

2002-2003



Annual Report for Alumni Relations



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VIRGINIA TECH*forlife*

The Virginia Tech Alumni Association • Serving 175,000 Alumni

Our Alumni Relations program recently adopted the “slogan” **VirginiaTechforlife**. By that, we hope to communicate that a

graduate’s relationship with the university is intended to extend for a lifetime. Our alumni programs are strategically designed to accomplish this simple goal. The more alumni who remain involved benefit the university through their volunteerism, advocacy, and financial support.

Our alumni programs have touched a few new areas and initiatives in the past year. We are always seeking ideas from alumni and within the university faculty and administration that can strengthen our efforts to engage more alumni on a lifetime basis. A few highlights I lift from the report include:

- New Alumni and Conference Center
 - Groundbreaking was held on April 26, 2003
 - Construction on the \$43.5 million facility began two days later
- Events for alumni, ranging from traditional alumni chapters to on-campus homecomings and reunions totaled approximately 560 separate programs.
- Online news communications were both expanded and enhanced with graphics and photography to strengthen their appeal, and included more online program registration opportunities.
- 134 alumni chapter scholarships totaling \$128,300 were awarded to incoming freshmen.
- A Young Alumni Advisory Council met in fall of 2002 to discuss ways to engage more in their age group in various university alumni activities.
- Student Alumni Associates, volunteers assisting alumni programs, formed a Traditions Committee to celebrate the rich heritage of Virginia Tech and more widely disseminate such information using web and CD technology.
- Over 350 Black alumni and guests returned to campus for the Black Alumni Golden Anniversary Reunion, in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the first black student admitted to Virginia Tech.

- New Alumni Distinguished Professor nominations expanded the total number of these endowed professorships to ten, the highest since its inception in 1972.
- Planning was begun to publish the first in a series of Virginia Tech Date Planners for alumni; the first planner for 2004 begins the series.

Our programs in Alumni Relations have become more focused on constituency-based strategies in the past few years, more than any period in the Alumni Association's history. Geographic constituencies are served by more than 100 chapters nationally and in a few international cities. Academic constituencies are served by college-based alumni programs guided by the college Deans, their alumni advisory councils, and departmental advisory councils. Graduating class constituencies are served by a reunion program celebrating anniversaries at roughly five-year intervals. Additional groups such as the alumni of the Corps of Cadets, African American alumni, and other identifiable alumni constituencies are served by reunions and celebratory occasions.

This model seems to serve the university quite well in engaging more alumni in the life and activities of the university. We welcome suggestions for expanding our alumni programs and, of course, encourage alumni to volunteer to help us accomplish our goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Tillar, Jr.", with a stylized flourish above the name.

Thomas C. Tillar, Jr.
Vice President for Alumni Relations

Alumni Relations Staff

- Thomas C. Tillar, Jr., *Vice President for Alumni Relations*
- Deborah Day, *Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations*
- Richard W. Hastings, *Assistant Vice President for Alumni Relations*
- John R. Hutcheson III, *Associate Director (NOVA Graduate Center)*
- J. Andrew Hall, *Associate Director*
- Mara K. Barker, *Assistant Director*
- Robin H. Jackson, *Assistant Director*
- Lynn Young, *Assistant Director*
- Tysus Jackson, *Director of Development for Multicultural Affairs**
- Patricia B. Foutz, *Alumni Chapter Coordinator**
- Elizabeth D. Lee, *Alumni Chapter Coordinator (Richmond Office)**
- Richard S. Roszak, *Associate Director for Corps Alumni**
- Cathy Lally, *Assistant to the Vice President*
- Shari B. Malone, *Student Programs Coordinator*
- Melissa Vidmar, *Publications Manager*
- Deborah D. Sheldon, *Publications Assistant*
- Jo Farmer, *Executive Secretary Senior*
- Phil Gettel, *Printing and Mail Room Manager*
- Karen Denny, *Fiscal Technician*
- Kellie Morris, *Reunions and Chapter Support*
- Laura Wedin, *Student Programs Assistant/Alumni Travel Coordinator*
- Ruth Graves, *Alumni Records*
- Dot Keister, *Alumni Records and Reunion Support*
- Sharon Croy, *Alumni Records*
- Carol Green, *Reunion Support and Alumni Records*
- Leslie Thornton-O'Brien, *Receptionist**
- Lori Carpenter, *Receptionist**
- Pam Sparks, *Mail Room Assistant**

**Part-time in Alumni Relations or a shared position with another university department*



Introduction

Several significant initiatives in Alumni Relations over the past year merit special mention as examples of our mission to continue to involve alumni with the Alumni Association and the university and in support of the university's goal of becoming a premier research institution. The Campaign for the new Alumni and Conference Center neared its completion with less than \$1 million remaining to be raised. Ground was broken in April with construction expected to be completed by spring of 2005.

A new type of program providing opportunities for alumni to join others from their academic college was added to the fall events schedule. Academic college "Homecomings" were offered for the first time in fall 2002 for all eight colleges. These were planned as opportunities for colleges to showcase their programs to their alumni.

Also new in fall 2002 were "Joint Class Reunions" for alumni in three consecutive classes in both the '80's and '90s decades, which were successful in bringing increased numbers of alumni back to campus.

A new annual Outstanding Graduate Alumni Award was created in collaboration with the Graduate School to recognize exceptional professional performance by a graduate degree alumnus/a.

With the shortfall in state revenues and difficult budgetary times faced by the university, the Alumni Association committed \$55,000 from endowment earnings to the university as a gesture of support for the Honors Program. This was in addition to \$150,000 committed earlier to benefit programs in the humanities.

The program initiatives and services summarized in the pages that follow comprise the heart of the Alumni Relations programs of the university. The staff and volunteers responsible for them deserve our appreciation for their commitment to make Virginia Tech more inviting, more inclusive, and more engaging to its many constituents.

Alumni Awards and Recognitions

The Alumni Association continued a long tradition of service to the university by awarding scholarships to students, excellence awards to faculty and service awards to alumni. Endowments have been established to provide annual funding for professorships and merit scholarships. The total amount awarded to faculty and students was approximately \$162,800. Several awards were presented at Founders Day, Fall Faculty and Staff Awards Ceremony, the Student Honors Dinner, alumni chapter activities and special programs.

In total, thirteen awards were presented to faculty at the Fall Faculty and Staff Awards Ceremony with cash stipends of \$2,000 each. Two graduate student awards of \$1,000 recognized teaching and service at the spring Graduate Student Awards dinner. Two alumni were recognized on Founders Day for their distinguished service to the Association and university.

Awards and scholarships presented in 2002-2003 included:

- “Top 25” Awards for Virginia Tech’s nationally ranked athletic teams
- Alumni Chapter Scholarships (134 scholarships)
- Alumni Distinguished Professorships (9 continuing appointments)
- Alumni Honors Scholarships (up to 11 awards)
- Alumni Presidential Scholarships (12 endowed)
- Excellence Awards for teaching, research, extension, service, academic advising, outreach, and international programs (15 awards)
- Outstanding Alumni Chapter Awards (22 awards with funding for 7 scholarships)
- Outstanding Alumni Chapter Officer (2 recognitions)
- Outstanding Graduate Alumni Award (1 recognition)
- Outstanding Students by college (8 recognitions)
- Outstanding Young Alumni Awards (8 recognitions)
- Student Alumni Associates Students’ Choice Award (1 faculty recognition)

Alumni Legislative Advocacy



This advocacy group supporting higher education and General Fund appropriations for Virginia Tech continues to provide vocal support on issues of importance to Virginia Tech and to higher education, and to cultivate support among elected officials.

A breakfast hosting Virginia Tech alumni members of the General Assembly and reception for Virginia's senators and representatives in Congress was held on Capitol Hill, which included the Northern Virginia alumni business community. The 5th Annual "Hokie Day at the General Assembly" was a successful event with representatives from 10 chapters visiting legislators in Richmond during the 2003 session.

Virginia alumni chapters were asked to support the bond referendum campaign by writing letters to editors, making phone calls or sending emails to local alumni, staffing polling places and distributing promotional materials.

Alumni Chapter Programs

Alumni chapter programs continued to expand. Chapters have been organized throughout the US and abroad to provide opportunities for alumni to gather in their local communities. Chapter activities typically included receptions or dinners hosting faculty speakers, assistance in recruiting students, community service, and providing scholarship support for local students. The primary purpose for chapter programs is to involve and inform alumni about the university, enhancing its image and alumni support.

The annual Chapter Officers Leadership Forum was held in the fall of 2002 with attendance of 82 chapter volunteers and Alumni Board members representing 39 chapters. Twenty-two chapters received Outstanding Chapter Awards. All outstanding chapters were entered into a drawing with seven chapters receiving \$1,000 toward each of their student scholarship funds. The remaining 15 chapters received two football tickets to use for raffles. Chapter superlative awards were awarded, acknowledging excellence in five areas – Outstanding Event, Outstanding Golf Tournament, Outstanding Fundraising Event, Outstanding Alumni Admissions Program, and Outstanding Community Service. Achievement Awards were presented to 14 chapters. A new award for Best Chapter Scrapbook was presented as well.

The number of alumni chapters or program areas throughout the nation and internationally reached 102 (30 in-state, 65 out-of-state, and seven abroad in Hong Kong, London, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Panama, Philippines and Virgin Islands).

Approximately one-third of the chapter areas were reclassified as alumni “clubs.” Clubs label areas that do not have elected officers or boards of directors and hold a limited number of events. Members from 57 chapters participated in the Alumni Admissions Program by assisting the Office of Undergraduate Admissions staff with college fairs, phone calls to prospective students, and scholarships. Forty-four chapters awarded a total of 134 scholarships totaling \$128,300 to freshmen from their local chapter areas. New chapters were established or reactivated in Greater Prince William County and Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Alumni Career Services

The CareerLink program enables Virginia Tech students and alumni to network with Virginia Tech alumni for career planning and job search assistance. Users may search for alumni volunteers from the CareerLink database based on major, occupation, employer name, work setting, services offered, schools attended and/or location. Alumni volunteer mentors and participants served during the past year included:

- 1,348 active alumni volunteers
- 3,059 total number of users – students and alumni
- 13,589 total online searches by alumni

CareerConnections, a free service to alumni providing the ease of submitting a resume to the Career Services database via the Internet. Over 550 alumni made use of this service. Almost 200 alumni made use of the candidate referral service as one of their job search tools. The Northern Virginia Alumni Chapter sponsored the 12th Annual Job Fair in January over the semester break. Approximately 22 employers were represented and 150 candidates.

Career and personal counseling services were made available to students at the Northern Virginia Center, conducted by graduate students.

ExecuPlanet, an out-sourced, fee-based service firm providing professional career services to Virginia Tech alumni, was updated with a new four-step job process and new fee-based program opportunities. With 150 offices throughout the United States, alumni have access to monthly job search workshops in most major cities.

Special Alumni Programs

The Alumni Association, in conjunction with the Division of Continuing Education, hosted its 12th Annual Civil War Weekend in March. A total of 351 registrants attended. Featured speakers included: James I. Robertson, Jr., Alumni Distinguished Professor of History; William C. Davis, Director for the university's Virginia Center for Civil War Studies; author, playwright, and screenwriter Dennis Brown and widely recognized Civil War authority Chris E. Fonvielle. Participants enjoyed informative lectures, book sales and signings, and a special concert with recording artists Cathy Barton and Dave Para.



The Summer Escape program attracted 95 participants from 32 families, 16 of whom were first-time participants. The program featured faculty speakers, campus tours, evening entertainment, outdoor activities such as hiking, biking and tubing, and children's activities. The 2nd Annual Hokie 5K run was featured on Saturday morning, attracting approximately 130 runners.

Alumni Reunion Programs

In the fall, the Alumni Association enjoyed a successful reunion season. Almost 2,600 alumni attended six class reunions, seven college homecomings and a Corps of Cadets Reunion. A Joint Class reunion program for three classes in the '80's and '90's decades was created in an effort to attract younger alumni back to campus. At their 50th Anniversary Reunion, the Class of '52 was inducted into the Old Guard. The class raised \$555,457 for their anniversary gift which was designated for the new Alumni Center gateway and entrance plaza fountain. Total participation for reunions increased from the previous year.



College Homecomings were held on home game weekends for all seven undergraduate colleges. The College of Veterinary Medicine held its homecoming on an other than home game weekend. They provided an excellent occasion for alumni to visit with faculty and other alumni and gave the colleges the opportunity to showcase their programs.

Spring reunions were held for several constituencies including a Student Media Reunion, the Department of Agricultural Economics 75th Anniversary, and the Department of Biochemistry 50th Anniversary. Over 350 Black Alumni returned to campus for the Black Alumni Golden Anniversary Reunion in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the first black student admitted to Virginia Tech. The reunion was held

the same weekend as the dedication of Peddrew-Yates Residence Hall, the first building at Virginia Tech to be named for African Americans.

In the spring, the Old Guard held its annual reunion, which was attended by members of the classes of '29 through '52. Highlights of the reunion included: presentations from Alumni Distinguished Professors Rosemary Blieszner and Charles Reinholtz, and a presentation on the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine. Participants were served a picnic lunch in the new South End Zone and toured the new facility. A reunion banquet with jazz music and dancing was held, and the reunion concluded with presentations by representatives from the Honors Program, Corps of Cadets, and the Cranwell International Center at a brunch.

International Programs for Alumni

The "Hokies Abroad" program, a cooperative effort between the offices of International Programs, Undergraduate Admissions and Alumni Relations, seeks to involve traveling members of the Virginia Tech faculty and administration with university alumni and prospective students who reside abroad. Several traveling faculty volunteered to meet with alumni in Australia, Brazil, Greece, Hong Kong, London, New Zealand, Paris, South Korea, Taipei and Turkey during the year. The Alumni Association co-sponsored receptions for international graduates in the Fall and Spring semesters.

Alumni Records

Responsibility for maintaining biographical records increased to more than 188,000 records. Through returned USPS mail, email, phone calls, and alumni visits to Alumni Hall, the Association received and updated over 40,000 records. Mailing labels and alumni rosters were supplied as a service to colleges, departments, and student organizations throughout the year.

The Alumni Association staff continued its work with the Banner database system to facilitate the recording of additional data and provide for more flexible reporting. A new Alumni Directory was published and mailed in late 2002. The Directory was available in hardcover, softcover and CD-Rom versions.

Communications

The Alumni Association's portal page at www.VaTechAlumni.com continues to offer a number of features to welcome and serve alumni, such as alumni links, university news articles, headline news, weather reports, Virginia Tech merchandise, and stock quotes. The Alumni Gateway is a password-protected feature and offers access to several university services and informational features, such as accessing alumni record profiles to make updates and additions online, exploring the VTAlumnNet Website for free online educational programs (or "knowledge units") or a variety of other courses for a fee. Chapter Volunteer training modules are also offered through this venue. Another feature offers registration for class reunions and special programs on-line, including lodging reservations and reserving football game tickets. This gateway helps alumni maintain a closer relationship with those aspects of the university in which they have an interest or may choose to learn more.

The Association published and mailed two issues of the **Alumni Association News** to all alumni. Other publications included a reunion registration brochure, reunion invitations, the Class of '52 **Reunion Bugle**, Handbook for Alumni Volunteers (available on CD-Rom), Board of Directors Manual, announcements for university events and receptions, Alumni Association Update, and newsletters and event publicity for alumni chapters. Total mailings exceeded 570,000 pieces of mail and approximately 150 emails were sent to chapters and constituency groups informing them of upcoming events, more than double the previous year. Also, news and class notes information were provided for inclusion in the **Virginia Tech Magazine**.

Virginia Tech Alumni Association
Welcome to www.VaTechAlumni.com

Features:

- [Black Alumni at VT](#)
- [2004 Civil War Weekend](#)
- [Summer Escape 2004](#)

Alumni Association Links

- [About the Alumni Association](#)
- [Alumni & Conference Center](#)
- [Career Assistance](#)
- [Chapters & Clubs](#)
- [Class Rings](#)
- [Colleges & Constituencies](#)
- [Gifts Supporting the Alumni Association](#)
- [Publications for Alumni](#)

Alumni Center... Under Construction!

[View plans for our new Alumni and Conference Center](#)

[Alumni Center Construction and Virtual Tour](#)

[View and Update My Alumni Profile](#)

[VTAlumnNet Online Courses](#)

[Shopping, Gifts, and Services](#)

[Alumni Football Emulation](#)

Student Programs



Student programs complemented the mission of Alumni Relations by helping instill a sense of loyalty and pride in students soon to become members of the Alumni Association. The Class Officer and Student Alumni Associates (SAA) are two active and respected organizations. They foster special traditions designed to bond students more closely with the university.

During the freshman year, Class Officers are elected to serve lifetime terms and are responsible for promoting and preserving class traditions. Highlights of events for the Classes of '03, '04, '05 and '06 were:

- Election of officers for the Class of 2006
- Committee appointments and ring design for the Class of 2005
- Class of 2005 Officers Welcome Dinner
- Ring Premiere and Ring Dance for the Class of 2004
- Senior Celebration for the Class of 2003
- Class Officer Retreat
- Year-end Class Officer Picnic

The Class of 2004 held a Kickoff Concert and Pep Rally in August and to help advertise their Ring Premiere and handed out t-shirts and thundersticks at the Class of 2004 Day at the Homecoming football game. Class of 2003 held a Senior Celebration before Commencement in May. The senior class gift to the university was support for the new Alumni and Conference Center. Class officer elections again generated high turnout with the on-line balloting process.

The SAA members assisted with registration for alumni reunions and other programs, helping greet alumni and other visitors to the campus. Through the SAA, current students are introduced to the Alumni Association and to various opportunities to serve after graduation. SAA membership includes Class Officers and other student ambassadors. Highlights of SAA activities during the year included:

- Welcome Back Concert and Pep Rally
- Alumni Reunion Registrations
- Student Organization Showcase
- SAA Retreat (Fall and Winter)
- Fall Home Game Pep Rallies – with spirit item giveaways
- Assistance at Founders Day, Summer Escape, Fall Faculty and Staff Awards Ceremony, Old Guard Reunion, Career Fairs, Alumni and Conference Center Groundbreaking
- Parents Day Game Watching Party
- “Seniors Movin’ On” program
- Faculty Appreciation Day

The SAA was recognized with awards for two program sessions and received a Certificate of Appreciation for their participation at the Association of Student Advancement Programs District Conference. Their website won the International Award for Outstanding Website, as well. SAA was honored as the Outstanding Student Organization at the University Student Leadership Awards.

SAA formed a Traditions Committee to focus on the unique qualities of the heritage of Virginia Tech. They hosted a reception for faculty, administrators and alumni to introduce the project in the fall. The initial goal is to establish a traditions website, with a long-term goal of producing a CD-Rom to include all aspects of the rich traditions at Virginia Tech, including the Corps of Cadets, ring design, and Ring Dance.

Alumni and Conference Center



The university broke ground on the new Alumni and Conference Center in April and the campaign is nearing its completion. Less than \$500,000 remains to be raised of the \$16.2 million campaign goal. Several thousand alumni have generously supported the campaign for the new center. The construction is on schedule with completion expected in spring of 2005.



Financial Summary

The staff, programs and services of Alumni Relations were supported with income from six private sources (no state funds are available for administering alumni programs):

- Virginia Tech Foundation support (44%)
- Affinity Credit Card royalties (35%)
- Merchandising/Tours royalties (6%)
- Alumni Gifts (2%)
- Reunions and Special Programs income (11%)
- Alumni Directory sales (2%)

Revenue totals for the fiscal year were \$2,017,636 and expenditure totals were \$1,959,233. An agency endowment for the Alumni Association managed by the university's Foundation was valued at \$3,523,231 as of June 30, 2003.

Considerable income was generated by the affinity Visa card program. Other programs including a telephone long-distance affinity program, watches, campus scene prints, diploma frames, jewelry and chairs were revenue producers. Some 250 alumni and friends participated in 13 different tours abroad offered by the Association, providing additional income. Reunion and other alumni programs resulted in a modest net profit over expenses for the year. A new 2004 Daily Planner was designed to offer as a sample to some alumni. The publication will be continued on an annual basis and sold to alumni in subsequent years.

Collaboration with Other Campus Departments

The Alumni Staff often collaborated with various units and departments on programs serving alumni. These included:

Undergraduate Admissions
University Development
University Relations
Student Affairs
Career Services
Athletics and Athletic Fund
Government Relations
Continuing Education
International Programs
Virginia Tech Richmond Office

President's Office
Provost's Office
Corps of Cadets
Northern Virginia Center
Graduate School
Honors Program
Academic Colleges and Departments
Multicultural Affairs
Southwest Virginia Higher Ed Center
University Outreach

Alumni Association Board of Directors

Officers for 2002-2003

- John B. Higginbotham '77 *President*
- Paul M. Saunders '54 *President-Elect*
- Kimble Reynolds, Jr. '88 *Vice President*
- Thomas C. Tillar, Jr. '69 *Secretary-Treasurer*
- Gene A. James '53 *Immediate Past-President*

Directors for 2002-2003

- Ronald E. Ball '70
- Patricia B. Beuttel '74
- Scott C. Cappiello '94
- Peter S. Darby '90
- Elizabeth A. Flanagan
- B. Keith Fulton '89
- Charles O. Gordon '42*
- Douglas S. Graham '94, '98
- Harry N. Gustin II '43*
- Joseph M. Harris '68
- Susan L. Hensley '77
- Wayland E. Hundley '84
- Gregory B. Jones '77
- William C. Latham '55*
- Elizabeth L. Leonard '80
- Graham C. Lilly '60
- Cecil R. Maxson, Jr. '52
- Stephanie B. McClellan '85
- Robert M. Minish '77
- Jeffery K. Mitchell '86
- Thomas W. Moss, Jr. '50*
- Kevin W. Mottley '93
- Melissa B. Nelson '92
- Robert D. Orrock '78
- Coleman G. Rector '86
- W. Thomas Rice '34*
- Jesse J. Richardson, Jr. '84
- William E. Skelton '40*
- Brian Slingerland '00
- James E. Smith '66
- Sidney C. Smith, Jr. '63
- Charles W. Steger '69
- Jean S. Swartz '86
- Lee C. Tait '41*
- Nicholas P. Valdrighi '57
- G.T. Ward '49*
- Laurie M. Wright '96

**Lifetime honorary member*