

## BOV Open Session President's Report

August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018

The 2018-19 Academic Year has launched successfully. Just over 6,300 first-year students – including 400 new members of the Corps of Cadets - and about 1,000 transfer students join hundreds of new graduate students, faculty and staff comprise our newest Hokies. And our football team remains undefeated!

Our sesquicentennial class – the Class of 2022 – was drawn from a record applicant pool of over 32,000 and is the most diverse and accomplished class in our history; 34% of this class is from underrepresented or underserved, including Pell eligible and first generation students. That is about 5 percentage points ahead of last year.

Of course, it is not who comes in the door, but who finishes that matters. More importantly, it is the degree to which the Virginia Tech experience supports the well-being and success of the graduate that matters. To this end, we recently polled our current students with the help of Gallup to better understand the distinguishing strengths of the Virginia Tech experience as well as the areas where we fall short of our goals. I encourage everyone to read the published report. In summary,

- Virginia Tech students are more likely than national peers to be thriving in each element of well-being.
- Virginia Tech students are significantly more likely to be engaged with school (18 pct pts higher than similar institutions)
- Virginia Tech students are twice as likely to be extremely active in co-curricular activities.

- Virginia Tech students are twice as likely to strongly agree that fellow students look out for one another.
- Virginia Tech students are much more likely to strongly agree that they are receiving a quality education.
- And while a majority of students say that Virginia Tech is a good place for racial and ethnic minority students and LGBT students, there is work yet to be done in assuring that African-American and LGBT students feel that Virginia Tech is home for them.

In the coming weeks, we will use the results of this and other surveys to ensure that we are addressing disparities and building on our distinguishing strengths.

Speaking of people, I am pleased to welcome Dr. Dwayne Pinkney to our leadership team. Dwayne is SVP of Operations and Administration and comes to us from UNC-Chapel Hill. In just a few short weeks, Dwayne is already absorbing the ethos of Virginia Tech and engaging our people all across the institution.

Dwayne's group will soon include our incoming VP for HR, Bryan Garey from UVa. I look forward to introducing Bryan to the BOV in November. I'd also like to thank Dwight Shelton and Lisa Wilkes who served as interim SVPOA and VPHR, respectively. Neither were caretakers in their roles. They both made significant progress in moving their respective organizations forward so that Dwayne and Bryan inherit organizations with momentum.

Although our fall census is not complete, I'm very pleased to announce that about 30 of our new cohort of faculty identify as under-represented minority, up from 15 last year. And while this is but one dimension of diversity, this leap shows to me that our faculty are acting on the urgency of ensuring that Virginia Tech is tapping the largest talent pool faculty, and bringing faculty with life experiences that will

enrich our research, the student experience and our efforts to engage the communities we serve.

As you heard from Vice Rector Valerias, we had another great year for advancement, with alumni giving participation ticking up to 13% (from 9% and on the way to 22% by 2022). In terms of dollars, generous donors made \$153M in new gifts and commitments, our second year above \$150M, and provided \$135M in philanthropic cash, the highest ever. These figures are representative of a friends, alumni and partners who see an opportunity to help Virginia Tech achieve its aspirations for impact.

On the research front, I am excited about our early-career faculty success in winning the prestigious NSF CAREER awards. We had 16 new awardees this past year. Our previous high was seven. We now have 41 active CAREER award winners. By comparison, the next highest in the Commonwealth is 23. This is a great sign for the future of Virginia Tech. We have to focus on making sure that these talented faculty members thrive at Virginia Tech for the rest of their careers.

Earlier this month, Virginia Tech's Mid-Atlantic Aviation Partnership working with Alphabet's Wing and the Center for Innovative Technologies, and under the auspices of the Department of Transportation's UAS Integration Pilot Program, demonstrated the first commercial delivery by drone over a populated area and out of line of sight of the operator. Two-year-old Jack Smith enjoyed his still-frozen popsicle.

Another highlight of the year is the Commonwealth Cyber Initiative, which Virginia Tech was asked to lead. This initiative seeks to place Virginia as the global leader at the nexus of security, data and autonomy. It is a bold move by leadership in Richmond, and we take or

responsibility seriously. Nearly every institution of higher education is represented, along with industry, government and entrepreneurship sectors. We will deliver a Blueprint proposal to the Virginia Research Investment Committee in November, and it is full speed ahead from there.

Sticking with Cyber, this week we announced a partnership between DeepSig and Virginia Tech's Hume Center for National Security, leveraged by \$1.1M from the Virginia Research Investment Fund. DeepSig is one of eight cyber start-ups to emerge from the Hume Center since 2012. Those start-ups have raised \$120M in venture funding so far.

Finally, under the leadership of Dr. Menah Pratt-Clarke, we have a big year planned for strategic planning built on the platform of our generational Beyond Boundaries vision. I invite everyone to take part as your effort allows.

We are poised for a great year. Go Hokies!