientations and cultural programming, and prepare a variety of presentations related to immigration and international student concerns.

Capital Requests

Construct Moody Hall - \$68,600,000

Removes three existing facilities to construct a new purpose-built facility to support academic lectures and symposia, academic events (e.g. Distinguished Speaker Series), alumni offices and support spaces. It will provide the space for larger sized events and demand for modernized facilities designed around current programming. The current facility was constructed in 1969 and no longer adequately serves the needs of the Corps of Cadets or alumni.

MEMORANDUM

TO: External Relations Committee
FROM: COL Kimberly Parker
SUBJECT: Higher Education Legislation
DATE: 10 January 2024

Attached is a preliminary report on the legislation to be tracked by the VMI Government Relations Team during the 2024 General Assembly Session.

After all bills are filed, this tracking report will likely contain 75-100 bills and will cover a number of issues affecting higher education operations. The GR team and subject matter experts across Post are already reviewing the bills that have been filed to determine their impact on VMI operations.

Public college liaisons work together during the Session to monitor the legislation that impacts higher education and to address with legislators any language revisions that will improve these bills and minimize unintended consequences. It is early in the review process, and it is anticipated that more legislation will be added to this list in the days ahead.

Status	Crossover Status	Keyword	Bill # (hyperlinked)	Companion Bill	Title	Patron	Issues Summary/Questions	Subject Matter Expert	Committee Assignment	Fiscal Impact
Introduced		Minimum Wage	HB1	SB1	Increases wage to \$13.50 per hour effective January 1, 2025.	Del Jeion Ward	\$13.50 effective 1/1/2025 and moving to \$15.00 1/1/2026	Stores/Lawhorne	Labor and Commerce	
Introduced		Unemployment	HB14		Unemployment compensation; employer's failure to respond to requests for information, etc.	Del Lee Ware	An employer must respond timely to written questions about an unemployment claim or else waives certain rights.	Stores	Labor and Commerce	
Introduced		Firearms	HB16		Carrying a firearm or explosive material within Capitol Square and the surrounding area, into a building owned or leased by the Commonwealth, etc.; <i>exception for concealed handgun permit holders.</i>	Del Garrett	Adds an exception for persons who have been issued a valid concealed handgun permit by the Commonwealth to the prohibition of carrying a firearm within Capitol Square and the surrounding area, any building owned or leased by the Commonwealth or any agency thereof, or any office where employees of the Commonwealth or any agency thereof are regularly present for the purpose of performing their official duties.	Marshall/Henson	Public Safety	
Introduced		Hate Crimes	HB18		Hate crimes and discrimination; ethnic animosity; penalties.	Del Helmer	Provides that it is the policy of the Commonwealth to safeguard all individuals within the Commonwealth from unlawful discrimination in employment and in places of public accommodation because of such individual's ethnic origin. The bill also adds victims who are intentionally selected because of their ethnic origin to the categories of victims whose intentional selection for a hate crime	Stores/Marshall/Henson/Astphan	Courts of Justice	
Introduced		Marine Science	HB19		Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Marine Resources Commission; study of ecology, fishery impacts, and economic importance of Atlantic menhaden; report.	Del Ware	Directs VIMS to study Atlantic menhaden in Virginia waterways.		Rules	
Introduced		School Crossing Zones (includes IHE's)	HB21		School Crossing Zones	Del M. Jones	Expands the definition of "school crossing zone," where a traffic warning may be necessary and INCLUDES public institutions of higher education.	Marshall/Henson/Boobar	Transportation	
Introduced		Budget Bill	HB29		Budget Bill	Del Torian	Pertains to Budget ending June 30, 2024	Lawhorne/BG Clark/Parker	Appropriations	
Introduced		Budget Bill	HB30		Budget Bill	Del Torian	Pertains to Budget ending June 30, 2026	Lawhorne/BG Clark/Parker	Appropriations	

Status	Crossover Status	Keyword	Bill # (hyperlinked)	Companion Bill	Title	Patron	Issues Summary/Questions	Subject Matter Expert	Committee Assignment	Fiscal Impact
Introduced		Loan Repayment Programs; mental health professionals	HB37		Loan repayment programs; mental health professionals.	Del Clark	Creates a loan repayment program for persons who have worked as mental health professionals in the Commonwealth for at least five years.	Fry/Stores/Krawiec/Boobarr	Health and Human Services	
Introduced		Legacy Admissions	HB48	SB46 and SB71	Public institutions of higher education; admissions applications; legacy admissions and admissions based on donor status prohibited.	Del Helmer/Sen VanValkenberg/Sen McPike	Do preferential admissions decisions based-on familial/donor history currently exist?	Hagy/Eskam	Education and Health	No fiscal impact
Introduced		Dual Enrollment	HB83		Comprehensive community colleges and school boards; dual enrollment agreements; parameters.	Del Scott	Requires dual enrollment agreements between comprehensive community colleges and school boards to permit any student to complete an associate degree, the Passport Program, or a one-year Uniform Certificate of General Studies from a comprehensive community college concurrent with a high school diploma or high school equivalency program.	Moreschi/Hagy	Education	
Introduced		Hair Styling	HB129		Hair styling; added as a profession that is regulated by the Board of Barbers and Cosmetology	Del Convirs-Fowler	Does this impact VMI Barber Shop?	Lee Clark	General Laws	No fiscal impact
Introduced		Virginia Teacher Residency Training	HB145		Virginia Teacher Residency Training Corps established.	Del Reid	Goal is to attract and retain public elementary and secondary school teachers in school divisions in the Commonwealth by awarding scholarships to students seeking to obtain teaching degrees and certifications at participating institutions (LU, NSU, VCU, RU)	Moreschi/McDonald	Education	

Status	Crossover Status	Keyword	Bill # (hyperlinked)	Companion Bill	Title	Patron	Issues Summary/Questions	Subject Matter Expert	Committee Assignment	Fiscal Impact
Introduced		Student ID Cards	HB163		Higher educational institutions, public; student identification cards, contact information.	Del Cole	In addition to 988 suicide and crisis lifeline, student ID cards should include contact information for an extensive list of various local emergency providers	Lee Clark/Faust/Marshall/Henson	Education	Potential \$10k impact. Reissuing cards costs materials and labor.
Introduced		Firearm Storage	HB183		Storage of firearms in a residence where a minor or person prohibited from possessing a firearm is present; penalty.	Del Simon	Impacts residences with minors, exempts antique firearms.	?	Public Safety	
Introduced		Hunger-Free Campus Designation for Higher Education	HB207	HB827	Public institutions of higher education; Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program; established	Del Simonds	Optional program. If an IHE meets certain criteria related to addressing student hunger, it can receive a special designation and a grant to help address hunger.	Lee Clark	Education	Minimal potential costs of admin time (\$4-\$7k) to organize student meal donation program, food pantry partner, SNAP information, student survey, task force, event and awareness promotion.
Introduced		Education Preparation Programs	HB211		Department of Education; audit of education preparation programs at public institutions of higher education; science-based reading research and evidence-based literacy instruction; frequency.	Del Martinez	Changes from once every 7 years to biennially the frequency of the DOE audit for compliance.	Moreschi/McDonald	Education	

Status	Crossover Status	Keyword	Bill # (hyperlinked)	Companion Bill	Title	Patron	Issues Summary/Questions	Subject Matter Expert	Committee Assignment	Fiscal Impact
Introduced		VPPA	HB242		Virginia Public Procurement Act; competitive negotiation; exceptions to contractual terms and conditions of the Request for Proposal.	Del Bulova	Deals with certain exceptions that would not be required anymore related to liability provisions within an RFP for information technology. Then deals with scoring on the basis of the exceptions.	Tomlin/Campbell	General Laws	
Introduced		Teacher Licensure	HB284		Board of Education; criteria for initial renewable teacher licensure for certain individuals.	Del Thomas	Directs the BOE to issue renewable teacher licenses if certain criteria are met.	Moreschi/McDonald/Sebastino	Education	
Introduced		VPPA	HB311		Virginia Public Procurement Act; submissions of bids or proposals on the Commonwealth's electronic procurement system.	Del Hope	All public bodies will accept bids via eVA, whereas presently only state public bodies allow this. (not sure if this applies to VMI)	Tomlin	General Laws	
Introduced		Firearm Instruction	HB319		Firearms instructors and safety programs; National Rifle Association and United States Concealed Carry Association.	Del Helmer	Removes references to the NRA and USCCA from code and changes references to these groups to certify instructors and ranges and training for purposes of receiving concealed-carry permit	Bither/Faust Sowers/Rubenstein	Public Safety	
Introduced		VPPA	HB341		Virginia Public Procurement Act; consideration of employment of older Virginia residents.	Del Thomas	Allows public bodies to include as a factor that will be used in evaluating a Request for Proposal the proposer's participation in programs that employ Virginia residents age 55 or older.	Tomlin	General Laws	
Introduced		Solar Development	HB367		Parking Lot Solar Development Pilot Program and Fund	Del Reid		Parker	Appropriations	Implementation would be expensive

Status	Crossover Status	Keyword	Bill # (hyperlinked)	Companion Bill	Title	Patron	Issues Summary/Questions	Subject Matter Expert	Committee Assignment	Fiscal Impact
Introduced		Virginia National Guard Tuition Grant	HB366	SB219	Institutions of higher education; tuition grants; Virginia National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program. Makes several changes to the Virginia National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program	Del Reid	several changes to the program. notably, (i) making the provisions relating to the requirements and conditions for eligibility for and award of grants under the Program subject to regulations as prescribed by the Adjutant General. Also, change (iv) providing that any grant awarded shall be in an amount equivalent to the difference between the full cost of tuition and fees at the institution of higher education less any other educational benefits for which an individual is eligible as a member of the National Guard.	Eskam/Lawhorne/Parker/BG Clark	Education	There should be no fiscal impact to VMI if the State is covering the potential increase in value of grants.
Introduced		Sexual Misconduct Policies	HB369		Institutions of higher education; sexual misconduct policies; civil penalty.	Del Martinez	Requires SCHEV to appoint task force to develop sexual misconduct climate survey and requires IHE's to do multiple tasks and also sets forth annual reporting requirements. A penalty not to exceed \$150k could be imposed if any provision or rule is not adopted.	Astphan/Faust/Marshall/Henson	Rules	
Introduced		Employment Training/Harrasment	HB370		Employment; training and education; harassment and workplace discrimination.	Del Martinez	Requires state agencies to provide annual interactive training regarding harassment and discrimination. Specific training for supervisors, nonsupervisors, seasonal and temp workers.	Stores/Astphan	Labor and Commerce	
Introduced		VPPA	HB381		Virginia Public Procurement Act; participation by veteran-owned small businesses.	Del Feggans	Requires all public bodies to include in their goals for participation by small businesses a minimum of five percent participation by veteran-owned businesses and service disabled veteran-owned businesses. Current law only requires a goal of three percent participation	Tomlin	General Laws	
Introduced		Carrying a firearm	HB389		Carrying a concealed handgun; permit not required.	Del Griffin	Allows any person who is otherwise eligible to obtain a concealed handgun permit to carry a concealed handgun without a permit anywhere he may lawfully carry a handgun openly within the Commonwealth.	Marshall/Henson	Public Safety	

Status	Crossover Status	Keyword	Bill # (hyperlinked)	Companion Bill	Title	Patron	Issues Summary/Questions	Subject Matter Expert	Committee Assignment	Fiscal Impact
Introduced		Carrying a firearm	HB454		Carrying a firearm or explosive material within Capitol Square or building owned or leased by the Commonwealth; exemptions; public institutions of higher education; penalty.	Del Callsen	Changes exemption for IHE's to limit it to those who possess a weapon as part of such public institution of higher education's curriculum or activities or as part of any organization authorized by such public institution of higher education to conduct its programs or activities within such building.	Henson/Marshall/Faust/Stores		Fiscal impact on criminal justice system
Introduced		Limitation on freshman class	HB486		Certain public institutions of higher education; enrollment limitations in incoming freshman classes; Virginia Higher Education Scholarship Act Fund and Program established.	Del Garrett	Requires, beginning with the incoming freshman class in the 2025 academic year, the board of visitors of each baccalaureate public institution of higher education, with the exception of Norfolk State University, Virginia Military Institute, and Virginia State University, to ensure that the annual percentage of undergraduate non-Virginia students in each incoming freshman class does not exceed 45 percent. Also creates a new scholarship program administered by SCHEV.	Hagy/Eskam/Lawhorne		
Introduced		Forms provide choice of male, female, nonbinary	HB502		Nonbinary sex or gender designation option.	Del Cohen	Requires all forms or applications to offer any applicant the option of "male," "female," or "nonbinary" when designating the applicant's sex or gender. The bill contains technical amendments.	Hagy/Gatliff Ellwood/Campbell		
Introduced		Teachers for Tomorrow Grant Program	HB506		Teachers for Tomorrow Grant Program established.	Del Cohen	Department of Education, with such funds as may be appropriate for such purpose pursuant to the general appropriation act, to establish and administer the Teachers for Tomorrow Grant Program whereby any school board may apply for a grant in an amount up to \$250,000, to be awarded on a competitive basis, with which to expose and attract high school students in the local school division to careers in teaching	Moreschi/Hagy		

Status	Crossover Status	Keyword	Bill # (hyperlinked)	Companion Bill	Title	Patron	Issues Summary/Questions	Subject Matter Expert	Committee Assignment	Fiscal Impact
Introduced		IHE's Individuals with Disabilities	HB509		Public institutions of higher education; policies; individuals with disabilities.	Del Cohen	Requires each IHE to adopt a policy makes certain documentation is submitted and it is sufficient to establish a student with a disability. Requires the policy to be transparent and information on the policy shared broadly with students, parents, and on the IHE's website.	Moreschi/McDonald/ODS/Sullivan		
Introduced		SCHEV; membership	HB566		State Council of Higher Education for Virginia; membership; representative of a historically black college or university.	Del Askew	Requires the membership of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to include at least one nonlegislative citizen member who has served as a chief executive officer of one of the Commonwealth's historically black colleges or universities.	Parker/BG Clark		
Introduced		Student-Athletes; NIL (high school and college)	HB617		Student-athletes; use of name, image, or likeness; high school students; Office of the Student-Athlete Name, Image, and Likeness Contract Ombudsman established.	Del Price	Establishes NIL rules for HS athletes, creates ombudsman for dispute resolution for high school and college athletes	Miller/Brown		
Introduced		State agencies; electronic information breach.	HB666		State agencies; electronic information breach.	Del Freitas	Requires every state agency to promptly notify affected citizens of the Commonwealth in the event of a breach of such state agency's electronic information system from unauthorized uses, intrusions, or other security threats, which breach compromises such citizens' personal information. The bill requires the Chief Information Officer to provide requirements for such notifications.	Campbell/Ellwood/Sigler		
Introduced		IHE; Campus Safety	HB690		Institutions of higher education; campus safety; governing boards of certain educational institutions; employment of security services and personnel authorized.	Del O'Quinn	Authorizes the governing board of certain educational institutions (no 4-year schools in bill), ito establish and maintain a campus security department and to employ security personnel. Under current law, the governing board of the mentioned educational institutions are only authorized to contract for security services.	Marshall/Henson		

Status	Crossover Status	Keyword	Bill # (hyperlinked)	Companion Bill	Title	Patron	Issues Summary/Questions	Subject Matter Expert	Committee Assignment	Fiscal Impact
Introduced		Internet Safety Education	HB706		Public secondary schools; public institutions of higher education; Internet safety education required; report.	Del Webert	requires each public institution of higher education to provide instruction on the principles of Internet safety as a part of an existing general education course, a first-year orientation program, or another appropriate program or course and directs the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to encourage private institutions of higher education to provide instruction on the principles of Internet safety.	Campbell/Moreschi/Sebastino/McDonald		
Introduced		IHE's; Campus Safety/Emergency Preparedness Training	HB713		Institutions of higher education; campus safety and emergency preparedness training; first-year completion and biennial review.	Del Torian	Requires the governing board of each public institution of higher education to develop and implement policies requiring that a campus safety and emergency preparedness training program be provided to and completed by all first-year students by the first day of the fall academic semester and reviewed biennially by each returning student at such institution.	Marshall/Henson/Bissell/Kastner		
Introduced		Space Force	HB738		Space Force; extension of certain benefits and privileges for persons serving in Armed Forces	Del Sewell	Amends several provisions of law related to certain benefits and privileges available to persons serving or having served in a branch of the Armed Forces to include the Space Force as an eligible branch.	Parker/BG Clark		
Introduced		VPPA; prohibition on boycotting Israel	HB758		Virginia Public Procurement Act; prohibition on boycotting Israel.	Del Walker	Requires all public bodies to include in every contract in excess of \$100,000 with a business that employs more than 10 employees and in every subcontract or purchase order in excess of \$10,000 a provision that states that during the performance of the contract, neither the contracting business nor any of its affiliates shall engage in a boycott of Israel.	Tomlin		

Status	Crossover Status	Keyword	Bill # (hyperlinked)	Companion Bill	Title	Patron	Issues Summary/Questions	Subject Matter Expert	Committee Assignment	Fiscal Impact
Introduced		FOIA; definition of meetings	HB818		Virginia Freedom of Information Act; definition of meeting.	Del Cherry	Amends the definition of "meeting" as it relates to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to clarify that a gathering of two or more members of a public body is not a meeting if there is no discussion or transaction of any public business, defined in the bill, by the members of the public body and that certain educational trainings are not meetings subject to FOIA.	Wyatt		
Introduced		IHEs; Hunger-Free Campus Grant	HB827	SB318	Public institutions of higher education; Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program established; report.	Del Cousins	Establishes the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program (the Program) to address student food insecurity at public institutions of higher education. The bill provides that the Program shall be managed by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and available for participation by public institutions of higher education; however, participation in the Program shall be optional	Lee Clark		
Introduced		IHEs; Hunger-Free Campus Grant	HB881		Public institutions of higher education; Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program; established	Del Bulova	Establishes the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program (the Program) to address student hunger at public institutions of higher education. The bill provides that the Program shall be managed by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and available for participation by public institutions of higher education; however, participation in the Program shall be optional for such institutions.	Lee Clark		
Introduced		FOIA; electronic meetings	HB894		Virginia Freedom of Information Act; electronic meetings.	Del Bennett-Parker	Amends the number of all-virtual public meetings that public bodies, with certain exceptions, may convene in a calendar year to no more than two times per calendar year or 50 percent of the meetings held per calendar year rounded up to the next whole number, whichever is greater.	Wyatt		

Status	Crossover Status	Keyword	Bill # (hyperlinked)	Companion Bill	Title	Patron	Issues Summary/Questions	Subject Matter Expert	Committee Assignment	Fiscal Impact
Introduced		Conflicts of Interest Act	HB899		State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act and the General Assembly Conflicts of Interests Act; deadline for annual filing of disclosure statements; deadline for public disclosure.	Del Srinivasan	Changes the filing deadline for statements of economic interests and financial disclosure statements from February 1 to December 15. The bill requires the forms to be made public within thirty days of the filing deadline; currently, this is required within six weeks of the filing deadline.	Stores		
Introduced		IHEs; reporting hazing	HB980		Institutions of higher education; students who report act of hazing or bullying experienced as result of report of act of hazing; referral for support.	Del Tran	Requires that any student who reports to a public institution of higher education or nonprofit private institution of higher education an act of hazing or an act of bullying experienced as the result of a report of an act of hazing shall be referred to an individual or entity that is qualified to provide the appropriate ongoing mental and behavioral health support.	Faust/Astphan		
Introduced		IHEs; tuition and financial aid	HB981		Public institutions of higher education; tuition and financial aid; dependency override application form.	Del Willett	Requires each public institution of higher education to develop, maintain, and post publicly on the financial aid page of such institution's website informational materials relating to the dependency override application process	Hagy/Eskam		
Introduced		IHE; financial value transparency	HB1008		Public institutions of higher education; financial value transparency information and acknowledgement; requirements.	Del Lovejoy	Requires each public institution of higher education to require each student enrolled at such institution to sign, at the time such student enrolls in such institution or declares or changes his academic major, as defined in the bill, an acknowledgement form outlining (i) the total cost of completing such academic major and (ii) an estimate of the annual income such student could expect to earn upon completing such academic major, based on the median income potential of such academic major as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States or another reputable source.	Gatliff/Eskam/Hagy/Moreschi		

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Introduced		SCHEV	HB1044	SB159	State Council of Higher Education for Virginia; membership.	Del Rasoul	Requires the membership of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to include at least one nonlegislative citizen member who has served as a chief executive officer of an accredited nonprofit private institution of higher education whose primary purpose is to provide collegiate, graduate, or professional education and not to provide religious training or theological education. The bill has a delayed effective date of July 1, 2026.	Parker/BG Clark		
Introduced		School Crossing Zones	HB1072		School crossing zones. Expands the definition of "school crossing zone"	Del Carr	Expands the definition of "school crossing zone" to include areas surrounding schools where the presence of students reasonably requires a special warning to motorists and provides that the term "school" includes public institutions of higher education and nonprofit private institutions of higher education.	Marshall/Henson		
Introduced		College Partnership Lab Schools	HB1079		College partnership laboratory schools; Early College Model Program established.	Del Coyner	Establishes the Early College Model Program whereby any public institution of higher education may establish a college partnership laboratory school in which each enrolled high school student earns, at no cost to the student, an associate degree or a bachelor's degree concurrently with a high school diploma.	Moreschi		
Introduced		VPPA	HB1108	SB18	Virginia Public Procurement Act; construction management and design-build contracting	Del Carr	Limits the use of construction management or design-build contracts by state public bodies and covered institutions for complex projects	Tomlin		
Introduced		Sports for Specific (defined) Genders	HB1120		K-12 schools and institutions of higher education; student participation in women's sports; civil cause of action.	Del Oates	K12 and IHE sports must be designated as being for men, women, or coed. Etc. Etc. Etc.	Brown/Miller Faust/Rubenstein		

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Introduced		State Debt Collection	HB1192		State debt collection; statute of limitations	Del Scott	Establishes a seven year statute of limitations on the commencement of any action by a state agency or institution to collect past due accounts receivable due to the Commonwealth.	Parker/BG Clark Lawhorne		
Introduced		Student Participation	HB1229		Elementary and secondary schools and institutions of higher education; student participation in sports; access to restrooms and changing rooms.	Del Higgins	Requires each interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural, or club athletic team or sport sponsored by a public school, or any other school that is a member of the Virginia High School League, or by a public institution of higher education to be expressly designated as one of the following based on biological sex: (i) males, men, or boys; (ii) females, women, or girls; or (iii) coed or mixed if participation	Faust/Miller/Brown		
Introduced		Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	HB1255		Certain public institutions of higher education; enrollment limitations in incoming freshman classes; Virginia Higher Education Scholarship Act Fund and Program established.	Del Milde	Requires the chief executive officer of each public institution of higher education to annually submit to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, the Governor, and the Chairmen of the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education of Health no later than August 1 a written, signed certification that no diversity, equity, and inclusion-related program, instruction, or initiative provided or sponsored by such institution promotes anti-Semitism.	Williams		
Introduced		Carrying Firearms; exception off-duty LEO	HB1321		Carrying a firearm or explosive material within Capitol Square and the surrounding area, into a building owned or leased by the Commonwealth, etc.; exceptions for law-enforcement officers.	Del Wyatt	Adds an exception for off-duty law-enforcement officers to the prohibition of carrying a firearm within any building owned or leased by the Commonwealth or any agency thereof or any office where employees of the Commonwealth or any agency thereof are regularly present for the purpose of performing their official duties.	Marshall/Henson		

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Introduced		Law-Enforcement Officers Procedural Guarantee Act	HB1341		Law-Enforcement Officers Procedural Guarantee Act; hearing panel decisions	Del Garrett	Provides that for the purposes of the Law-Enforcement Officers Procedural Guarantee Act a majority decision of a hearing panel shall be binding on the employing agency. Under current law, such decisions are advisory recommendations only.	Marshall		
Introduced		On-Campus Student Health Centers	HB1342		Certain baccalaureate public institutions of higher education; on-campus student health centers.	Del Shin	Requires each baccalaureate public institution of higher education that has an on-campus student health center to staff such center with at least one on-campus certified sexual assault forensic examiner, as defined in relevant law, for the purpose of administering a physical evidence recovery kit, as defined in relevant law, to any student who is in need of such a kit.	Krawiec/Fry		

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Introduced		Employee Protections	HB1344		Employee protection; prohibited retaliation; prohibited nondisclosure and nondisparagement	Del McQuinn	Prohibits the inclusion of a provision in any employment contract that has the purpose or effect of concealing illegal activity or activity an employee believes to be unlawful, including unlawful sexual harassment, discrimination, wage theft, and protected whistleblowing, as those terms are described in existing law.	Stores		
Introduced		Reduced in-state tuition rates	HJ15		Study; State Council of Higher Education for Virginia; offering reduced rate in-state tuition rates at public institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth to dependents of public school instructional, administrative, and support personnel in the Commonwealth; report.	Del Helmer	Would this help enrollment? Would it be funded by the state or would IHE's need to absorb the cost, thus passing it along to other students?	Lawhorne/Eskam/Hagy		
Introduced		SCHEV Study; IHE's	HJ21		Study; State Council of Higher Education for Virginia; public institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth; guaranteed first-year admission; report.	Del Seibold	Requests the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to study the feasibility of implementing a guaranteed first-year admission policy at each public institution of higher education for certain high school graduates in the Commonwealth and report its finding and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2025 Regular Session of the General Assembly.	Eskam/Hagy		
Introduced		Study: HBCUs	HJ25		Joint committee study of challenges faced by and effective strategies for ensuring the sustainable, long-term success of the five historically black colleges and universities in the Commonwealth; report.	Del Askew	Joint committee to study challenges faced by and effective strategies for ensuring the sustainable, long-term success of the five historically black colleges and universities in the Commonwealth - Hampton University, Norfolk State University, Virginia State University, Virginia Union University, and Virginia University of Lynchburg - by discussing, adopting, and recommending to the Governor and the General Assembly for formal recognition and endorsement a comprehensive statewide HBCU Support Plan.			

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Introduced		Board of Workforce Development; study	HJ29		Study; Board of Workforce Development; adequacy of the funding model for noncredit workforce credential programs; work group; report.	Del Simonds	Requests to study the current funding model for noncredit workforce credential programs offered at comprehensive community colleges in order to identify areas of inadequacy and make recommendations			
Introduced		Waiver of Tuition and Fees at certain Community Colleges	HJ39		Study; JLARC; waiver of tuition and mandatory fees at certain comprehensive community colleges; report.	Del Lopez	JLARC study waiving tuition and fees for students at three specific community colleges,			
Introduced		STEM+C Competition Grant Team	SB5		STEM+C Competition Team Grant Program and Fund; established.		Establishes the Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Computing (STEM+C) Competition Team Grant Program and Fund to encourage interest in STEM+C-related subject areas	Moreschi	Finance and Appropriations	
Introduced		VPPA	SB18	HB1108	Virginia Public Procurement Act; construction management & design-build contracting, applicability.	Sen Mamie Locke	States that design-bid-build, defined in the bill, utilizing competitive sealed bidding is the preferred method of procurement for construction services in the Commonwealth.	Jarvis/Tomlin	General Laws and Technology	
Introduced		Individuals with Disabilities	SB21		Public institutions of higher education; policies; individuals with disabilities.	Sen Salim	A policy must exist, and be on the website, outlining documentation required to determine eligibility for accommodation for an individual with a disability, etc.	ODS/Sullivan/Moreschi	Education and Health	
Introduced		FOIA; definition of meetings	SB36		Virginia Freedom of Information Act; definition of meetings.	Sen Locke	Exempts certain public meetings from the definition of "meeting" under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act to clarify that three or more members of a public body may appear and participate in such public meeting without violating the Act, provided that no public business is transacted or discussed.	Wyatt	General Laws and Technology	
Introduced		IHE Admissions	SB46	HB48, SB71	Public institutions of higher education; admissions applications; legacy admissions and admissions based on donor status prohibited.	Sen VanValkenburg	Prohibits any public institution of higher education from providing any manner of preferential treatment in the admissions decision to any student applicant on the basis of such student's legacy status, defined in the bill, or such student's familial relationship to any donor to such institution.	Hagy/Eskam	Education and Health	

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Introduced		New College Institute	SB62		New College Institute; duties.	Sen Stanley	Requires the New College Institute to design and implement, in collaboration with the Department of Education, the Virginia Community College System, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, the Virginia Board of Workforce Development, and other relevant agencies and organizations, any workforce development programs necessary to support the initiatives of the Office of the Governor, including adult education and workforce training programs.		Education and Health	
Introduced		IHE Admissions	SB71	SB46, HB48	Public institutions of higher education; admissions applications; legacy admissions and admissions based on donor status prohibited.	Sen McPike	Prohibits any public institution of higher education from providing any manner of preferential treatment in the admissions decision to any student applicant on the basis of such student's legacy status, defined in the bill, or such student's familial relationship to any donor to such institution.	Hagy/Eskam	Education and Health	
Introduced		Solar-Ready Roofs	SB79		Solar-ready roofs for certain gov't bldgs - net-zero energy consumption bldg. design for schools	Sen Favola	Requires any executive branch agency or institution and any locality entering the design phase for the construction of a new building greater than 5,000 gross square feet in size, or the renovation of a building where the cost of the renovation exceeds 50 percent of the value of the building, to ensure that such building includes a solar-ready, cool, or energy-efficient roof,	Parker	General Laws and Technology	Implementation would be expensive
Introduced		FOIA; defines caregiver	SB85		Virginia Freedom of Information Act; definition of "caregiver;" remote participation in meetings by persons with disabilities and caregivers; remote voting.	Sen Favola	Provides that for purposes of determining whether a quorum is physically assembled, an individual member of a public body who is a person with a disability or a caregiver, defined in the bill, and uses remote participation counts toward the quorum as if the individual was physically present.	Wyatt	General Laws and Technology	

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Introduced		Betting on Virginia Sports	SB124		Sports betting; Virginia college sports.	VanValkenburg	Permits betting, with the exception of proposition betting, on Virginia college sports. Under current law, betting other than proposition betting is allowed on all college sports except Virginia college sports	Miller/Brown	General Laws and Technology	
Introduced		Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority.	SB155		Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority.	Sen Head	Modifies the enabling legislation for the Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority by adding four additional ex officio members to the Authority, directing changes to regulations regarding qualifications for nursing faculty and qualified mental health professionals,		Education and Health	
Introduced		SCHEV; membership	SB159	HB1044	State Council of Higher Education for Virginia; membership.	Sen Boysko	Requires the membership of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to include at least one nonlegislative citizen member who has served as a chief executive officer of an accredited nonprofit private institution of higher education whose primary purpose is to provide collegiate, graduate, or professional education and not to provide religious training or theological education. The bill has a delayed effective date of July 1, 2026.	Parker/BG Clark	Education and Health	
Introduced		Virginia National Guard/Tuition Program	SB219	HB366	Institutions of higher education; tuition grants; Virginia National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program.	Sen Sturtevant	several changes to the program. notably, (i) making the provisions relating to the requirements and conditions for eligibility for and award of grants under the Program subject to regulations as prescribed by the Adjutant General. Also, change (iv) providing that any grant awarded shall be in an amount equivalent to the difference between the full cost of tuition and fees at the institution of higher education less any other educational benefits for which an individual is eligible as a member of the National Guard.	Eskam/Lawhorne/ Parker/BG Clark	Education and Health	There should be no fiscal impact to VMI if the State is covering the potential increase in value of grants.

Status	Crossover Status	Keyword	Bill # (hyperlinked)	Companion Bill	Title	Patron	Issues Summary/Questions	Subject Matter Expert	Committee Assignment	Fiscal Impact
Introduced		VPPA; Constructional Capital	SB249		Virginia Public Procurement Act; construction management and design-build contracting.	Sen McPike	Limits the use of construction management or design-build contracts by state public bodies and covered institutions for complex projects. The bill requires state public bodies, covered institutions, and local public bodies to provide documentation of the processes used for the final selection of a contract to all the unsuccessful applicants upon request.	Tomlin/Jarvis	General Laws and Technology	
Introduced		VPPA	SB260		Virginia Public Procurement Act; preference for products made or manufactured in Virginia.	Sen DeSteph	Provides preference for a bidder who is a resident of Virginia over a bidder who is a resident of any other state in determining the award for any contract for goods, services, or construction under the Virginia Public Procurement Act	Tomlin	General Laws and Technology	
Introduced		VCU; capital projects; issuance of bonds	SB279		Virginia Commonwealth University Health System Authority; board of directors membership; powers and duties; capital projects; issuance of bonds.	Sen Sturtevant	Provides reforms to the VCU Health System Authority		Education and Health	
Introduced		Community Colleges	SB287		Comprehensive community colleges; authority to offer and confer certain baccalaureate degrees.	Sen Sturtevant	Allows SCHEV and State Board of Community Colleges to establish an upper division of any comprehensive community college consisting of the third and fourth years of baccalaureate degree programs that lead to occupations in a high-demand field and confer baccalaureate degrees in such degree programs.	Hagy/Eskam	Education and Health	

Status	Crossover Status	Keyword	Bill # (hyperlinked)	Companion Bill	Title	Patron	Issues Summary/Questions	Subject Matter Expert	Committee Assignment	Fiscal Impact
Introduced		Hunger-Free Campus	SB318	HB827	Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program	Sen Roem	Establishes the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program (the Program) to address student food insecurity at public institutions of higher education.	Lee Clark	Education and Health	
Introduced		Firearms	SB319		Purchase, possession, or transportation of firearm following an assault /battery against a person	Sen Salim	Provides that any person who knowingly and intentionally purchases, possesses, or transports any firearm following a misdemeanor conviction for an offense that occurred on or after July 1, 2024	Marshall/Henson Bither/Faust	Courts of Justice	None
Introduced		Firearms	SB327		Purchase of firearms; age requirement; penalty	Sen Salim	Prohibits any person under 21 years of age from purchasing a firearm, with exceptions for the purchase of a rifle or shotgun by a law-enforcement officer, correctional officer, jail officer, or member of the Armed Forces of the United States, the Virginia National Guard, or the National Guard of any other state	Marshall/Henson Bither/Faust	Courts of Justice	None
Introduced		FOIA	SB340		Virginia Freedom of Information Act; exclusions from mandatory disclosure; purchase card statement.	Sen Salim	Clarifies that the name of a public employee, officer, or official as it appears on a purchase card statement or other payment record and the description of individual purchases are not exempt from disclosure by the State Comptroller.	Tomlin	General Laws and Technology	None

Status	Crossover Status	Keyword	Bill # (hyperlinked)	Companion Bill	Title	Patron	Issues Summary/Questions	Subject Matter Expert	Committee Assignment	Fiscal Impact
Introduced		Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program	SB347		Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program	Sen Reeves	Provides that the stepchild of a living veteran or military service member, as described in the bill, is eligible to receive a tuition and fee waiver under the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program	Lawhorne/Sigler Hagy/Eskam	Education and Health	
Introduced		Unemployment Compensation	SB381		Unemployment compensation; employer failure to respond to requests for information	Sen Ebbin	Provides that an employer's failure to respond timely or adequately to a written request for information relating to an unemployment claim results in a waiver of all of such employer's rights in connection with the claim, including participation and appeal rights, unless such employer demonstrates that good cause exists for such failure.	Stores	Commerce and Labor	
Introduced		Unemployment Compensation	SB382		Unemployment compensation; collection of overpayments; limitations.	Sen Ebbin	Provides that collection activities for an overpayment, provided that such overpayment was not caused by fraud on the part of the claimant, shall be suspended and that the Virginia Employment Commission shall determine as uncollectable and discharge the overpayment	Stores	Commerce and Labor	

Status	Crossover Status	Keyword	Bill # (hyperlinked)	Companion Bill	Title	Patron	Issues Summary/Questions	Subject Matter Expert	Committee Assignment	Fiscal Impact
Introduced		Employee Protections	SB391		Employee protections; medicinal use of cannabis oil.	Sen Pekarsky	Amends the provision that prohibits an employer from discriminating against an employee for such employee's lawful use of cannabis oil .	Stores	Rehabilitation and Social Services	
Introduced		Six-Year Plan	SB399		Six-year financial plan	Sen McDougle	Modifies the requirements for the six-year financial plan submitted by the Governor to the General Assembly by (i) requiring that the plan be submitted every regular session, instead of only in even-numbered years and (ii) providing that the financial plan shall ensure structural balance between projected revenues and expenditures for the six-year period.	Parker/BG Clark	Finance and Appropriations	
Introduced		Firearms	SB447		Firearm in unattended motor vehicle	Sen Marsden	Provides that no person shall leave, place, or store a handgun in an unattended motor vehicle, as defined in the bill, when such handgun is visible to any person who is outside such motor vehicle.	Marshall/Henson Bither/Faust	Courts of Justice	None
Introduced		Legal Counsel	SB506		Public institutions of higher education; legal counsel; scope of employment; duties and powers	Sen Surovell	Provides that the governing board of each public institution of higher education shall have authority over the employment of all legal counsel for the institution.	Parker/BG Clark	Education and Health	
Introduced		Public Funds	SB510		Investment of Public Funds	Sen Stanley	Allows any qualified public entity of the Commonwealth to invest in asset-backed securities which are guaranteed by the United States or any agency thereof.	Lawhorne	Finance and Appropriations	
Introduced		Firearms	SB522		Purchase of firearms; demonstrated competence with a firearm or completion of a firearms safety	Sen Graves	Requires that a prospective purchaser of a firearm present proof that such prospective purchaser has demonstrated competence with a firearm or completed a firearms safety or training course, as specified in the bill, within the past five years.	Marshall/Henson Bither/Faust	Courts of Justice	

Status	Crossover Status	Keyword	Bill # (hyperlinked)	Companion Bill	Title	Patron	Issues Summary/Questions	Subject Matter Expert	Committee Assignment	Fiscal Impact
Introduced		Employee Protections	SB529		Employee protections; medicinal use of cannabis oil	Sen Jordan	Amends the provision that prohibits an employer from discriminating against an employee for such employee's lawful use of cannabis oil .	Stores	Rehabilitation and Social Services	
Introduced		Six-Year Plan	SB585		Six-Year Capital Outlay Plan and funding	Sen Deeds	Provides that the Six-Year Capital Outlay Plan Advisory Committee shall submit and annually amend a Six-Year Capital Outlay Plan that shall include new capital outlay projects (and previously planned or authorized capital outlay projects) that are to be funded entirely or partially from general fund-supported resources for the six fiscal years beginning July 1, 2024.	Parker/BG Clark	Finance and Appropriations	
Introduced		Capital Outlay Plan	SB601		Capital Outlay Plan	Sen Lucas	Updates the six-year capital outlay plan for projects to be funded entirely or partially from general fund-supported resources.	Parker/BG Clark	Finance and Appropriations	
Introduced		IHE; Campus Safety	SB613	HB690	Institutions of higher education; campus safety; governing boards of certain educational institutions; employment of security services and personnel authorized.	Sen Pillion	Authorizes the governing board of certain educational institutions (no 4-year schools in bill), to establish and maintain a campus security department and to employ security personnel. Under current law, the governing board of the mentioned educational institutions are only authorized to contract for security services.	Marshall/Henson	Education and Health	
Introduced		VPPA	SB647		Virginia Public Procurement Act; competitive sealed bidding; required criteria in invitations	Sen Foy	Requires all public bodies to include in any Invitation to Bid criteria that will be used in determining whether a bidder who is not prequalified by the Virginia Department of Transportation is a responsible bidder. Current law authorizes, but does not require, localities to include such criteria in Invitations to Bid.	Tomlin	General Laws and Technology	

Parker, Kimberly C

From: Justin Brown <jbrown@jlarc.virginia.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 10:08 AM
To: Wins, Cedric T
Cc: Young, John; Parker, Kimberly C; Joe McMahon; Stefanie Papps
Subject: 2024 legislative review of higher education

Superintendent Wins:

My name is Justin Brown, one of the associate directors at Virginia's Joint Legislative Audit & Review Commission.

The purpose of this e-mail is to **make you aware that we are beginning a broad review of higher education**. We have been directed by our commission to [review](#) a variety of topics related to higher education costs, operations, and efficiency.

We are currently in the process of planning our review. During this planning process, we are collecting and analyzing data (primarily from SCHEV and several different public information sources). We will also be conducting preliminary interviews and reviewing academic literature about higher education.

We have **no specific requests of your institution at this time**. However, during the review we will likely need to meet with staff from each public four year higher education institution--including yours. Your staff may also receive e-mails from us requesting specific data or information.

We plan to complete this work by the end of 2024 and will provide more information as it pertains to specific requests we may have related to your institution.

We thank you (and your staff) in advance for your attention and cooperation,

Justin Brown
Senior Associate Director
[Virginia Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission](#)
(804) 371-4576

Study Resolution

Higher education cost efficiency

Authorized by the Commission on December 11, 2023

WHEREAS, the Virginia Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2011 set a goal to confer 100,000 more undergraduate degrees by 2025; and

WHEREAS, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia reported that Virginia public four-year institutions charge more than the national average as a percentage of per-capita disposable income; and

WHEREAS, JLARC's 2022 *Higher Education and Financial Aid Grant Programs and Awards* found that a majority of in-state students had an average debt of nearly \$30,000; and

WHEREAS, the increasing cost of attendance and growing student debt burden may limit access to educational opportunities, and hinder growth in other sectors of the economy; and

WHEREAS, as evidenced by the latest six-year planning process, Virginia's higher education institutions have widely varying recent and projected student enrollment trends which may affect institutional revenue and cost structures; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission that staff be directed to study the cost efficiency of public higher education institutions. In conducting its study, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall (i) identify recent trends in student application, admittance, acceptance, enrollment, retention, and graduation rates; (ii) assess the alignment of degree offerings and attainment with current and projected skills needed to obtain employment and fulfill workforce needs in the Commonwealth's critical industry sectors; (iii) identify factors contributing to changes in institutional revenue levels and composition; (iv) identify factors contributing to changes in academic, research, academic support, administrative, facility, and auxiliary costs; (v) estimate institutional costs to educate an undergraduate student; (vi) identify current and projected institutional debt and debt service; (vii) identify major factors contributing to changes in institutional costs and students' cost of attendance; (viii) assess financial sustainability based on recent and projected enrollment, revenue, and cost trends; and (ix) identify opportunities to reduce the cost of public higher education.

JLARC shall make recommendations as necessary and review other issues as warranted.

All agencies of the Commonwealth, including the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia and all public higher education institutions, shall provide assistance, information, and data to JLARC for this study, upon request. JLARC staff shall have access to all information in the possession of agencies pursuant to § 30-59 and § 30-69 of the Code of Virginia. No provision of the Code of Virginia shall be interpreted as limiting or restricting the access of JLARC staff to information pursuant to its statutory authority.

12 January 2024

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Visitors – External Relations Committee

FROM: Brigadier General (BG) Dallas Clark

SUBJECT: Local Government Relations Update

VMI continues a robust relationship throughout the Lexington/Rockbridge County community and the New Market community to include involvement in organizational boards and committees, supporting events, and maintaining effective communications on programs that impact the local jurisdictions. Below is a summary of VMI's local government relations activity from September through December 2023:

1 September 2023 – MG Wins participated in a “President’s Panel” for the Rockbridge/Lexington Chamber of Commerce. He was joined by President William Dudley (Washington & Lee University), Acting President Eric Denna (Southern Virginia University), and President John Rainone (Mountain Gateway Community College). Each president provided 10 minutes of opening remarks covering community engagement, institute involvement with local businesses, investments in each institution, and future plans for each institution. After the presentations, the presidents took part in a Q&A session with Chamber members. This event was the first time all four major college presidents had met with the Chamber of Commerce. Approximately 80 people attended the event. MG Wins was joined by COL Jeffrey Boobar (Finance & Support Office), MAJ Grace Moyer (Jackson House Museum), Mr. Corey Bachman (VMI Representative to the Chamber), and Mr. David Sigler (Finance & Budget Office). The VMI Alumni Agencies were also represented at the event.

12 September 2023 – COL Boobar attended a Sister City Exploratory Partnership Meeting hosted by Lexington Mayor Frank Friedman. The meeting was held at W&L and included Mayor Friedman, W&L President William Dudley, W&L Professor Mark Rush, W&L Professor Stephanie Sandberg, and Chief Elizabeth Kwaakie Mann who is the Mayor of Ga East Municipality in Ghana. Lexington is exploring the possibility of becoming a “sister city” with Ga East Municipality. The meeting ended with an agreement to put together a working group headed by the City of Lexington to explore the sister city process. VMI will be represented on the working group. Later in the day, COL Boobar provided Chief Kwaakie Mann with a short tour of the VMI Post.

12 September 2023 – COL Boobar attended the Lexington City Council “On-Site” Walk-thru Meeting at Jordan’s Point in Lexington. The purpose of the meeting was for the city council members and the mayor to get a briefing and tour of the upcoming renovation project at Jordan’s Point. The overall renovation project which is being undertaken by the City of Lexington will

include multiple smaller projects including the construction of a new service road to the river boat launch; upgrades to the picnic areas and bathroom facilities; paving of existing parking lots; construction of a new terrace; installation of benches; the construction of ADA compliant trails; and landscaping. The project will be conducted in phases and began in October 2023.

19 September 2023 – The Town of New Market hired Mr. Nathan Garrison as new town manager. COL Keith Gibson (Museums System Director), Ms. Brittany Phillips (New Market Battlefield Site Manager), and the staff at the Virginia Museum of the Civil War/New Market Battlefield State Historical Park will continue working closely with Mr. Garrison and the New Market town leadership in the future.

24 September 2023 – VMI participated in the City of Lexington/Gold Star Families Memorial Monument Dedication at Jordan’s Point. The monument was a joint venture between the Gold Star Families Organization and the Woody Williams Foundation. The Corps of Cadets provided the color guard and the national anthem singer for the dedication ceremony. CPT Eli Facemire (Associate Chaplain) provided the invocation at the ceremony. The ceremony was attended by approximately 120 people from the local community (See photo below).



18 October 2023 – BG Clark participated as a guest speaker at the Lexington Sunrise Rotary Club Charter Dinner in Lexington. BG Clark provided an “Institute Today” update for the attendees and answered questions concerning VMI. Approximately, 30 club members and guest attended the event.

1 December 2023 – The VMI Corps of Cadets participated in the City of Lexington 2023 Christmas Parade through downtown Lexington. The Regimental Staff and the RAT Mass led the parade as it marched down Main Street Lexington beginning around 6:00pm (See photo below)



6 December 2023 – Mr. Jim Halasz, the Lexington City Manager and Chief Angela Greene, Lexington Chief of Police, held a community meeting in the Diamond Hill area of the city. The Diamond Hill area is located just off the VMI Post above Foster Stadium. During the meeting, several residents commented about the number of VMI cadet vehicles parked on the streets for days at a time. The City and VMI are working together to address the problem through better enforcement of City regulations and potential VMI Blue Book violations for cadets involved.

12 December 2023 – COL Boobar attended a meeting with COL Adrian Bogart (Commandant of Cadets), Chief Greene, and Lexington Police Department Lieutenant Cherie Padgett to discuss the ongoing issue of cadet vehicles parked in the Diamond Hill neighborhood. COL Bogart and COL Boobar provided information to Chief Greene concerning VMI’s administrative

disciplinary system for cadets and offered to continue to use the system for cadets found to have vehicles parked uptown. COL Bogart also requested the Lexington Police Department provide his business card to any residents or businesses in town so they could contact the Commandant's Office directly concerning cadet conduct in town. COL Bogart and COL Boobar offered to attend the next Diamond Hill neighborhood meeting with Chief Greene. That meeting is currently scheduled for 18 January 2024.

VMI's participation in local organizations is also ongoing. These organizations include membership in the Rockbridge County/Lexington Chamber of Commerce; membership in Main Street Lexington, a small business group; board membership on Project Horizon, a local domestic and sexual violence prevention organization; and chair of the Chessie Nature Trail Advisory Group. Through its certified EMT program, the Corps of Cadets continues to provide EMS support to local emergency services including the Lexington Fire Department and other Rockbridge County agencies. In addition, COL Boobar, in his role as local government liaison officer, continues to monitor and participate in both Lexington City Council and Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors meetings and activities as appropriate.

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OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

TO: VMI Board of Visitors External Relations Committee

FROM: Lt. Col. Michelle Ellwood
Acting Director of Communications & Marketing

DATE: January 2024

RE: Communications & Marketing Update

This update covers the communications and marketing activities for AY 2022-23 as well as projects currently in progress.

I. MEDIA COVERAGE

Between September 1 and December 31, 6,224 news items mentioned or featured information about VMI. This is a decrease of 28% over the same period in 2023. VMI's drop in enrollment and Washington Post coverage accounted for inflated news items in 2022. Despite the decrease in overall volume, the number of positive news items increased by six percentage points over 2022.

90% of the news items are categorized as positive or neutral in sentiment. Negative sentiment (10%) decreased from 812% during the same period in 2022. Positive sentiment, increased from 31% in 2022 to 37% in 2023.

Potential reach of news coverage from September 1 to December 31, exceeded 18.5 billion possible readers, an decrease of 48% over the same period last year which is indicative of the drop in news items.

II. NEWS & EDITORIAL SERVICES

The News & Editorial Services team actively worked with nearly every department on post to provide coverage of events, successes, milestones, and personnel recognition for the fall 2023 semester. The team averaged 8 stories per month for the VMI website, social media, local news coverage pitches, and for publications. These are in addition to coverage for items just used for social media posts. A big accomplishment for the multimedia team was hosting several days of headshots. More than 80 employees from across post, many of them in the new uniform, got headshots that will be used for the VMI website, news stories, post announcements, and personal use when VMI employees participate in conferences or other activities.

The team also supported the look and feel of the new strategic plan, finding photos and information that would match the goals and values highlighted in the publication.

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The Institute Report, the most wide-spread publication developed by the NES team, celebrated its 50th anniversary in December. Each issue this academic year takes a look back over the decades, featuring highlights from the publication, including high-profile visitors to post, academic updates, the changes in technology on post, and construction over the years.

TV news coverage included Founders Day and the local reaction to the forest fires and smoke. A professor was interviewed about the war in Israel. W&L radio helped advertise many VMI events. Understaffed news stations and weekend events have been a challenge when it comes to getting coverage for many things. Video, photos, and stories are put together for news stations for each event to ensure they have the materials needed for any coverage opportunities.

Major event support, that featured photography, videography, stories for the website and social media, as well as programs, signage, media attendance, etc. included:

- Leadership Conference
- Matriculation
- 9/11 Stair Climb
- Admissions Open Houses
- Family Weekend
- Ring Figure
- Rat Challenge and Rat Olympics
- Fall FTX
- Holiday events – Spirit Night, Lexington Christmas Parade, decorations on post, card-making, etc.

Departments from across post have relied on our team for flyers, banners, logos, event programs, and other publications. These include:

- Lifeguard recruitment flyers
- Mental Health Resources
- Career Fair
- Summer Undergraduate Research Institute materials
- Social Media logos for various departments and clubs
- Guest speaker events
- VMI Theatre programs and signage

III. PUBLICATIONS

The Publications team continues to support the needs of the entire post. During the period September-December, the publications team worked on the following projects:

- VMI December Graduation Program
- VMI December Commissioning Program
- VMI Admissions Appointment Envelopes
- VMI Academic Program
- VMI Directory

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- Gen. Peay ad for Goodpaster Award program
- Golf Cart graphics
- Provisional Appointment Certificate
- HR Resource cards
- Admissions Web forms
- Coleman Memorial Service bulletin
- Admissions Call to Duty postcards
- Women's Faculty Working Group luncheon programs
- Career Fair booklets
- Chaplain Christmas card and magnet
- Navy/Marine Corps Birthday Ball programs
- VMI Fact Sheet
- Letterhead and envelopes for Class of '24
- Admissions business reply envelopes

The Publications team also printed a number of reports, publications, and documents:

- BOV Fall meeting materials
- Blue Book (completed)
- CLE training books
- CLE Conference posters
- September Commissioning program
- Candlelight Service bulletin
- Study Abroad Fair poster
- Admissions recruiting handouts
- Appointment Certificates
- Appointment Letterheads
- Classroom materials for Dean's Office
- Memorandum of Understanding – Superintendent's Office
- Lift Training Manual for Physical Plant
- HR Resource books
- Wrestling posters
- Ring Figure program

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

IV. DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Digital Communications team currently consists of C&M's assistant director of digital communication, social media specialist, digital content specialist, and a videographer (reporting to the director of communications and marketing). The team collaborates with C&M's graphic designers, publishing team, news and editorial staff, and photographers.

The social media specialist position was vacant as of mid-October. The assistant director of brand marketing position was reposted, but remained vacant during the Sept.-Dec. 2023 time period covered in this report.

The digital communications team continues to work diligently to improve and streamline communication and messaging processes, branding initiatives, and digital content for departments and offices across post and to VMI's various audiences and stakeholders. The addition of new staff has increased the quantity, speed, reach, and variety of materials created to showcase VMI to stakeholders from high school students and families, to alumni, to internal VMI audiences, and the general public. New initiatives outlined in this report were only possible due to the increased staffing and investment in technologies. Emphasis continues to be placed on projects targeting recruitment, image and brand awareness, user experience, and digital accessibility.

Project Highlights Aug. - Dec. 2023:

Ongoing:

- Update vmi.edu focused on VMI brand and image, search engine optimization (SEO), user experience, and telling the VMI story with focus on recruitment and challenging misconceptions about the Institute.
 - Connect to social media and video projects as appropriate
- Create analytics reports for website and social media use and interaction and meet with offices to review and adjust content based on data
- Create and manage online forms/surveys for use on web and by C&M through Qualtrics
- Support and promote Admissions events through web design and content, social media promotion, registrations, and analytics
- Maintain all livestream and calendar events for the public
- Provide oversight, content as requested, and guidance for VMI social media, including affiliated channels
- Review web contents, including PDFs, for accessibility and branding

August:

- Matriculation promo and prep
- Reworking of Admissions and Financial Aid content to reflect and promote new application procedures, including Common App
- Redesign and custom build new homepage layout and megamenu (see below for details)

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

- Work with Registrar on catalog including design, branding, and accessible PDF version for web/print
- Begin org chart redesign and overhaul to prepare for HR
- DOI site edits
- Resign digital bulletin in coordination with other members of C&M
- Matriculation promo and coverage

September:

- Continue Admissions and Financial Aid updates and upgrades, as well as promotions
- Assist with implementation, marketing, and launch of TimelyCare with Cadet Counseling
- Train new cadets and staff on U360 App management
- Overhaul COVID-19 Portal with C&M and Emergency Management teams
- Collaborate with 1st Brigade Army ROTC for marketing campaign tracking and input
- Begin overhaul of all ROTC subsites based on SEO and competitor research (see below)
- Develop and launch Never Settle campaign website with VMIAA and Admissions
- Overhaul Finance and Budget subsite

October:

- Update Call to Duty content and prepare for upcoming promos
- Promote open house and admissions information
- Create new FAFSA content to explain federal updates and changes
- Create new features and collaborations to showcase VMI's three-legged stool
- Promote VMIAA information sessions, including design and branding collaboration with Admissions
- Begin review of virtual tour vendors to plan to utilize grant money related to PELL grant prospectives
- Handle U360 App troubleshooting and training

November:

- Continue research and meetings related to virtual tour vendors as well as replacement options for TerminalFour (explained below)
- Meet with cadets and Comm staff to review possible solutions for cadet podcast request
- Create overarching project goals and plans for Virtual Tour
- Work on hiring new social media specialist
-

December:

- Interviews and committee meetings regarding hiring of new social media specialist
- Meet with STEM committee and IPAC leadership for upcoming web and marketing projects, in coordination with Admissions
- Launch new Call to Duty page, application, and content in coordination with Admissions and Financial Aid
- Continue to provide updates regarding FAFSA, VMI applications, and Open Houses

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS BY THE NUMBERS

Month	Email Threads in <u>Web</u> redits Inbox*	New Piece of Content Created for vmi.edu	Edits Made to Existing Content on vmi.edu	Featured Stories Written for vmi.edu**	Facebook Posts	Instagram Posts ⁺	X (Twitter) Posts	LinkedIn Posts
09/2023	134	69	379	3	40	28	35	36
10/2023	134	72	338	12	40	36	68	41
11/2023	91	26	155	8	43	36	63	36
12/2023	58	14	131	3	44	27	41	32
TOTAL	411	181	1,003	26	167	127	207	145
AVG./Month	102.74	45.25	250.75	6.5	41.75	31.75	51.75	36.25

* Change request threads vary from one item updates, such as adding a new staff member, to full section redesigns or large accessibility remediation projects. These numbers do not include requests or project needs sent directly to the Assistant Director for Digital Communication.

** Featured stories are predominantly written by the Digital Content Specialist, but also include input from other members of the digital comms team.

^ Involved major projects documented in this report which required a significant increase in edits to the site, including to page & site templates.

+ Includes story slides and main feed posts/reels.

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Digital Communications goals within VMI's Strategic Communications Plan:

1.1: INCREASE ENGAGEMENT WITH QUALITY PROSPECTS –

The digital communications team continues to support the Admissions Office in focusing on recruitment of and engagement with prospective applicants. A systemic overhaul of VMI main social accounts continues to incorporate more video/reels, update styling consistent with competitors while remaining 'on brand' for VMI, Platform content is also now tailored more specifically by audience, with Instagram being heavily tilted towards promoting VMI as a top choice for high school students. Open house and application promotion continue to be main targets, particularly with the use of the Common App and FAFSA changes. The team also designs and supports web-based engagement tools and forms, custom page builds to support ad campaigns with VMIAA, and increased video content linked to subpages on the VMI homepage.

C&M continues to collaborate with Parents Council leadership on bettering their communication internally with current parents and externally with prospective parents. Specific improvements are focused on the recruiting and communications committees.

1.2: COMPREHENSIVE IDENTITY & BRAND GUIDE –

All members of C&M have worked to fill this gap left by the departure of the Assistant Director of Marketing in December 2022. Efforts are ongoing to ensure all offices and departments are utilizing the most current VMI logos across post. Even though there is a Visual Identity Guide on VMI.edu, it is a concern of C&M that offices and departments do not always follow those branding guidelines. The proposed online comprehensive identity and brand guide will cover everything needed for internal use and external requests, and will be a major project once the branding position is filled. The digital communications team continues to build out resources to move forward with an online design toolkit, and is collaborating with the Web Administrator in IT as he overhauls design of internal resources. The web team continues to correct old branding on digital assets on vmi.edu as they are discovered,

The current assistant directors in C&M answer all logo requests and licensed vendor product approvals daily while working with VMI departments, offices, and organizations on their specific materials and messaging on a case-by-case basis (e.g., presentations, forms, social media, etc.). They also perform reviews of emails and documents submitted by VMI internal stakeholders for branding compliance. The official online logo request form generated 13 requests from Sept. 1 – Dec. 31, 2023.

1.3: EXPANSION AND BETTER LEVERAGING OF DATA –

C&M's digital communications team continues to work with IT, admissions, institutional research, and internally to obtain and utilize proper data for marketing and recruiting strategies and initiatives. This is handled within C&M using analytics from the vmi.edu website, social

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

media platforms, and Qualtrics online forms. Data is shared more widely and more often with various stakeholders, particularly Admissions and Financial Aid.

The web team is working on search engine optimization (SEO) for VMI.edu as well as establishing key performance indicators (KPIs) and SMART goals for those visiting the No Ordinary recruiting landing page, new Never Settle campaign page with VMIAA, and VMI.edu. This includes the purchase of BrightEdge software for professional guidance and support in optimizing VMI.edu, with focus on not only increasing SEO efficiency, but specifically targeting competitor-shared keywords to increase enrollment. Admissions and Financial Aid offices now receive monthly web analytics updates and analytics from social media posts related to their offices and are also provided SEO reports on related keywords.

This tool has been invaluable in streamlining the process of research, project selection, and results-based edits. Through competitor research, the web team has been able to specifically tailor web contents to compete more directly for online traffic with other SMCs and service academies. The first major SEO targets for the site have been admissions pages, financial aid pages, and ROTC pages, with Army completed in fall 2023 and new Air Force content launched Jan. 2024.

1.4: BOOST SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE & ENGAGEMENT –

Social media is a vital way for Virginia Military Institute to communicate with the VMI community and the world, offering instant access to cadets, alumni, staff, faculty, prospective cadets, and other groups.

VMI's social media accounts publish pictures, videos, articles, and news briefs highlighting the best of the Institute, bolstering VMI's reputation, brand recognition & identity, and and recruitment efforts. Posts on social media accounts include:

- Major events, announcements, and activities on post
- Cadet-focused stories regarding academics, military life, and athletics, with emphasis on the leadership journey
- Cadet events, activities, clubs, and organizations focused on the VMI college experience
- Academic, ROTC, and Athletics achievements, milestones, and event promotion
- Performance and highlights of faculty staff contributions to VMI and beyond
- Photo and video highlights depicting everyday life at the Institute

VMI social media accounts pay special attention to specific audiences on each platform:

Facebook: older alumni, families of cadets, families of prospective cadets

LinkedIn: current cadets, a large population of alumni

Instagram: current cadets, younger alumni, prospective cadets

Twitter: news-oriented accounts, alumni, general public particularly for large events and athletic connections

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

After the departure of the social media specialist in mid-October 2023, other members of the digital communications team stepped up to ensure this crucial recruitment tool continued to be utilized and keep sharing the VMI brand and stories of the Institute. A new specialist came onboard in Jan. 2024, and will be reviewing reporting options moving forward.

Each platform continues to be analyzed and optimized to promote VMI and its cadets in the correct style and format based on audience, algorithms, and industry trends. This is particularly noted in the continued increase of video content on Instagram, a key for reaching interested students.

Sept. - Dec. 2023 VS Sept. - Dec 2022, Year-Over-Year Comparison				
FACEBOOK	Fans/Followers	Engagement	Impressions	Brand Awareness
AY22-23	35,911	181,203	4,786,949	2,001
AY23-24	37,134	179,228	4,685,591	3,870
% Change	3.41%	-1.09%	-2.12%	93.4%
INSTAGRAM	Fans/Followers	Engagement	Impressions	Brand Awareness
AY22-23	20,823	93,632	1,449,203	840
AY23-24	24,335	133,178	1,897,058	828
% Change	16.87%	42.24%	30.9%	-1.43%
LINKEDIN	Fans/Followers	Engagement	Impressions	Total Reached Users
AY22-23	21,909	87,424	429,546	212,751
AY23-24	19,889	128,076	605,398	269,640
% Change	-9.22%	46.5%	40.94%	26.74%

- An unexpected loss of followers occurred on LinkedIn, but engagement and interactions increased. It is possible, as this is the channel most followed by alumni, that we are still seeing some fall off connected to criticism of VMI, but the content being posted resonates well with the followers. Increasing followers will be a 2024 goal.
- The large increase in Instagram followers and interaction are encouraging as this is the platform most targeted to recruitment and shows the increased use of video is paying off.
- Facebook saw a mixed comparison, but the increase in Brand Awareness is key to continuing to increase followers and spread the message further as more users are sharing VMI content.
- Algorithm updates continue to be researched, and the trend towards ranking videos higher, and downgrading links, continues to steer post content.
- Some Twitter stats are now unavailable due to the API changes under Elon Musk. The digital communications team is researching options for getting this information another way without having to increase spending.

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

A more common measure of social media success and growth can be seen by comparing a time period to the immediate period of same length before. It takes into account algorithms and platform expectations from a more closely related schema, and shows adjustments made each month based on performance analysis of posts and campaigns.

Note: Graduation and Matriculation interactions can skew the May-Aug. interaction as only Breakout is nearly as popular with followers, so some drop-off is expected, though the team continues to try to minimize this, and has been predominantly successful. Instagram is affected the most as the account has yet to match the viral success of the [May '23 graduation Reel](#), an outlier in all VMI social tracking.

Sept – Dec. 2023 VS May – Aug. 2023				
FACEBOOK	Fans/Followers	Engagement	Impressions	Brand Awareness
	37,134	179,228	4,685,591	3,870
% Change	1.1%	6.7%	58.1%	73.8%
INSTAGRAM	Fans/Followers	Engagement	Impressions	Brand Awareness
	24,335	133,178	1,897,058	828
% Change	1.4%	-15.5%	-15.2%	5.5%
LINKEDIN	Fans/Followers	Engagement	Impressions	Total Reached Users
	19,889	128,076	605,398	269,640
% Change	-13.6%	19.2%	1.6%	7.2%

Social Media Content Analysis:

VMI’s social media accounts continue to actively emphasize Maj. Gen. Cedric T. Wins ’85’s “One Corps, One VMI” outcomes:

Honor - Diversity and Inclusion - The VMI Brand - Competing and Winning - One VMI

Efforts continue to be made to balance the three-legged stool of VMI in post selection and curation, continuing to increase both NCAA and club sport coverage. Posts continue to be developed to show a more inclusive and person-centered view of the Institute. This includes continuous competitor and trend research for topics and styles that work well with the VMI ‘brand’. The continued calendar consistency of campaigns and series has been successful in setting not only expectations, but also keeping the VMI voice and brand front and center while balancing content with day-to-day news. Use of archival photographs resonates strongly with alumni, often increasing weekly engagement and bringing more positive responses and interactions. Jackson statue comments still abound but are less prolific than previous years since the removal.

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Video Remains Popular: Reels and videos continue to account for some of the most engaged with and seen content across platforms, most notably Instagram which is the main channel for recruitment efforts. Video clips have also seen strong positive reaction when used in stories – posts seen for 24 hours. The work of VMI’s videographer has been key to increasing the Institute’s ability to reach a wider, younger audience.

Some stats are not registered for shorter videos (Reels) on Facebook due to API settings.

Video	Platform	Impressions	Reach	Comments	Shares	Likes & Reactions
Meet Your S5 Captain	FB	8.8K	7.8K	55	16	274
Meet Your S5 Captain	IG	15K	11.6K	13	50	720
Matric Week 2023 *	FB	157.5K	153.3K	199	242	2K
Matric Week 2023 &	IG	16.3K	12.8K	3	151	859
Meet Your S9 Captain	IG	15.2K	11.1K	6	55	723
Scenes on Post: 9/11 Stair	FB	N/A	7.8K	12	23	304
Scenes on Post: 9/11 Stair	IG	15.2K	11.1K	6	55	723
Meet Your 2nd Battalion Comm.	FB	N/A	2.4K	1	7	83
Meet Your 2nd Battalion Comm.	IG	11.4K	9.2K	4	40	630
Corps Contributions: Barbershop	FB	74.5K	71.6K	41	40	827
Corps Contributions: Barbershop	IG	14.2K	12.2K	18	119	1.4K
Fall FTX	IG	14.8K	12.2K	13	149	1.4K
Meet Your 1st Battalion Comm	FB	N/A	2.6K	3	2	72
Meet Your 1st Battalion Comm	IG	10.5K	8.5K	7	20	537

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Game Day – FB Citadel Pep	FB	9.6K	9.1K	16	19	241
Game Day – IG Citadel Pep	IG	18.7K	15.2K	10	138	1.6K
Autumn: Scenes on Post	FB	4.2K	3.8K	4	6	114
Autumn: Scenes on Post	IG	9.9K	8.5K	2	9	800
Corps Contributions: Tailor Shop	FB	21.2K	19.6K	87	46	578
Corps Contributions: Tailor Shop	IG	8.2K	6.7K	16	27	514
Family Weekend Recap	FB	79.2K	79.2K	73	83	1.8K
Family Weekend Recap	IG	19.1K	15K	10	80	1.6K
Corps Contributions: Laundry	FB	9.5K	8.9K	26	25	230
Corps Contributions: Laundry	IG	7.7K	6.7K	18	37	511
Rat Olympics	FB	N/A	5.8K	22	35	349
Rat Olympics	IG	16.7K	14K	6	147	1.1K
Fall Colors: Scenes on Post	FB	N/A	4.9K	10	23	283
Fall Colors: Scenes on Post	IG	7.4K	6.5K	1	16	620
Ring Figure: Scenes on Port	FB	N/A	4.7K	10	13	188
Ring Figure: Scenes on Port	IG	11.1K	9.4K	9	33	981
Meet Your Band Co. Comm.	FB	31.5K	31.5K	61	41	585
Meet Your Band Co. Comm.	IG	8.1K	7K	4	19	446
Lex. Christmas Parade	FB	379.7K	379.7K	343	660	10K

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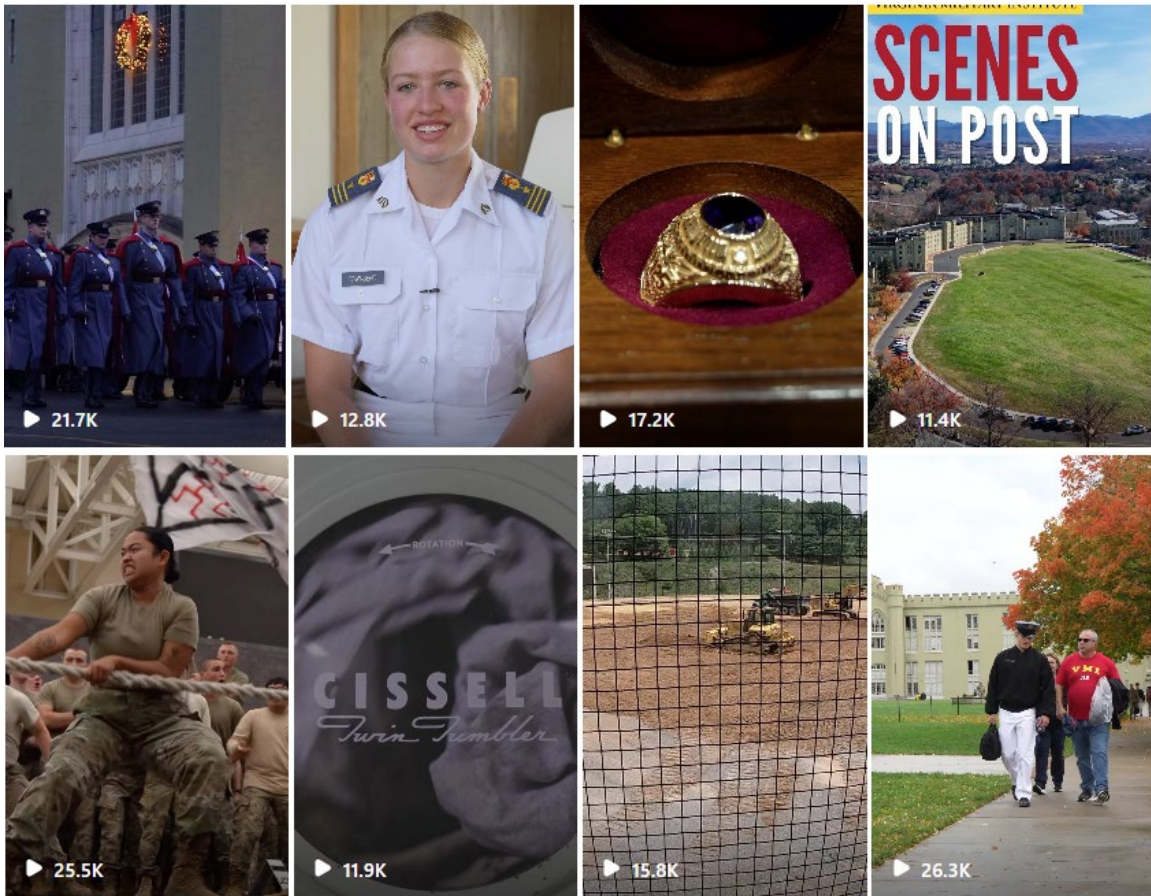
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Lex. Christmas Parade	IG	14.2K	12K	11	93	1.6K
December: Scenes on Post	FB	N/A	3.2K	13	14	164
December: Scenes on Post	IG	5.9K	5.4K	3	12	635
Happy New Year ^	FB	31.4K	31.4K	39	35	705
Happy New Year ^	IG	8.1K	7K	1	19	678

* = Ad money spent

^ = Skewed by PST reporting, posted midnight Jan 1 EST, will share stats again in next report

Sample Reels covers on Instagram:



Updates to the VMI YouTube channel continue, as do video additions for the website. The videographer has begun to update all marketing-style videos that already existed with new interviews and b-roll. Videos shared on other social platforms are also being added to the channel to better harness YouTube as a recruitment and marketing tool.

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SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM SNAPSHOTS:

**Please note: Earlier months may see higher reach and impressions as they were available for longer at the time this report was created in Jan. 2024. Timestamps are also in PST, so midnight posts register as the previous day (such as New Year posts).*

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/vmi1839/>

Monthly Averages by Post

Month	Comment	Likes	Shares	Engage.	Reach	Impress.	Photo Views	Clicks	Reel Plays
SEP. 2023	22.95	318.09	21.37	362.42	9,715.70	10,425.30	459.26	870.63	7,398
OCT. 2023	23.50	387.94	19.58	431.03	12,030.7	12,734.67	443.21	797.89	3,422
NOV. 2023	27.33	358.58	17.33	403.23	8,260.37	8,879.09	638.26	963.38	7,729
DEC. 2023	32.22	666.52	117.73	760.02	16,853.88	16,062.16	567.31	1,000.02	2,189.5

Most Popular Posts by Month according to Reach

Month	#1	#2	#3
SEPT. 2023	Matriculation Week Reel Wrap-Up - 153,306	Asian Fusion Bar in Crozet – 22,684	Football throwback from the Archives – 21,262
OCT. 2023	Family Weekend Wrap-Up Reel – 79,712	Corps Contributions – Barbershop Reel – 71,642	Shako Secured – Football Defeats Citadel – 27,515
NOV. 2023	Happy Thanksgiving Archives Photo – 21,037	Men’s Rugby Win – 20,172	Ring Figure Cannonball photos – 19,240
DEC. 2023	Lexington Christmas Parade Reel – 377,442	Happy New Year Reel – 31,039	Meet your Band Co. Commander Reel – 30,930

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Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/virginiamilitaryinstitute/>

Monthly Averages by Post

Month	Impressions	Reach	Shares	Follows	Plays	Likes	Comments	Saves
SEPT. 2023	12,375	9,537	94	4	2,526	1,321	8	18
OCT. 2023	9,702	7,459	50	2	3,974	984	7	14
NOV. 2023	8,876	7,243	41	2	967	930	5	10
DEC. 2023	8,385	6,936	45	1	1,363	986	4	12

Most Popular Posts by Month according to Reach

Month	#1	#2	#3
SEPT. 2023	9/11 Memorial Stair Climb Reel – 13,702	Under Armour partnership – 13,208	Asian Fusion in Crozet – 13,070
OCT. 2023	Citadel Pep Rally Reel – 15,434	Family Weekend Wrap-Up Reel – 15,295	Gray-Minor Stadium Update – 12,906
NOV. 2023	Rat Olympics Reel – 13,835	Harvest Hop recap – 12,169	Ring Figure Cannonball photos – 9,469
DEC. 2023	Lexington Christmas Parade Reel – 12,079	Winter Solstice Snow Archives photos – 9,086	Lexington Christmas Parade prep – 9,001

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LinkedIn <https://www.instagram.com/virginiamilitaryinstitute/>

Monthly Averages by Post

Month	Impressions	Reach	Clicks	Likes	Shares	Comments	Engagements	Eng. Rate / Impress	Eng. Rate / Reach	Video Views
SEPT. 2023	4,748.83	3,193.94	552.75	142.64	3.61	6.14	705.15	13.51	20.45	2,870.8
OCT. 2023	4,046.78	2,812.24	552.00	105.83	3.37	4.39	665.59	13.07	19.00	2,201.6
NOV. 2023	4,082.28	2,890.14	885.03	112.78	2.81	4.94	1,005.56	20.79	28.95	n/a
DEC. 2023	4,251.72	2,680.91	1,180.59	103.72	2.09	3.13	1,289.53	23.96	40.69	995.0

Most Popular Posts by Month according to Reach

Month	#1	#2	#3
SEPT. 2023	9/11 Memorial Stair Climb – 7,547	News & World Report Ranking – 6,471	Sept. 11 morning post – 6,349
OCT. 2023	Shako Secured – Football Defeats Citadel – 9,130	Gray-Minor Stadium Update – 6,380	Family Weekend recap – 6,010
NOV. 2023	Founders Day – 7,262	Combat Supper recap – 5,911	USMC Birthday, archives photos – 5,556
DEC. 2023	Midshipmen Moments: Joseph Addison Hagan '24 – 5,652	Farewell December (recap) – 4,755	Commissioning & Graduation – 4,723

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X (Twitter) <https://www.twitter.com/vmi1839/>

Monthly Averages by Post

Month	Impress.	Engage.	Engage Rate	Retweet	Likes	Profile Clicks	URL Clicks	Media View	Media Engage
SEPT. 2023	1,477.74	71.29	4.79%	2.71	23.74	2.97	6.89	78.17	19.46
OCT. 2023	1,025.03	40.1	4.42%	1.75	15.49	2.19	4.09	21.01	6.10
NOV. 2023	1,084.81	43.22	3.85%	1.53	15.25	2.84	3.17	15.83	10.06
DEC. 2023	712.59	32.88	4.43%	0.63	12.19	1.22	2.2	14.63	10.29

Most Popular Posts by Month according to Engagement Rate

Month	#1	#2	#3
SEPT. 2023	VMI under Armour Announcement – 9.27%	Matriculation Week Video – 8.43%	Second week of class photos – 7.98%
OCT. 2023	#VMIIHistory Hen. Burress WWII plaque – 54.84%	Family weekend parade announcement – 11.35%	Family weekend schedule/promo - 10.26%
NOV. 2023	Harvest Hop – 10.18%	Return from Furlough – 8.03%	Combat Rings and Class Supper – 7.68%
DEC. 2023	Tweet thread with links for Dec. Grad/Comm - 13.68%	Lexington Parade Prep – 9.69%	Holiday Supper, Carols and Candlelight – 8.69%

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V. WEB

The VMI Web Team continues to focus on providing timely, accurate, and engaging content across the vmi.edu site, with emphasis on best representing the benefits of a VMI education and its varied programs, the successes and achievements of a diverse and talented Corps of Cadets, and important information related to health, safety, and upcoming events. Special project rearrangements and schedule adjustments continue to allow for a focus on recruitment. Large portions of the website are also undergoing overhauls to compete in design and content more directly with other senior military colleges (SMCs) and the service academies, as well as other state and private universities. This is done in partnership with many departments across post, most notably the Dean's office, Commandant's office, and Admission.

Significant issues with the content management system (CMS) vendor, TerminalFour and its many technical glitches continue to take away from the time the web team is able to spend on content creation and updates, and limits design options, but the team continues to create custom code and content to work around this major issue.

Financial Aid and Admissions pages continue to be updated to reflect changes not only in the VMI Admissions & Aid process, but also changes to the FAFSA which impact all colleges and universities. New code was developed to implement not only homepage video content, but also text and button links with that video to make the homepage more appealing and engaging for prospective students.

START YOUR JOURNEY: [INQUIRE](#) [VISIT](#) [APPLY](#) MYVMI OFFICES A-Z CALENDAR GIVE

About Admissions Academics ROTC Cadet Life Athletics Community

Become part of the tradition.

VMI is currently accepting applications for admission. Join our Corps of Cadets and start your leadership journey.

[APPLY TODAY](#)

The Virginia Military Institute believes that the measure of a college lies in the quality and performance of its graduates and their contributions to society. Established in 1839, VMI has shaped leaders and individuals whose daily lives reflect the integrity, fairness, and appreciation for the value of work that is instilled here.

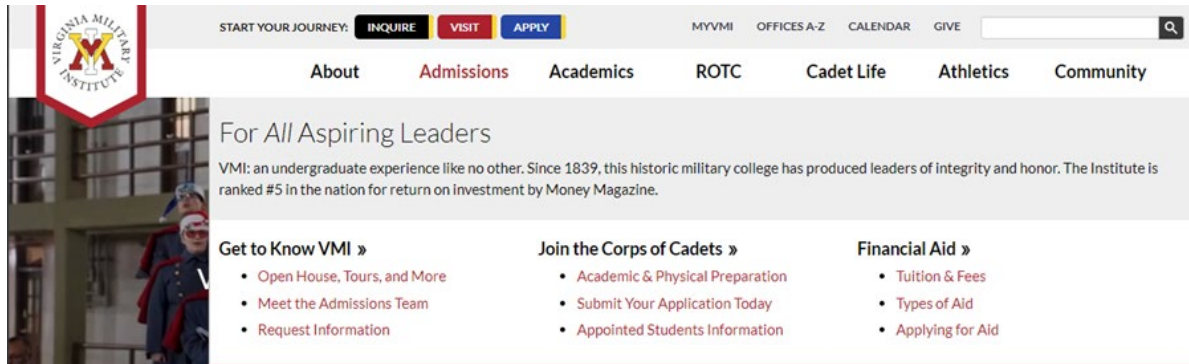
[INTERESTED STUDENTS](#) [AFFORDING VMI](#) [EARNING YOUR DEGREE](#) [MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS](#)

This was a follow-up to the complete navigation overhaul launched in August 2023 which saw the implementation of a custom-coded megamenu. This new code not only served as a

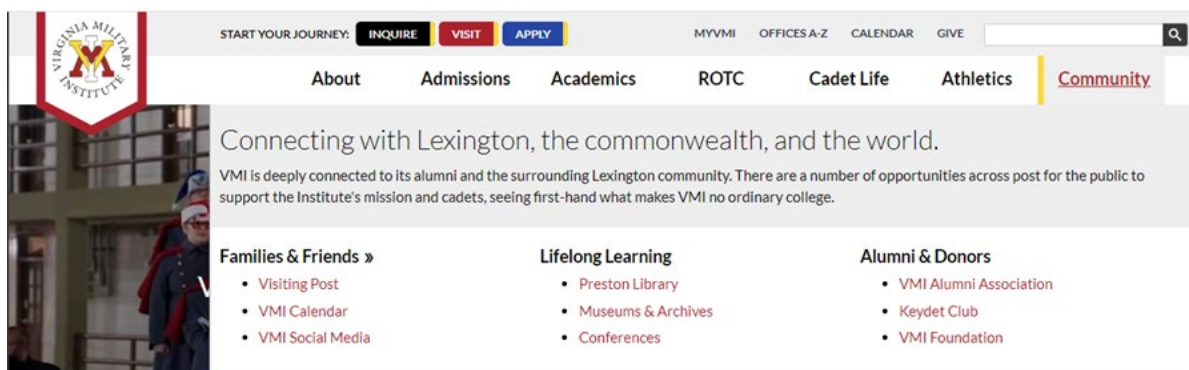
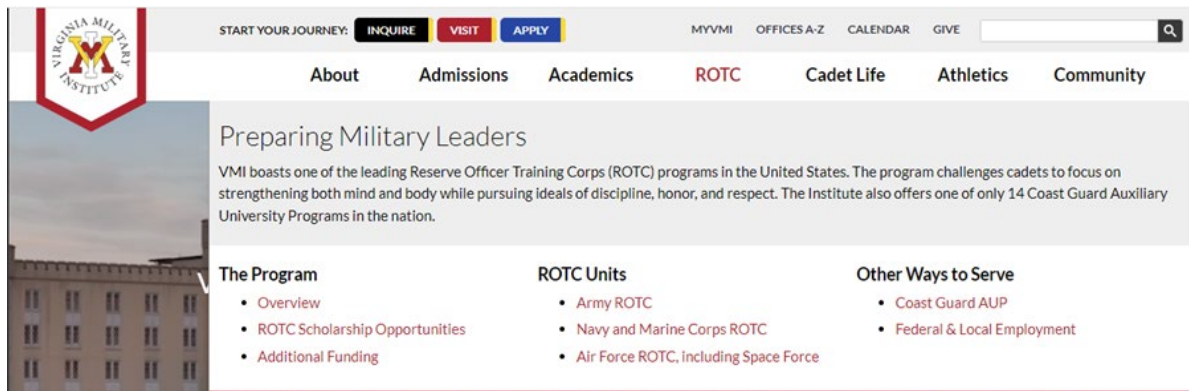
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workaround for the issues with TerminalFour noted above, but addressed the need for the site to be more easily navigated for all visitors. The megamenu also allows for more marketing-focused language to be used, touching on SEO and feedback from both internal and external stakeholders. The amount of pages now available to site users from the menu on all pages of the site increased nearly five-fold, providing a smoother, faster site visit experience.



New sections were launched for [ROTC](#) and [Community](#) to allow for speedier navigation, marketing and branding opportunities, and to better target SEO and the structure of VMI's main recruitment competitors. This also organizes important information for families and friends of VMI.



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OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

WEBSITE ANALYTICS

Due to changing Google formatting and a major overhaul of the site architecture. The academics section of the site is affected the most due to moving ROTC to its own section of the site out of academics, and Preston Library moving to its own URL/CMS. Tear-to-year comparisons will resume in Fall 2024 to represent site traffic more fairly and accurately. For this report, changes will be shown based on comparisons to the preceding period (May 2 – Aug 31 to match number of days).

SEPT-DEC 2023 TOTALS AND CHANGE COMPARED TO PRECEDING PERIOD

Site Section	Pageviews	Users	Views per User	Average Engagement Time	Events (Clicks, etc.)
Homepage	210,332 20.53%	85,142 +14.74%	2.47 +6.55%	00:35 -3.93%	728,408 +25.97%
About	152,948 -10.35%	49,823 -11.68%	3.07 +3.72%	01:19 +7.61%	450,891 -4.53%
News (About)	59,738 -28.94%	21,498 -50.53%	2.78 +43.66%	00:56 -70.81%	150,708 -34.54%
Academics	97,916 -35.32%	30,234 -55.23%	3.24 +46.25%	01:32 +30.81%	292,681 -36.86%
Admissions	45,716 -15.54%	19,949 -19.24%	2.29 +5.97%	01:11 +21.01%	134,634 -11.17%
Apply Page (Admissions)	12,923 +49.14%	6,701 +40.39%	1.93 +6.23%	00:53 -0.56%	36,986 +53.55%
Financial Aid	17,394 +11.26%	8,709 +15.24%	2 -2.08%	01:10 +5.29%	50,480 +15.7%
Cadet Life	60,323 -27.36	26,135 -25.42%	2.31 -2.63%	01:27 +0.43%	174,252 -25.06%
ROTC (new section, no comparison)	20,060	9,239	2.17	01:26	61,995

MOST POPULAR PAGES OF SEPT-DEC 2023

1. Homepage
2. Apply Page [Admissions]
3. Critical Dates & Academic Calendar
4. Admissions Landing Page
5. Visit Page [Admissions]
6. Majors and Minors [Academics]
7. Never Settle [Campaign w/ VMIAA]
8. VMCW Landing Page

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OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

9. About Landing Page

10. Offices A-Z [About]

SUMMARY

Of note are the large increases in traffic to the Admissions and Financial Aid portions of the website, a goal of the digital comms team in coordination with the respective departments for the opening of the 2024-25 admissions cycle and FAFSA changes. Gains may also be largely attributed to the search engine optimization (SEO) work done in partnership with BrightEdge, a contracted vendor, serving VMI pages to more web users. Both BrightEdge automatic features and the web team while developing content have emphasized page-to-page links to drive traffic throughout the site. Cadet Life will be targeted heavily in spring 2024, and academics should see a bounce back once the ROTC and Library shift are no longer reflected in comparison data.

MOST VIEWED NEWS STORIES OF SEPT.-DEC. 2023

Note: This table depicts the stories with the most views during the fall semester, not necessarily items written during the same semester. Criticism of VMI still skews searches for content regarding statues, DEI/DOI, and the superintendent.

Story Title	Pageviews	Date of Publication
TAPS – Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Charles Dominy	898	Sept. 1, 2023
VMI Again Ranked Highly by U.S. News and World Report	782	Sept. 18, 2023
Constructing His Own Experiences: Owen Clifford '24 *	579	July 20, 2023
VMI Events for the Holiday Season	548	Nov. 24, 2023
A Look Back: 25 Years of Women	521	Sept. 28, 2022
VMI Begins to Relocate the Stonewall Jackson Statue	497	Dec. 7, 2020
VMI Cadets Excel in Summer Internships	407	Oct. 12, 2023
Midshipmen Moments: Addison Hagan '24 *	399	Dec. 6, 2023
Rank Announcements Usher in New Corps Leadership	368	Mar. 9, 2023
The Extra Mile: Rugby *	366	Apr. 11, 2023
New Inspector General No Stranger to VMI	355	Oct. 5, 2023
VMI Class of 2025 Celebrates Ring Figure	343	Nov. 20, 2023
TAPS — Brig. Gen. Robert “Bob” L. Green '67	339	Sept. 25, 2023
Politeness on Post: Cadets Learn Etiquette	337	Nov. 2, 2023
The Extra Mile: Hockey Club	334	Apr. 18, 2023

* Featured Story by Digital Communications Employee(s)

THE IMPORTANCE AND IMPACT OF FEATURE STORY WRITING

With the hiring of a Digital Content Specialist last year, VMI feature stories have taken off exponentially. Visually branding and storytelling are imperative in establishing a narrative that aids marketing and branding efforts.

The importance of writing engaging stories does the following:

- Improves relationships
- Increases engagement with your brand
- Tells your brand's story
- Gives a competitive edge

These feature stories also showcase that VMI is “No Ordinary College,” yet still includes “normal” college experiences.

Between September and December, there were 14,624 views of feature stories from 6,635 users, who averaged two stories each. The average engaged time for these stories was 46 seconds with a nearly 50% engagement rate.

The introduction of two new series — Midshipmen Moments and Behind the Balance — have proved to increase engagement.

Midshipmen Moments features Naval and Marine ROTC midshipmen at VMI. The stories have ranged from what each has done on specific summer assignments, to overall leadership opportunities cadets have engaged in.

The Naval ROTC program provides two programs in which cadets can enroll in — U.S. Navy or U.S. Marine Corps.



The mission is to develop midshipmen mentally, morally, and physically, and to instill the highest ideals of duty, honor, and loyalty to commission them as Navy or Marine officers. The NROTC program fosters high-level responsibilities of command, citizenship, and government.

These stories showcase elite abilities and have really taken off with our audiences. One story, featuring Addison Hagan '24, was the number two story on the features story list with a 28% engagement rate. Other Midshipmen Moments stories averaged in the range of 30 to 40% average engagement rate.

Behind the Balance features cadet-athletes and how they balance cadet responsibilities along with being a NCAA Division I athlete. These stories specifically shine light on various cadets that are involved in sports teams but may not be the captains or head leaders of each team. We wanted to feature those who not only work hard but may fly under the radar more.

Cadet-athletes at VMI not only have their responsibilities with their selected sport but cadet duties on top of that. Cadets are also required to take physical fitness classes twice a week, participate in ROTC all four years, prepare for room and uniform inspections, practice for parade, guard duty, and more.

By showing how each cadet handles the stresses of cadet life and athlete responsibilities, these stories provide an honest example of what to expect once deciding to attend VMI for athletics and academics. The main stressor of these stories is the high workload many of these cadet-athletes take on for academics, many with full course loads along with their mandatory practices and other cadet responsibilities. The average engagement rates for these stories ranged from 30 to 40%.



SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO):

Every page on the vmi.edu site continues to undergo updates and upgrades, some more significant than others. New metatags are being added to the website to increase search engine optimization (SEO) and properly format link sharing across social media and email tools. Additionally, photos are being selected and formatted to include important keywords in their tagging to not only continue to update the site to best represent VMI as it is and hopes to be, but also to target interested applicants, targeting keywords and topics most in competition with service academies, senior military colleges, and other Virginia colleges and universities.

There have already been significant improvements to SEO and vmi.edu visibility. The work done by the web team is facilitated largely by the purchase of the BrightEdge software contract, which does research and analysis that would take multiple staff members months to do, and would never match the 24–48-hour turnaround time of BrightEdge analysis. Efforts continue on increasing traffic to admissions, financial aid, and ROTC. New pages have been added across the site to fill gaps Spring 2024 will see a focus shift to academics.

Largest improvements in blended rank (place in Google results), Dec. 31 VS July 30 :

Keyword	Monthly Search Volume	Blended Rank	Blended Rank Change	Google Page #
us army careers *	1,000	21	80	3
army branch *	9,900	23	78	3
careers army *	90	29	72	3
best military schools in the us	260	27	70	3
international studies degree	260	33	68	4
army careers *	5,400	38	63	4
army program *	720	45	56	5
coast guard auxiliary	5,400	46	55	5
jobs in the army *	14,800	48	53	5
cadet corps	880	49	52	5
ranger army *	33,100	50	51	5
economics vs business major	260	50	51	5

army programs *	720	51	50	5
best military colleges	590	16	46	2
army rotc programs	170	31	44	3
colleges with army rotc	390	36	39	4
va university	390	23	35	2
military prep schools	260	58	33	6
american military academy	1,300	45	32	5
military colleges in the us	1,000	34	32	4
virginia	450,000	16	31	2

BrightEdge not only incorporates guided edit suggestions for the web team to target terms such as those above, but also does work in the background through coding implemented in conjunction with the assistant director of digital communication to target specific key points Google values in its ranking.

CASE STUDY: ARMY ROTC

The [Army ROTC unit subsite](#) at VMI is the first SEO-guided rewrite of vmi.edu. In conjunction with faculty and staff, the VMI web team created new content, pages, layouts, and metadata to allow Army ROTC at VMI to more closely compete with other programs, particularly The Citadel and West Point. CPT Pauline Johnson was crucial to the impact and accuracy of these edits and upgrades.

New pages were added for [Ranger Challenge](#), [Commissioning](#), and [Careers and Branches](#). Additionally, the landing page and [program page](#) were both modernized and now have additional content specifically targeting keywords to draw more prospective cadets. All pages received new images, allowing for ALT tagging to hit key SEO terms, and increase the diversity of visual representation of members of Army ROTC, and therefore, VMI.

Success can be seen in the above chart as items marked with an asterisk (*) were Army-related keywords where VMI previously did not rank in the top 100 Google search results.

[Air Force ROTC](#) was just relaunched in Jan. 2024 with similar upgrades, and Naval ROTC is currently in review for the same level of targeted overhaul.

New systems for requesting web edits and larger scale projects will be implemented for AY23-24 to streamline the process, provide clear reporting, and ensure that all affected parties have all the needed information to provide expedient, high-quality service and end products. The digital

communications team looks forward to expanding the pool of content contributors to continue to increase the range of voices and topics represented on the VMI.edu website and support the mission of One Corps, One VMI on the most visible marketing tool of the Institute.

Related C&M Plan Status Updates for Goal 2: Enhance Digital and Web-Based Communications

2.1 INCREASED FUNCTIONALITY

C&M will continue to submit a budget request for a new content management system replacement to address flaws and shortcomings explained in previous reports. The delay in purchase, and therefore implementation, of the new system means that we will continue to see negative impacts with our current system. Most notably, there is often a sizable lag between content updates in the CMS and its reveal on the live website. As a result, there should be the expectation that notices on the web may take up to 30 minutes following completion of work to appear live to the public. This will negatively affect the Institute's ability to communicate in a timely fashion during emergency notification situations or public relations concerns such as those we dealt with in relation to articles from the Washington Post.

The current system's customer support has been largely unhelpful, despite priority status ticket submission. In fall 2023, this included major issues with the need to custom build the required megamenu and renamed and deleted pages still displaying to the public. This caused significant problems with DOI contents and the new ROTC launch.

With the limitations of our current CMS, the team must constantly write new, custom code to implement modern, mobile-friendly design styles. This takes time away from content overhaul and actual page updates. It has also slowed implementation of a more user-friendly menu structure as new code is often incompatible with the structure of our current site in TerminalFour, our current content management system.

Finally, TerminalFour's contract with VCU has expired, meaning they are no longer connected to VASCUPP.

2.2: MODERN & ENGAGING DESIGN & 2.3: REPRESENTATION & VISIBILITY

Summer/fall 2023 saw one of the largest overhauls of the VMI.edu website with the implementation of a megamenu. This robust navigation tool was built in-house by the assistant director of digital communication (C&M) and web administrator (IT). As mentioned earlier, the menu is more in line with modern college site designs, allows for the use of key marketing verbiage, and increases the ease of access from any page on the site to more content.

The Web Team continues to update photos to best represent the current Corps of Cadets and showcase the benefits and uniqueness of a VMI education. These graphics are also a key resource for SEO through alternative text, also an accessibility requirement, offering a place to include more keywords to target our top competitors. An additional feature of the BrightEdge contract was the implementation of Autopilot. This automated service, which can be customized by the web team, optimizes images for a faster load without quality loss, creating a better mobile experience while also allowing more design freedom.

The goal remains to continue to increase the recruitment style of all pages and emphasize the breadth and depth of academic offerings to compete with other state colleges and universities, particularly for those non-commissioning recruits. A new majors and minors page was launched to better match industry norms in searchability and organization, making it clearer what is on offer at the Institute.

A complete overhaul of the Bootstrap system used to create the site layout was completed, but this is a band aid to the larger issue of the outdated system.

2.4 INCREASE ACCESSIBILITY

Increasing the accessibility of content across the vmi.edu domain continues to be a top priority for the Web Team. Content editors within the CMS have also been contacted as to updated standards for design as they continue to add to the site. During 2023, the Web Team maintained an average of 99% accessibility for all HTML code on the site, and weekly reviews continue to ensure this high success goal.

A complete review and overhaul of all downloadable content is required to officially meet 100% accessibility for the site, as anything presented on the website, such as PDFs, must meet the same standards. Phase 1 of this process – cleaning unused PDFs off of the server, is underway. Each document must then be verified for accuracy by the owner and remediated as necessary by the web team.

Research will continue for the possibility of external remediation depending on the number of documents remaining as accessibility remediation is often a full-time role and the current staffing levels do not allow for any member of the team to focus solely on this important user experience and legal requirement project.

A new guide for accessibility in all products created in Microsoft Office has been created and is currently in review.

VII. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

VMI finished the 2023 calendar year with 118 FOIA requests. Between September 1 and December 31, 2023, C&M responded to 32 FOIA requests compared to 39 requests during the same period in 2022. For perspective, VMI responded to 54 FOIA requests during the entire 2021 calendar year and 113 in calendar year 2022. More than half of the FOIA requests during 2023 were filed by four individuals.

VMI's FOIA requests are publicly available at <https://vmi.nextrequest.com>.