

BOARD OF VISITORS INFORMATION SESSION MINUTES
June 10, 2024

An information session (open session) for the Board of Visitors was held on Monday, June 10, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. in the Classroom Building, Room 260, 1455 Perry Street, Virginia Tech Campus, Blacksburg, Virginia. The meeting was livestreamed via YouTube for the public. There was no public comment period.

Board Members Present

Edward H. Baine (Rector)
 David Calhoun (Vice Rector)
 Carrie H. Chenery
 Sandy C. Davis
 Nancy Dye
 Greta J. Harris
 William Holtzman
 Donald Horsley
 L. Chris Petersen
 John Rocovich
 Jeff Veatch

Absent

Brad Hobbs
 Anna L. James
 Letitia A. Long

Constituent Representatives Present:

William Storey, Undergraduate Representative
 Emily Tirrell, Graduate/Professional Representative
 LaTawnya Burleson, Staff Representative
 Janice Austin, Administrative/Professional Faculty Representative
 Joseph Merola, Faculty Representative

Also present at the meeting were: President Timothy Sands, Kim O'Rourke (Secretary to the Board), Simon Allen, Lauren Augustine, Whit Babcock, David Baker, Lynsay Belshe, Leanne Bokinskie, Bob Broyden, Eric Brooks, Brock Burroughs, Kirk Cameron, Cyril Clarke, Lance Collins, Al Cooper, Debbie Day, Elizabeth Davis, Corey Earles, Jeff Earley, Juan Espinoza, Ron Fricker, Michael Friedlander, Suzanne Griffin, Rebekah Gunn, Chelsea Haines, Kay Heidbreder, Tim Hodge, Elizabeth Hooper, Frances Keene, Sharon Kurek, Christophe Larroque, Evan Lavender-Smith, Justin Lemkul, Elizabeth McClanahan, Bryanna Meredith, Rachel Miles, Justin Noble, Mark Owczarski, Charlie Phlegar, Sharon Pitt, Ellen Plummer, Jon Porter, Menah Pratt, Paul Richter, Julia Ross, Lisa Royal, Ryan Saunders, Amy Sebring, Brennan Shepard, Daniel Sui, Aimee Surprenant, John Tarter, Don Taylor, Rob Viers, Tracy Vosburgh, Lisa Wilkes, and Chris Yianilos.

The meeting was livestreamed for the public via YouTube; there were 66 concurrent viewers on YouTube and a total of 65 views.

Rector Baine convened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the Information Session.

Motion to Begin Closed Session

Ms. Harris moved that the Board of Visitors of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University convene in a closed meeting, pursuant to § 2.2-3711, Code of Virginia, as amended, for the purpose of consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body, pursuant to subpart .7 of 2.2-3711 (A), Code of Virginia, as amended.

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The livestream was then suspended.

Motion to Return to Open Session

Following the Closed Session, at 2:04 p.m., the doors were opened, the livestream resumed, and Rector Baine called on Ms. Harris to make the motion to return to Open Session. Ms. Harris made the following motion to return to open session:

WHEREAS, the Board of Visitors of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provision of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the Board of Visitors that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Visitors of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Board of Visitors.

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Briefing on Northern Virginia Plan – Dr. Julie Ross, Dean, College of Engineering and Special Advisor to the President, briefed the Board of Visitors on the work she is leading to develop

a cohesive vision and organizational plan for Virginia Tech in the greater Washington, D.C., metro area. Efforts are focused on university-level strategy and sites, including the Virginia Tech Research Center — Arlington, Innovation Campus in Alexandria, and the redevelopment of Falls Church.

The committee's progress to date is organized into three phases with recommendations focused on strategic positioning, organizational structure, and operational support for the D.C. area. The committee was charged to review and assess the instructional, research, and outreach activities in the area with a special emphasis on those activities that leverage opportunities afforded by operating in the nation's capital.

Nearing completion of phase two work, Ross reported that the committee is looking at the operational needs of the region, budget models, facilities and operating costs, tuition models, transportation, and housing. This includes a preview of the proposed future operational and administrative structure: the formation of a cross-cutting academic unit to serve as the core academic structure for the region; the hiring of a vice president for the greater D.C. area; and a shared academic, business, and student support services operation at the regional level.

The committee is on track to submit final recommendations this summer, and implementation will begin in fall 2024.

Innovation Campus - Dr. Lance Collins, Vice President and Executive Director for the Innovation Campus, updated the board on the Innovation Campus's growth in faculty, focus on specialized areas of research, and advances in project-based learning. The Campus now has 17 computer science and computer engineering faculty, who, as a group, are outward focused, highly cited, and are contributing greatly to the research mission of the university. The Innovation Campus has four research areas of focus - Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning, Quantum Architecture and Software Development, Intelligent Interfaces, and Next Gen Wireless – and several marquee faculty searches to expand capabilities in these areas are in their final stages.

In addition, the first cohort of students participating in the Innovation Campus's new integrated project-based curriculum will begin this fall, connecting faculty and students with industry partners.

Research Global Overview – Dr. Daniel Sui, Senior Vice President and Chief Research and Innovation Officer.

Virginia Tech reported a record \$419 million in extramural research expenditures for fiscal year 2023, surpassing the university's strategic plan goal of \$410 million two years earlier than planned. For a second straight year, Virginia Tech's research awards and expenditures grew more than 10 percent, with federal, state, local, and private research awards growing a combined 17 percent. The Department of Defense and Department of Health and Human Services, the latter of which includes the National Institutes of Health, both grew significantly, each by 27 percent from the last year. The College of Engineering increased by \$28 million, the College of Science increased by \$14 million, the College of Agriculture

and Life Science increased by \$11 million, and the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine increased by \$9 million over the past five years. Three of the seven research institutes also reported significant growth since 2020: the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at VTC increased by \$16 million, the Virginia Tech National Security Institute increased by \$15 million, and the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute increased by \$8 million. Strategic areas of growth such as the Research Frontiers and competitively-awarded investment mechanism such as [Destination Area 2.0 projects](#) are frameworks that enable transformative growth.

Constituent Reports – The two student representatives to the board – William Storey (undergraduate student representative) and Emily Tirrell (graduate/professional student representative)--gave their constituent reports. Due to time constraints, the reports of the faculty representative, administrative and professional faculty representative, and staff representative were postponed to the full board meeting on June 11, 2024. (Copies filed with the permanent minutes of the full board meeting held June 11, 2024.)

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The meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

(Copies of the presentations are filed with the permanent minutes and attached.)

Virginia Tech Board of Visitors Meeting

Information Session

**Monday, June 10, 2024
1:00 p.m.**

**Room 260, New Classroom Building
Virginia Tech Campus**

Closed Session

Litigation Briefing

- Kay Heidbreder: University Legal Counsel

Open Session

Briefing on Northern Virginia Plan

- Dr. Julie Ross, Dean, College of Engineering and Special Advisor to the President

Innovation Campus Update (Faculty, Research, and Programs)

- Dr. Lance Collins, Vice President and Executive Director for the Innovation Campus

Research Global Overview

- Dr. Daniel Sui, Senior Vice President and Chief Research and Innovation Officer

Constituent Reports

- Mr. William Storey, Undergraduate Student Representative to the Board
- Ms. Emily Tirrell, Graduate Student Representative to the Board
- Ms. LaTawnya Burleson, Staff Representative to the Board
- Dr. Janice Austin, Administrative and Professional Faculty Representative to the Board
- Dr. Joseph Merola, Faculty Representative to the Board



Northern Virginia Steering Committee

BOARD OF VISITORS MEETING

June 2024

Committee Members

Chair: Julie Ross, Dean of Engineering

- Amy Sebring, Executive VP and Chief Operating Officer
 - Don Taylor, Executive Vice Provost
 - Lance Collins, VP and Executive Director, Innovation Campus
 - Aimee Surprenant, Dean of the Graduate School
 - Saonee Sarker, Dean of the Pamplin College of Business
 - Laura Belmonte, Dean of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences
 - Kevin Pitts, Dean of Science
- Dan Sui, Senior VP, Research and Innovations
 - Steve McKnight, VP, Strategic Alliances
 - Eric Paterson, Executive Director, National Security Institute
 - Mike Friedlander, VP, Health Sciences and Technology and Founding Executive Director, Fralin Biomedical Research Institute
 - Chris Yianilos, VP, Government and Community Relations
 - Shannon Andrea, Director, Media Relations and D.C. Area Communications



PURPOSE

Growth in the greater D.C. metro area is critical for Virginia Tech becoming a top global research university.

The steering committee will work to define the university's role and presence in the region for the years ahead.



GOAL

Significant work has already been accomplished surrounding Virginia Tech's physical footprint in the D.C. area.

*The **goal of the steering committee** is to review and assess these efforts, recommend adjustments as necessary, and chart a more detailed course for further development in the region.*

SCOPE OF INTEREST

Instructional, research, and outreach missions, with an emphasis on those that will distinctively position Virginia Tech among land-grant universities and leverage the opportunities afforded by operating in the nation's capital.



**Virginia Tech
Innovation Campus**

Alexandria



**Redevelopment of
Falls Church**

Falls Church



**Virginia Tech
Research Center**

Arlington

Phases & Timelines

Committee work is organized into three phases with recommendations that will focus on strategic positioning, organizational structure, and operational support for the D.C area.

PHASE 1: VISION, MISSION, POSITIONING

- March – June 2023

PHASE 2: ORGANIZATION AND OPERATIONAL PLANNING

- July 2023 – June 2024

PHASE 3: IMPLEMENTATION

- Beginning Fall 2024



PHASE 1: March – June 2023



Attributes of Programs & Activities

Need: clear articulation of the purpose for our regional enterprise



Foundational Principles for Operation

Need: Summary of operational expectations for the regional enterprise



Mission & Vision Statement

Need: Consistent messaging across all locations in the region for communications and marketing



Revision to Thematic Emphases

Need: Updated description of site alignment and organization for regional activity

Attributes of Programs & Activities

Provide Access to Partners - types of partnerships or depth of partnerships that are available/possible because of the university's location in the greater D.C. area.

Leverage Region-Specific Opportunities – access to diverse expertise and talent, unique research and educational programs, urban environment, and specialized laboratories to address regional, national, and global needs.

Advance Graduate/Postdoctoral Education for the Future - to provide students and trainees a world-class experience uniquely connected with the many government, industry, and urban community organizations in the area.

Phase 2 Focus Areas

- Organizational and administrative structure
- Facilities operating costs and space allocation
- Tuition models for in-person, hybrid, and fully online
- Transportation between Blacksburg, Roanoke and the D.C. area
- Budget models for the future
- Housing options for undergraduate and/or graduate students

Preview: Future Operational & Administrative Structure

Key Recommendations:

- Formation of a cross-cutting academic unit to serve as the core academic structure for the region. Structure, scope, and name to be determined. Transdisciplinary in nature, anchored in computing, and incorporating closely-related applications.
- Vice President of the Greater D.C. Area, reporting to the Provost in alignment with all academic enterprises at Virginia Tech.
- Matrixed organizational structure that maintains close connection with colleges, academic departments and central administrative offices.
- Shared academic, business and student support services operating at the regional level.

Summary

PURPOSE: Growth in the greater D.C. metro area is critical for Virginia Tech becoming a top global research university. The steering committee is working to define the university's role and presence in the D.C. metro area for the years ahead.

FOCUS AREAS: Virginia Tech Research Center in Arlington; Virginia Tech Innovation Campus in Alexandria; and the redevelopment of Falls Church.

PHASE 1: VISION, MISSION, POSITIONING
(March – June 2023)

- Attributes of Programs & Activities
- Mission & Vision Statement
- Foundational Principles for Operation
- Revision to Thematic Emphases

PHASE 2: ORGANIZATION AND OPERATIONAL PLANNING (July 2023 – June 2024)

- Organizational and administrative structure
- Facilities operating costs and space allocation
- Tuition models for in-person, hybrid, and fully online
- Transportation between Blacksburg, Roanoke, and the D.C. area

PHASE 3: IMPLEMENTATION (Beginning Fall 2024)

- We expect to deliver final recommendations this summer and begin implementation in the Fall 2024



*VIRGINIA TECH
INNOVATION CAMPUS*

*LANCE COLLINS
VP AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR*

*BOARD OF VISITORS MEETING
JUNE 2024*





FACULTY AND RESEARCH



RESEARCH FOCUS AREAS

- Artificial Intelligence (Sanghani Center for AI and Data Analytics)
- Quantum Architecture and Software Development
- Intelligent Interfaces (e.g., Virtual Reality)
- Next Gen Wireless





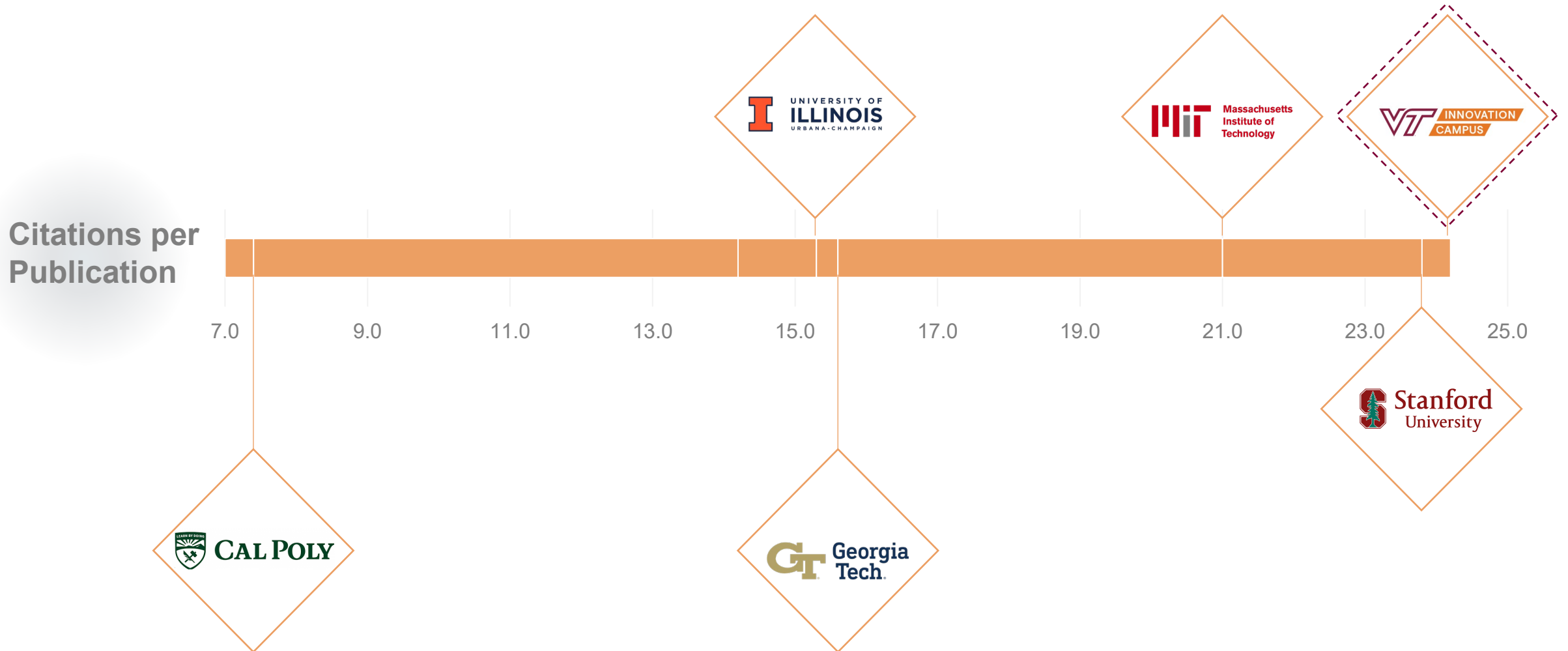
TOP FACULTY

- Expanding Virginia Tech’s faculty leadership in Northern Virginia
- 17 faculty members as of spring 2024
- Innovation Campus faculty are purpose-driven, industry connected, and make up a distinct, action-oriented culture
- 12 tenured faculty brought in \$15.2 million in 2023



UNMATCHED IMPACT

Our faculty members' publication impact is commensurate or better than that of top institutions



Computer science only. Metrics from Elsevier SciVal period 2018 - 2022



YANG “CINDY” YI

- Semiconductor grant from National Science Foundation (NSF): \$500,000
 - Grant awarded to enable semiconductor research and create artificial intelligence-enabled wireless circuits and systems
- UPWARDS: an international partnership between 11 Japanese and United States universities, funded by a \$30 million investment from Micron Technology, Tokyo Electronics, and the NSF, with a Virginia Tech share of \$3.47 million
 - Virginia Tech leads the Women in Semiconductors focus area



LINGJIA LIU

- FutureG grant from the Department of Defense: \$9 million
 - Liu will lead a team researching Mobile Distributed Multiple-Input, Multiple-Output (Mobile dMIMO)-facilitated complex and large-scale wireless networks to help define and set the standards for FutureG technology
- Open Radio Access Networks (O-RAN) grant from the Public Wireless Supply Chain Innovation Fund: \$2 million
 - Grant awarded to develop O-RAN technology and drive a more competitive wireless network market that lowers costs and creates jobs
- NextG wireless grant from the NSF: \$800,000
 - Grant awarded to create next generation (NextG) mobile broadband networks that increase the availability of access to users by providing seamless wireless coverage and supporting varying service requirements

STEVE FLAMMIA



- Founding director of Center for Quantum Architecture and Software Development
 - The Quantum Center was announced in 2021 as a part of a \$12.5 million gift from Northrop Grumman
 - Building on strengths of VTQ and research in NSI, Virginia Tech is positioned to be a national leader
- Former principal research scientist for the Amazon Web Services (AWS) Center for Quantum Computing
- Taught at University of Sydney and University of Washington
- Provides an opportunity for Virginia Tech to spearhead a regional powerhouse in quantum

NAREN RAMAKRISHNAN

- Director of Sanghani Center for Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics
- Oversees Amazon-Virginia Tech Initiative for Efficient and Robust Machine Learning
- Working with Washington Nationals on an AI/ML research project that is updating models to account for new game structure
- Partnering with *The Washington Post* to develop AI-powered tools to improve reader experience
- Recently elected Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Fellow and American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Fellow



ENGINEERING FACULTY AWARDS

- 2024 VT College of Engineering Dean's Awards for Excellence
 - Kirk Cameron
Excellence in Service
 - Kurt Luther
Excellence in Outreach
 - Cindy Yi
Excellence in Research





FACULTY SEARCH UPDATE

- Senior faculty search for the Sanghani Center is concluding (offer accepted)
- Senior faculty search in Intelligent Interfaces, in partnership with Boeing (in final stage)
- One collegiate faculty hire completed for fall semester; search underway for two additional faculty



CURRICULUM



“ For students to have the experience – to have done something real with machine learning and algorithms – is a distinguishing factor when I look at a resume for potential candidates to hire. ”

DEREK PROSPERIE
Principal Systems Engineer
MITRE Corporation



M. ENG INTEGRATED PROJECT CURRICULUM

NEAR-TERM GOAL:

Integrate multi-semester team projects throughout the curriculum

- 15 of 30 graduate credits will be project-based
- Team projects sourced from industry, non-profits, government agencies, and faculty research
- Students have the option to propose their own entrepreneurial team projects
- First cohort begins fall 2024
- Starting with computer science in 2024-25 then integrate with CPE in 2025-26



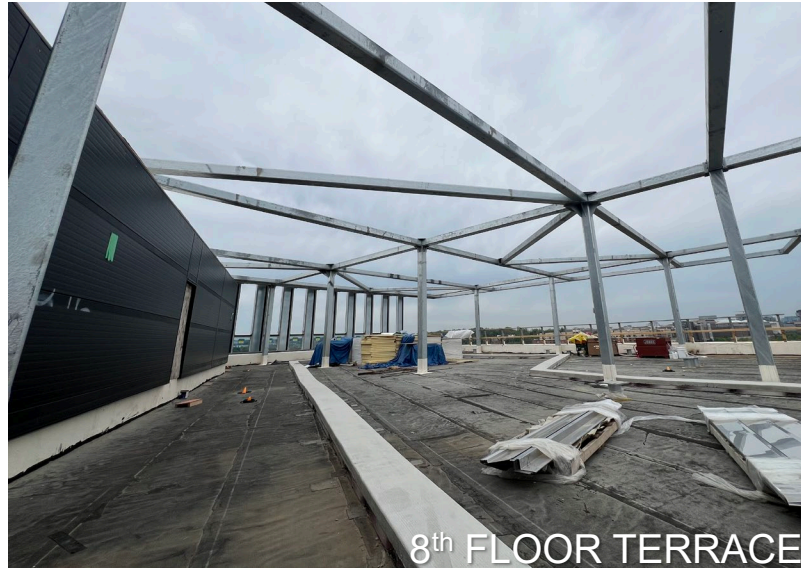


INTEGRATED PARTNERSHIPS

- Corporations and agencies sponsor projects
- Sponsors, in collaboration with faculty, specify the technical need or challenge
- Sponsors are required to provide in-kind support of project team
- Opportunities to sponsor hack-a-thons, bootcamps, etc.



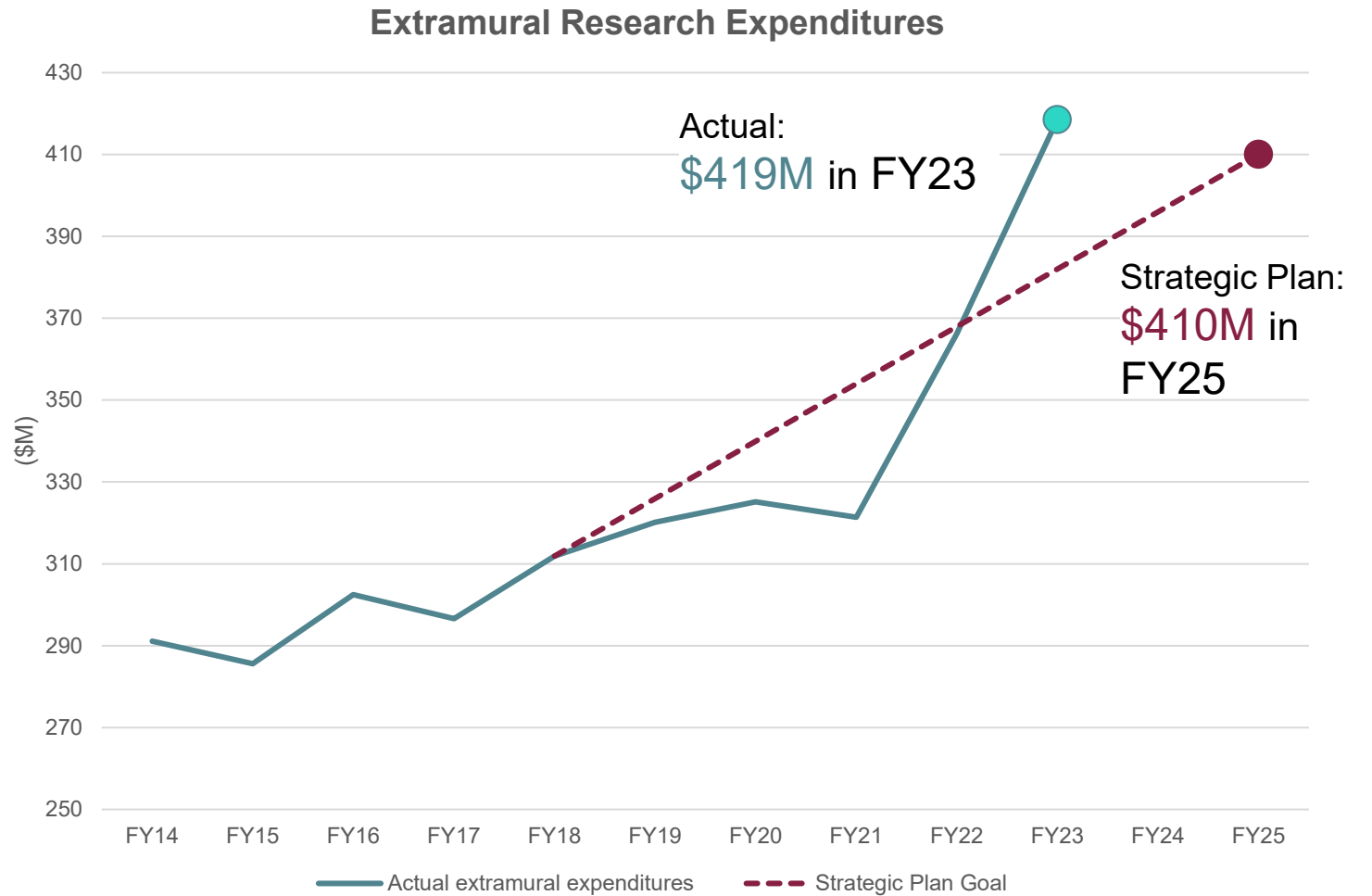
QUESTIONS?



RESEARCH AND INNOVATION UPDATES

June 10, 2024

**BEAT OUR
 STRATEGIC PLAN
 GOAL FOR
 SPONSORED
 EXPENDITURES
 TWO YEARS
 EARLY**

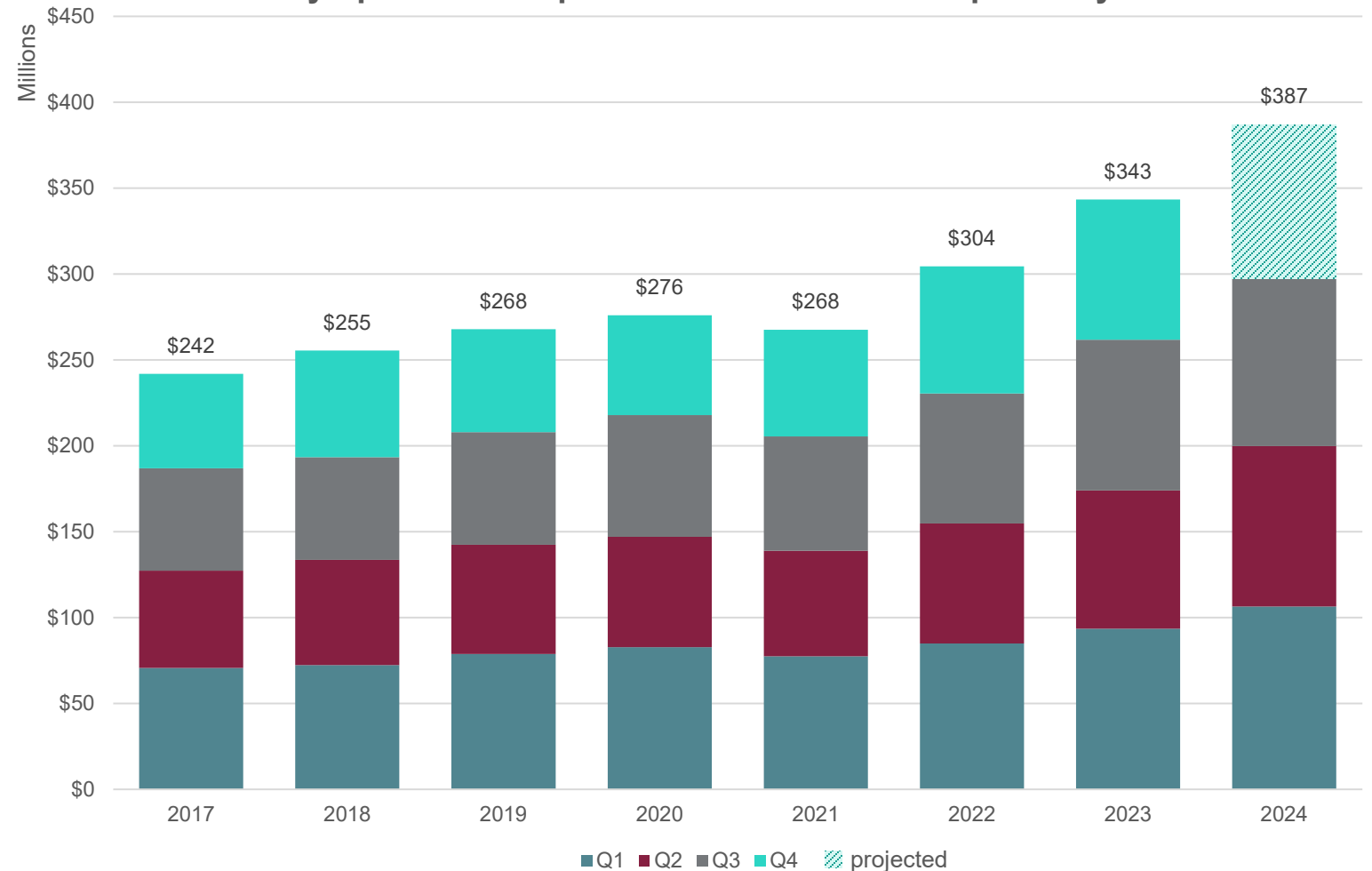


RESEARCH EXPENDITURES UP ACROSS THE BOARD

Trajectory continues on strong upward path in FY24.

Note: this only captures funds flowing through the Office of Sponsored Programs; excludes affiliated corporations, Agency 229, foundation funds.

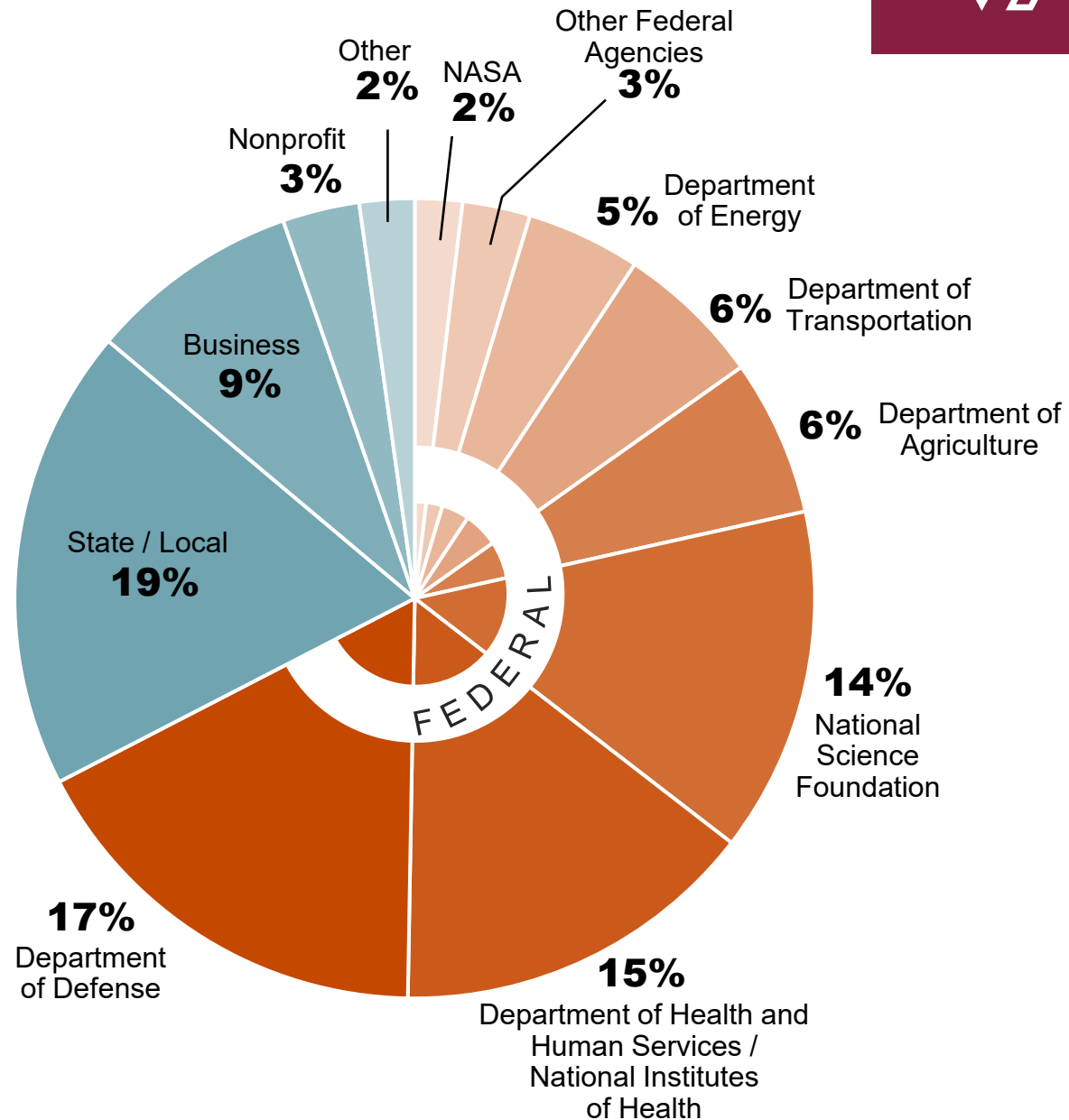
Externally Sponsored Expenditures - Research Purposes by Quarter



BALANCED PORTFOLIO

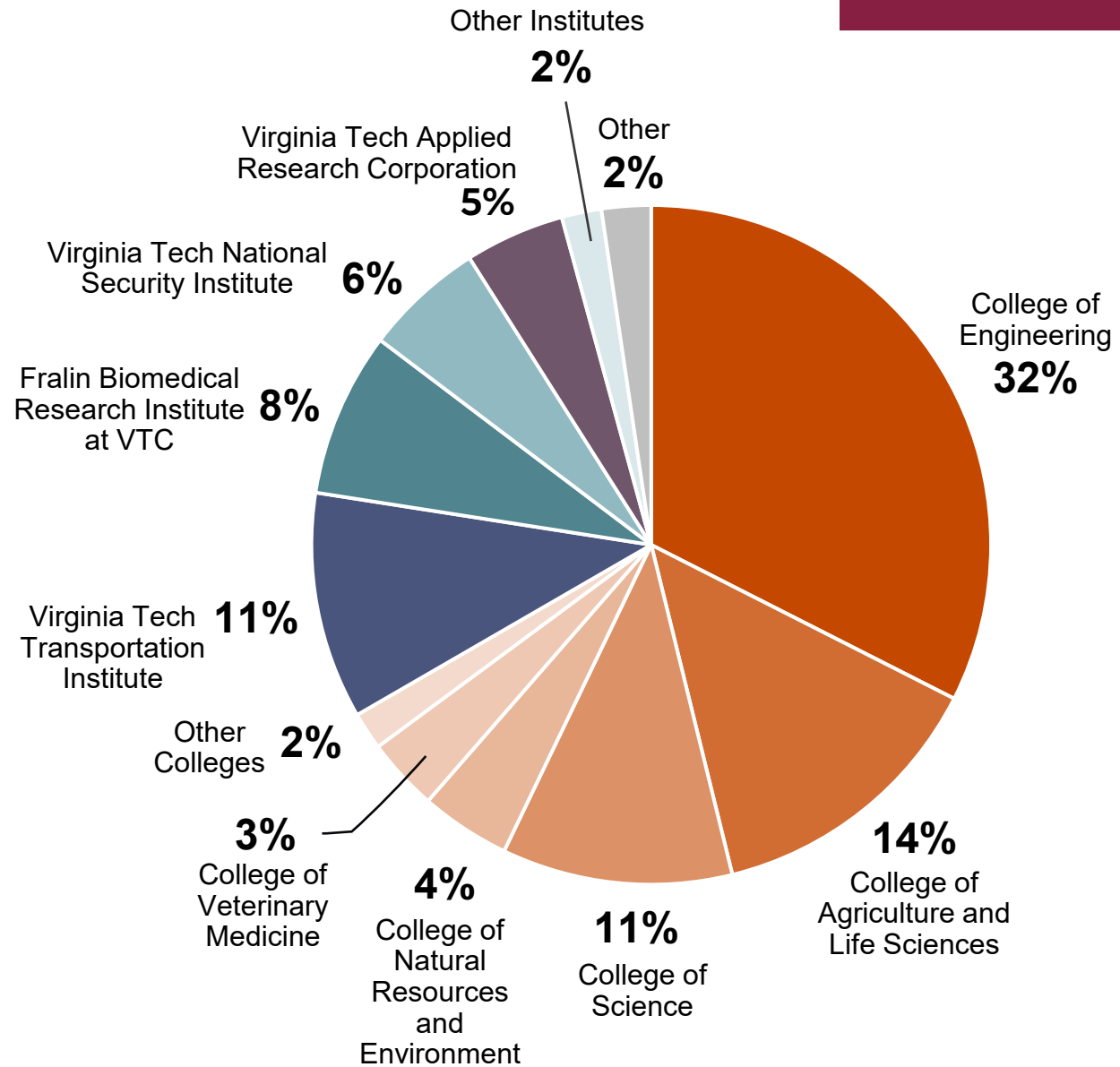
Virginia Tech's sponsored research portfolio has support from a broad number of agencies.

Growth was led by Department of Defense (+27%) and Department of Health and Human Services (+27%)

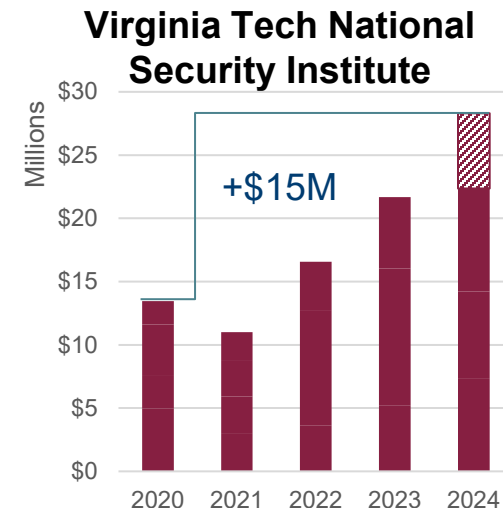
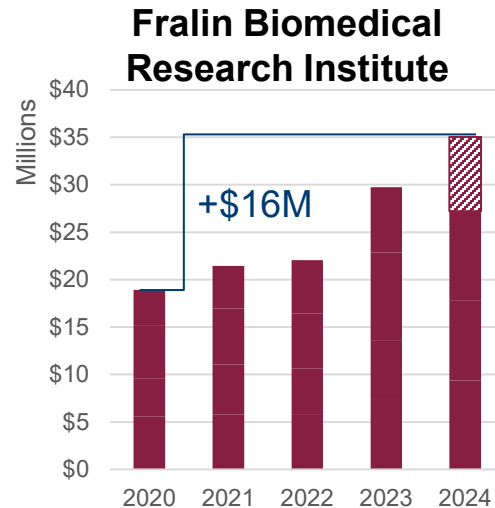
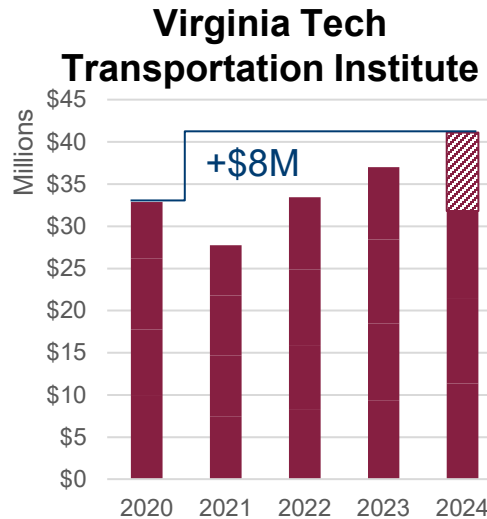
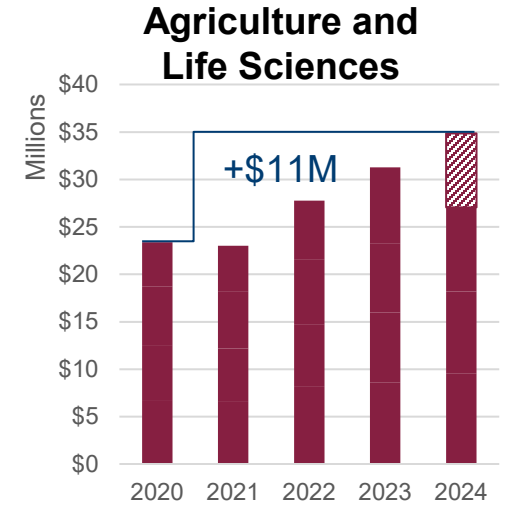
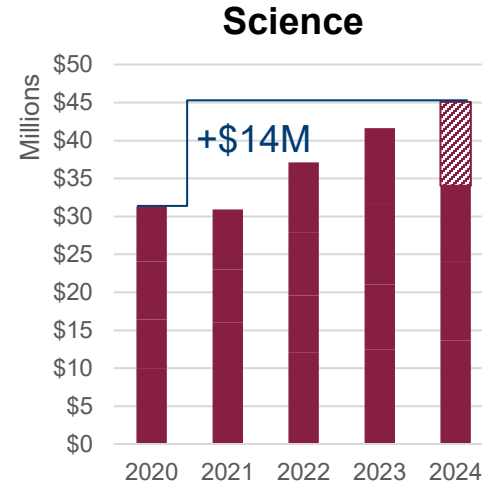
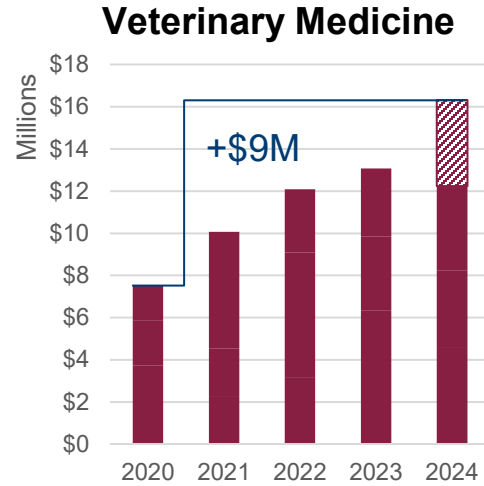
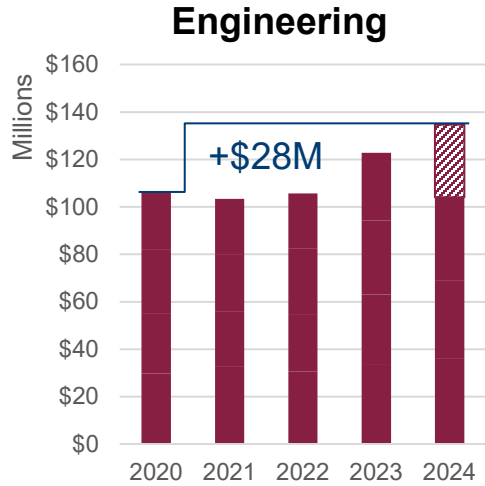


EXTRAMURAL FUNDING ACROSS VIRGINIA TECH

Faculty and researchers across all colleges and institutes are actively engaged in sponsored research programs.



GROWTH ACROSS ALL UNITS



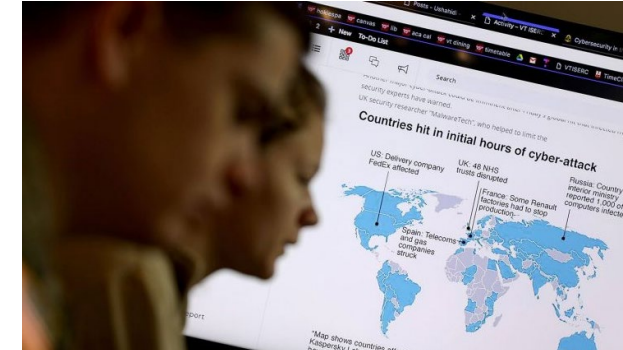
Actuals
 Projected

RESEARCH FRONTIERS

Grow and diversify the research portfolio by prioritizing strengths and focusing on emerging areas for competitive growth.



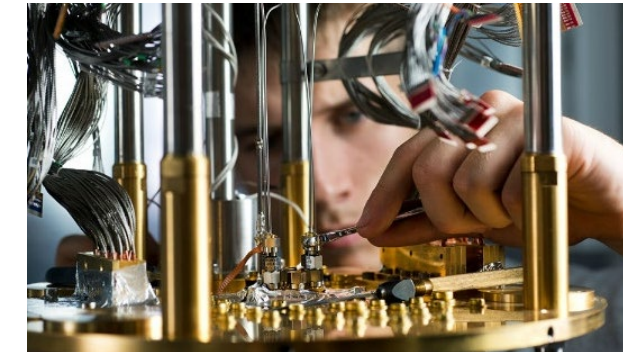
THE HEALTH FRONTIER



THE SECURITY FRONTIER



THE A.I. FRONTIER



THE QUANTUM FRONTIER

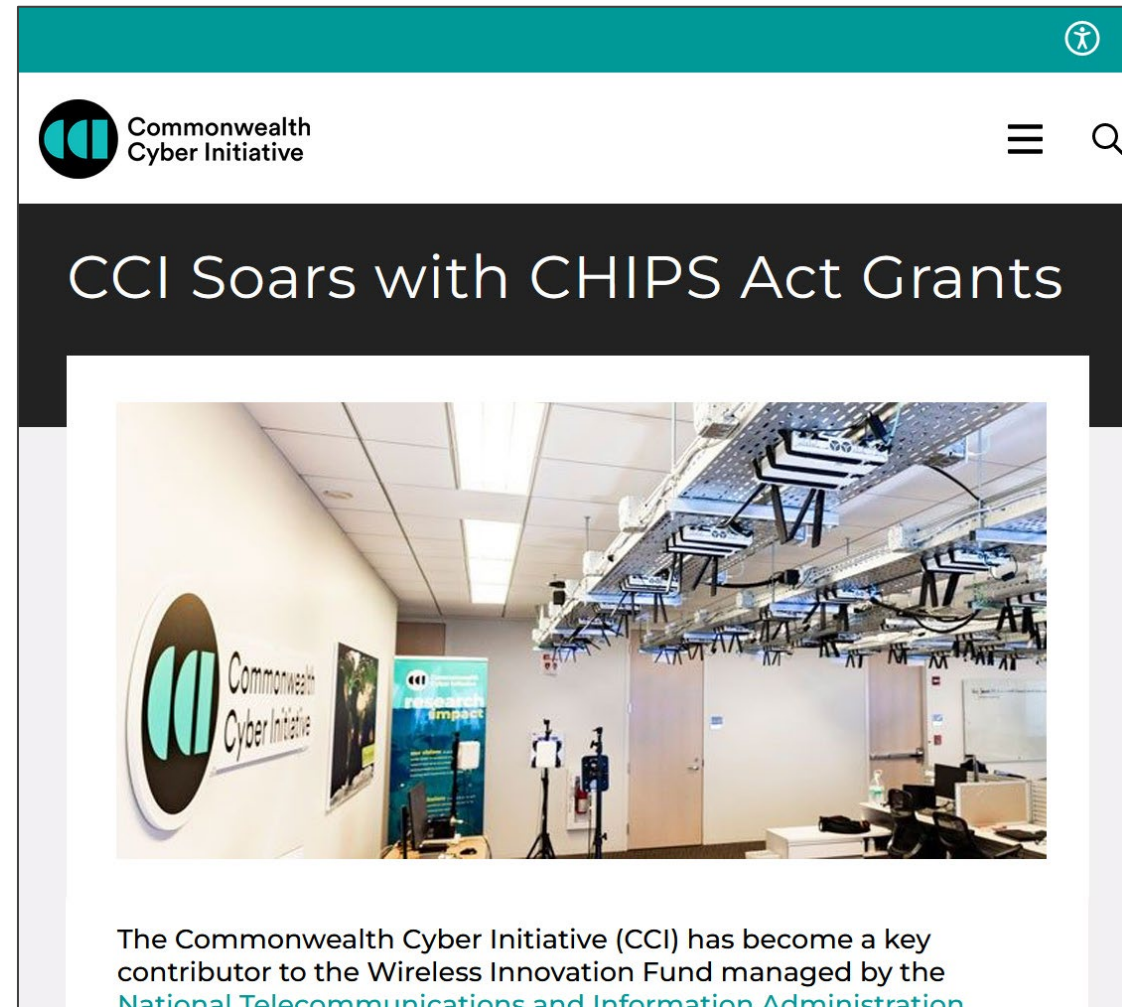
UNDERSEA AUTONOMY AND ROBOTICS

- Testing and demonstration in collaboration with the Navy, industry
- FY23-25 funding: \$17M
- At-sea demonstration 2026-27



COMMONWEALTH CYBER INITIATIVE

The Commonwealth Cyber Initiative has become a key contributor to the Wireless Innovation Fund managed by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration





VIRGINIA TECH.®

Board of Visitors Constituency Report
William Storey, Undergraduate Representative
June 10th-11th, 2024

Good afternoon Rector Baine, members of the board, President Sands, administration, guests, and friends. It is an honor and privilege to once again be seated with you all here today. The end of the spring semester was rich in student activities and I am delighted to update you all on these matters.

The unfortunate inevitability of food insecurity in a high cost of living town such as Blacksburg is an element of life that can not be understated. As mentioned in previous reports, food insecurity is a growing credence within our community in the town and in student life, and one that will require significant time and resources to sequester. With this in mind, the food drive that was initiated shortly before the start of the April board meeting aimed to tackle some of these attributes. I am incredibly pleased and proud to report that the food drive was a tremendous success through the month-long campaign. All in all, we collected 300+ lbs of non perishable food items that will go towards feeding dozens of Hokies over the course of this Summer and coming fall semesters. It is with my most sincere gratitude that I would like to thank everyone who donated towards the effort, with a special shout out to the President's suite, as their bin was almost overflowing. However, even with the food drives accomplishments, I can not downplay the reality that this donation was just one piece of a much larger puzzle of combating food insecurity for both on and off campus students and that tangible university action is still necessary to bring down this barrier for students.

Similar concerns for the sustainability and feasibility of campus dining has been a continual topic among undergraduate students over the course of this year as well. The long wait times due to grubhub orders, lack of workers, and more limited options from legacy supply chain issues has been plaguing on campus dining since the start of the pandemic. Finding ways to get students back into the dining halls and eating in the dining halls, prioritizing in person orders rather than grub hub orders, and curating a culture where students feel proud to work for dining will be critical to bringing Virginia Tech back to the number one spot in university dining.

At the end of the semester, we continued to see passionate and thorough demonstrations by students concerning the conflicts going on in the middle east. Many state that they feel that their voices have not been heard or fully understood, or that they are concerned for their safety and overall well being both on and off campus. The necessity for Tech to curate an environment of safety, mutual understanding, and constructive dialogue is vital if we are to be a university where everyone can feel welcomed.

The Hokie-Highlight for this board report will be a little different from the rest. The person we will be discussing today is Leslie Orellana whom most of you know will be the next Undergraduate Representative to the Board starting July 1st. Leslie is word for word, pound for pound, one of the most honest and sincere people I have ever had the privilege of getting to know and work with. When you look up the term "leader" in the dictionary, there is a picture of Leslie right next to the definition, because she embodies everything a leader is and stands for. The President of Hokie Ambassadors, a former President of the Real Estate club, and a proud first generation student, you will rarely find a harder working, more down to earth and humble student. I am thrilled that I will be passing the torch to her here soon, and I know you all will love getting to know her, just as I have in the past few months.

The 2023-2024 fiscal year has truly been one for the history books and for fireside conversation for decades to come. We have championed tough topics and engaged in rigorous but necessary discussions around all things student life. From housing prices off campus, to the affordability of the university for all students, to looking at campus through the lens of a wheelchair bound student, to bridging the gap of food insecurity, and campus safety to combat sexual violence. All the while still finding time to jump to enter sandman at a football game and throw snowballs on the Drillfield. We have come a long way and we should be proud of what we have achieved this year, however, the job is not yet finished and there is much more work to be done. I look forward to the continued effort of this board towards these aforementioned topics and believe it to be axiomatic that Virginia Tech never ceases in its mission to exemplify everything that Ut Prosim is and stands for, no matter the circumstances.

Furthermore, I would like to thank the Board for blessing me with the distinct honor and privilege to be the Undergraduate Representative to the Board of Visitors. The opportunity to be sitting with you all is not one that I take lightly, and I will forever be grateful for being able to grow, learn, and laugh right alongside you all. I am a better person, student, and leader today because of this board. Finally, I would like to thank you all for your steadfast devotion to undergraduate students here at Virginia Tech, it is because of this board that students from all walks of life can call Virginia Tech Home.

Graduate and Professional Student Constituency Report

Virginia Tech Board of Visitors

June 10 - 11, 2024

Presented by Emily Tirrell, Graduate and Professional Student Representative

Rector Baine, members of the Board of Visitors, President Sands, Provost Clarke, administrators, guests, and friends. Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you all about the graduate and professional students today. It is bittersweet as I give my final constituency report, as it feels like just yesterday when I was attending my very first board meeting - what a wonderful year it has been! In this report I want to highlight what an incredible opportunity this position has been for me, what an honor it has been to serve Virginia Tech, and share what we have been able to accomplish this year.

Firstly, I would like to thank all of the faculty and leadership at the university who welcomed me into this role, and collaborated with me and other graduate and professional students this year. **Dean Surprenant, Dean Givens, Dean Learman, Dean Hoopes, Lauren Surface, Ellen Plummer, Dr. Francis Keene, Dr. James Bridgeforth**, and everyone else I am failing to mention, thank you for all of your support and guidance this year. To the board, it has been an absolute pleasure getting to know each of you, and see the incredible amount of time, dedication, and passion that you bring to each of these meetings. Not only do you make Virginia Tech a global destination for innovation and education, but a strong community and a home. Thank you for everything you do here, and the difficult decisions I know you make.

As a reminder, I focused on two main topics that impact graduate and professional student attraction and retention: student financial wellness and overall student engagement and wellbeing.

Much has happened this year in relation to student financial wellbeing, specifically surrounding the university's commitment to increasing graduate student stipends. According to data collected by the Graduate School earlier in my term, **19.8% of graduate students received a 5% stipend increase, 38.4% received between 5.1% - 10% increase, and 35.6% of graduate students received more than a 10% increase in stipend amount this year.** Similarly, work has been done on the "Graduate Candidacy Status Tuition Reduction," with great collaboration between the Graduate School and the Finance Office to reduce tuition costs for those who have met Candidacy status. The financial wellness of graduate

students has been an ongoing challenge, and I appreciate the care and dedication that has gone toward supporting our graduate students financially.

Student engagement with campus resources is another contributing factor for student attraction and retention that I focused on this year. As a reminder, graduate school data showed that approximately 41% of graduate and professional students want to connect with campus resources surrounding mental health initiatives. I have collaborated with multiple campus resources, and have seen much work go into supporting our students. In our last board meeting, I mentioned the great success of the Graduate and Professional Student Resource Fair. With 21 campus partners in attendance, we had over 100 students attend and learn more about the resources that Virginia Tech has to offer - It was a huge success!! Rumor even has it that Graduate School will continue to host this event in the future, and I don't think that it's a bad legacy to have from my term.

Finally, thank you for this incredible opportunity to serve our institution. I cannot put into words how impactful this experience has been for me, or what an honor and a privilege it has been to work alongside you all. This fall marks my seventh year here at Virginia Tech, and taking a peek behind the curtain of what makes this institution tick has been incredibly rewarding and inspiring. As my term comes to an end, I am excited to know that the Graduate and Professional Student Representative position will be taken over by a driven and compassionate young man. A second year masters student in Electrical Engineering, William Poland is incredibly talented and accomplished in the academic field, studying the scattering of electromagnetic waves over rough surfaces. A Blacksburg native, William has a deep connection to and a rich history with Virginia Tech. He is passionate about graduate and professional student experiences, collaborative with administrators and student leaders across campus, and will be an excellent addition to the Board of Visitors family. Both William and Leslie will do incredible work next year serving this institution, and will represent their respective constituents well.

On behalf of the graduate and professional students, thank you for listening today. I appreciate your attention and I thank you again for this opportunity to share. It has been an honor to share my ongoing progress in this role and collaborating with you all in serving Virginia Tech! For a final time - Go Hokies!

Staff Senate Constituency Report

Virginia Tech Board of Visitors

June 10-11, 2024 Presented by LaTawnya Burleson, Staff Senate President

Rector Baine, members of the Board of Visitors, President Sands, administrators, and guests. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about staff and non-student wage at Virginia Tech.

Since my last report Staff Senate welcomed Provost Clarke and Reece Ramos, University Ombuds at our monthly meetings. Both offered engaging sessions and we thank them for their time with us. Next week we welcome President Sands to chat with staff as a close-out to the academic year.

I wanted to provide a wrap up to this year and progress on goals and issues that have been provided in previous reports. I could not go any further discussing our work without giving my most sincere thanks to the Staff Senate Executive Team, each member works tirelessly and shows great compassion in the efforts of advocacy for staff. Without them the accomplishments of this past year and this report would not be possible.

My reports this year have stressed the importance of looking at the supplement program that eligible staff can receive yearly. Currently salaried staff who make 35,500 per year or less are eligible for a taxable 500 dollar stipend each January. Staff Senate has voiced concerns over the need to reevaluate the threshold and/or amount received to help offset inflation and cost of living. I am happy to share that Amy Sebring and Bryan Garey hosted a meeting with the Staff Senate Executive Team to discuss future options and while these discussions are in the early stages it is encouraging to have this level of engagement with Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer and the Vice President of Human Resources and for that I would like to thank Amy Sebring and Bryan Garey for letting us be heard in efforts to improve the well-being of staff. We look forward to working closely together this summer to select the best path forward.

Through our road shows and other listening sessions with staff, we identified several problems that staff members struggle with when it comes to continuous advocacy through governance.

1. Lack of awareness: Some employees reported that they were previously unaware that staff could be represented through governance at VT. Non-student wage employees in particular were unaware that they could have a voice through Staff Senate.
2. Complexity: Staff from across the university have communicated that they've found it challenging to navigate the ins and outs of advocacy through governance. They expressed uncertainty as to the rules and how they could employ the governance channels that currently exist for the benefit of staff. There's a learning curve to understanding how governance functions, both at the level of Staff Senate and more broadly throughout the university.
3. Efficacy: Even when staff and non-student wage members participate in governance, they don't always see how it can be helpful for chronic communication and fairness issues that they report experiencing and observing at work. They want to be able to see the impact governance can make on these issues.

Staff have reported fairness and communication issues to our Exec Team in multiple venues, but there was a concentration of these types of concerns expressed as a result of our “Making It Work for Everyone” speaker series held by our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Committee over the past academic year. As a result, the DEIB Committee, chaired by Tasia Persson spearheaded the planning of the Staff Senate Governance School to better equip staff for advocacy. The idea is to go beyond advocating for staff as an Exec Team in favor of training and empowering individual staff members to step up, lead, influence, and advocate for themselves and their fellow staff members.

We just held the kick-off meeting for our test cohort, which is composed of members of our DEIB Committee and Staff Senate Exec Team. The program will continue throughout the summer and include training modules that involve other offices on campus, including the Office of the Vice President for Policy and Governance. Some of these training modules include: Governance 101 tutorials discussion group, Mock resolution-building, Higher Ed 101, How elections & nominations work, a Panel presentation on how governance works for other senates on campus, and a Panel presentation with representatives of Staff Associations from across the university.

The next stage of the program will be to hold a full academic year Governance School for our first official cohort of staff members in the program. We will put out a call this summer for these participants. In order to accommodate a full academic year of training, the programming will be expanded to include efficacy strategies and paths for staff advocacy, along with how to share opportunities for participating in governance with fellow staff members. We are proud that this initiative has been visioned through staff senate and see it’s possibilities a learning opportunities for the broader Virginia Tech community.

As I close today, I wanted to thank the board members for their hard work and dedication to this university. After attending many board committee meetings, it is readily apparent that you are engaged and driven to ensure the long-standing success of Virginia Tech. I look forward to working with you again in the upcoming year.

Go Hokies!

LaTawnya Burleson

Administrative and Professional Faculty Constituent Report

June 10-11, 2024

Presented by Janice Austin, A/P Faculty Senate President

Good afternoon, Rector Baine, board members, President Sands, Provost Clarke, Executive Vice President Sebring, administrators, and guests. It is a pleasure to be with you all for the June board meeting.

Our 2024-25 officer elections were held in April and I'm pleased to share the officers will be Dr. Marlena McGlothlin Lester, Vice President; Enrique Noyola, Secretary/Treasurer; and I will serve a second term as President.

President Sands joined our May senate meeting to discuss a variety of topics including our system of shared governance, free speech at Virginia Tech, discussions President Sands has had with various student groups, and the AP Faculty employee group and Job Architecture project. We greatly appreciate President Sands taking the time to join us for discussion and look forward to continued interactions in the coming academic year.

The AP Faculty employee group is comprised of over 2500 individuals doing a great diversity of work in support of the university's strategic initiatives. In the AP Faculty Senate, we've clustered ourselves into seven constituent areas: Extension, Research, Academic Support, Student Affairs, Athletics, General Professional, and General Administrative. Today I would like to highlight some of the varied work done by AP Faculty members in Academic Support. These AP Faculty members are advisors and other professionals working to support our colleges. Many AP Faculty members in academic support work within the colleges in roles such as advising undergraduate students on their curriculum selections or leading graduate programs with recruitment and academic progress as well as administrative functions in the colleges such as finance and program operations. Other academic support AP Faculty work in units outside of, yet support, the colleges and the university's academic mission. These AP faculty members work in areas such as the Undergraduate Research Office supporting research opportunities for students, Technology-Enhanced learning and online strategies (TLOS) supporting teaching and learning efforts across the university, Analytics & Institutional Effectiveness using data and information to provide insights used for decision making and continuous improvement efforts, and managing finance and operations for university centers such as the Center for Coal Energy Research. I will share more about our other constituent areas during our future meetings this coming year.

Thank you for the opportunity to update you today and I look forward to updating you on the work of the A/P Faculty Senate at the August meeting.

Constituent Report by Faculty Representative Joseph Merola to the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors, June 10, 2024.

Rector Baine, Vice Rector Calhoun, and all member of the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors, President Sands, Provost Clarke and all honored guests,

I am pleased to share a few words with you as the Faculty Representative to this Board.

Having served in this role 10 years ago, I would like to share my thoughts on Shared Governance 10 years ago and now. We have come a long way with the support of the president the provost and this board. Without going into detail, I must say that my experience this past year compared with ten years ago has been markedly different to the better. I have been active with state-wide faculty senate officials as well as the national council of faculty senates. In all those interactions, when I share information on Virginia Tech's system, I am invariably asked to give more details to help them in making changes to their systems. I was invited to give a presentation last week at the annual meeting of the National Council of Faculty Senates in which I shared the particulars of VT's Shared Governance. I was elected VP of the National Council with a view toward further sharing the expertise I have gained at Virginia Tech. Also, with the help of Anne Kroemer Hoffmann from Advancement, I published an article in THE on Faculty Senates that has garnered a LOT of attention.

The past year, Faculty Senate proceedings have gone smoothly except for an important issue that can be summed up as its role in enacting policies vs making "statements". FS Constitution makes it clear that the only resolutions that can be enacted are those that deal with university policies under the purview of the Senate. This past year, a group proposed a statement that they wanted Senate to endorse. This group did not accept the FS position that this statement did not deal with policy and so it is not in our purview. There was some lack of clarity in our by-laws and so senate allowed the statement to be considered. After lengthy debates, the resolution was defeated by a large margin. Ultimately, it became clear that the senate did not believe that it should play a role in endorsing political statements.

However, that raised the issue that faculty need a mechanism to have honest, open, and collegial discussions on issues that go beyond governance policies. Formulating such a mechanism is a high priority for the coming year.

When I asked faculty what issues I should bring forward in this report, many of the issues are tied to what is being discussed under the Global Distinction initiative. They are concerned that the emphasis on many high-level issues will not greatly benefit the bulk of the faculty. To begin with, the issue of the metrics troubles faculty, especially those faculty whose activities do not fit neatly into the metrics needed for THE rankings. One faculty member articulated it this way: "How can we, in a metric-driven world,

evaluate activities that do not show up in equations designed to evaluate programs and activities.” This past year, FS crafted a resolution concerning the Responsible Use of Research Metrics – a resolution passed by University Council and adopted by President Sands. We trust that all units on campus tasked with evaluating faculty take the recommendation in this resolution seriously to ensure faculty are fairly and responsibly evaluated.

It would appear to most faculty believe that strategic initiatives do not pay attention to the faculty in general. Allow me to quote another: “One thing I would mention from a faculty perspective is the pressures of enrollment growth on pedagogy and research. With more students comes more service to students and other supporting activities and less time to devote to innovation, research, and improvement. Further, our classes are bursting at the seams and at impossible times for rooms needed to hold higher capacity classes, and those classes are full of students with new accommodations that are the responsibility of faculty to meet. The job of all kinds of faculty (P/T, research, etc.) has grown exponentially and most of it in ways that do not enable more attention to the strategic vision of VT.”

VT Faculty have completed another outstanding academic year. Just listing highlights of accomplishments and awards would require my report to last several hours and no one wants that. Let me just say that our faculty are awesome!

With this meeting, my term as FS president and BOV rep comes to an end. In all honesty, I will miss our interactions, but I am also very pleased to say that the slate of officers for next year is an outstanding one. Rachel Miles will be President, Evan Lavender Smith will be Vice President, Justin Lemkul will be Operations Officer (Chair of CFA – amazing productivity this past year) and Alex Kinnaman as Parliamentarian.

I thank the Board for its willingness to listen to constituent representatives, both during formal presentations and through informal interactions. I am grateful for the board members’ openness, and I know you will work well with next year’s officers.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph S. Merola
Faculty Representative to the VT BOV