



VIRGINIA FOUNDATION FOR  
INDEPENDENT COLLEGES

UPDATE

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# THE HERITAGE SOCIETY

## SUPPORTS THE FUTURE OF VFIC STUDENTS & SCHOOLS

OUR VISION AT THE VFIC is to be recognized as the leading proponent for private higher education in Virginia. Our success today is due in large part to the philanthropic support we've received from foundations and corporations, individuals and civic organizations.

But what about tomorrow? Next year? A decade from now? Even then, our students will need financial support; our schools will still require the latest resources to create a dynamic learning environment.

Through the VFIC Heritage Society, a planned giving program, you can have an enduring impact on generations of student scholars in the Commonwealth.

"We encourage friends of the VFIC and fellow board members to help us secure the future for tomorrow's young women and men on our campuses by making a planned gift as part of the VFIC Heritage Society," says George Birdsong, a VFIC board member. "This type of gift is vitally important to our independent colleges, and that's why Sue and I included the VFIC in our wills. Unlike public colleges, our independent schools don't receive state

funding, so they depend on support from individuals, foundations, and members of the business community."

By including the VFIC in their philanthropy and estate planning, members of the Heritage Society can help secure the future of the young women and men on our campuses. The gifts they make through charitable estate planning will help fund scholarships and endowments, build research facilities, equip classrooms with the latest technology, recruit prominent teachers, and develop innovative curricula.

"Through your personal act of providing for the VFIC's future," says Matt Shank, VFIC president, "you enable us to fulfill our mission by investing in the people and programs that distinguish the VFIC and its member institutions."

Please contact Matt Shank at the VFIC to learn more about becoming a member of the Heritage Society. You can also talk to your family and financial advisers to learn how philanthropic support to the VFIC fits into your estate planning. We encourage you to join us. Working together, we can secure the future of our students and the quality of private independent higher education in Virginia.

# TEACHING EXCELLENCE: THE H. HITER HARRIS AWARDS

THREE VFIC FACULTY from our consortium of schools received H. Hiter Harris awards at a special board meeting and awards presentation. These awards were created by the Harris family to recognize faculty whose professional history reflects a strong and abiding commitment to excellence in classroom teaching within the undergraduate liberal arts and sciences.



**Adela Borrallo-Solís, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Hispanic Studies, Shenandoah University, received the 2020 **Libby and Hiter Harris Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award**. Arriving at Shenandoah University in 2015, Borrallo-Solís has helped grow the school's Spanish program through new courses, student engagement initiatives, and enhancements to the curriculum. Along with being an instructor and advisor, Borrallo-Solís holds a university-wide leadership role as the director of the QEP program, Shenandoah Conversations. This program gives faculty and students the tools necessary to engage in civil dialogue around complex and controversial topics. For the 2020-21 academic year, Borrallo-Solís serves as one of the university's ten Transformative Teaching & Learning Fellows.



**Amber Peacock, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor of Education, Randolph-Macon College, received the 2020 **H. Hiter Harris III Rising Star Award**. Peacock began working at Randolph-Macon College in 2009 as an adjunct professor to help develop coursework for a K-12 special education licensure track for the school's education program. Appointed to a tenure-track assistant professorship in 2016, Peacock also holds positions on the college's Academic Integrity Council and the Curriculum Committee. In 2019, she was recognized with the college's Art Conway Award for Enthusiasm in Teaching and Learning, an award presented annually by students in the Honors Program.



**Lily Zhang**, Head of Instructional Design & Technology and Associate Professor, Randolph-Macon College, received the **H. Hiter Harris III Excellence in Instructional Technology Award**. Zhang began working at Randolph-Macon College in 1995 as the Media Resource Supervisor and an assistant professor. She currently is the head of Instructional Design & Technology and an associate professor. For over twenty years, Zhang has been working with faculty and students at Randolph-Macon College to enhance courses and curriculum through instructional technology. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit last spring, Zhang helped the college transition from in-person classes to remote online-learning. Zhang is respected and admired by her colleagues for her knowledge and expertise in digital pedagogy.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

dividends for decades to our communities and our schools. If you would like to create a Brighter Futures scholarship, please contact Mary-Beth Johnson at [johnson@vfc.org](mailto:johnson@vfc.org).

AEP Foundation

Altria

Anonymous

Eugene M. Bane Charitable Trust

Bank of America Charitable Foundation

A. Lea Booth Fund

Camp Foundation

Ruth Camp Campbell Foundation

Council of Independent Colleges Scholars  
through its CIC/UPS Educational Endowment

Walter and Beese Craigie Fund

Dominion Energy

Ferguson Enterprises

Bob and Charlotte Gammon Fund

Anne and Til Hazel

HRH Endowed Scholarship Fund

Landmark Foundation

Thomas J. Lennon Fund

Luck Companies

Mars Foundation

T. Justin Moore Fund

John D. Munford Fund

New Horizons Scholarship Fund

New River Electrical

Norfolk Southern Foundation

Moses D. Nunnally, Jr. Charitable Trust

Robins Family Fund

Newton B. Shingleton Foundation

Donald G. and Barbara B. Smith Fund

Universal Corporation

VFIC 50th Anniversary Fund

Williams Mullen





MARY BALDWIN UNIVERSITY

## ENHANCING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS

WHILE IT'S GRATIFYING to know that VFIC students come from diverse racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds, we are equally focused on where our students go to after they graduate. Our schools feel a responsibility to students not only when they are in the classroom or lab but also as they prepare to graduate and head into the job market in pursuit of their career.

Enhancing Career Preparation for Underrepresented Students is a program the VFIC developed to prepare our graduates for a career path that offers the bright hope of personal success and economic independence. With philanthropic support from the Council of Independent Colleges and matching gifts from VFIC donors, this program will help underrepresented students at our fifteen schools address the challenges they face when it comes to career readiness, job opportunity, and wage equity.

“Enhancing Career Preparation for Underrepresented Students is designed to complement the work of career development officers at VFIC schools by providing them with the special resources they need to help first-generation, racial/ethnic minority, lower socio-economic, and new American students secure a fulfilling, lucrative job upon graduation,” says Matt Shank, VFIC president. “The VFIC is perfectly positioned to create and initiate this program. We can leverage our connections with businesses from every industry and sector, many in the Fortune 500, in ways that enhance the efforts of each school’s career development office to improve career opportunities for underserved student demographics.”

While underrepresented students typically face significant challenges when it comes to securing employment and launching their career, the need to remedy this problem could not be more critical than it is today. The COVID-19 pandemic that nearly caused a global and personal financial collapse continues to have a dramatic impact on our students and their families. Many of them have had their financial well-being compromised.

“Working together with our board of directors, the career planning offices at our schools, and the many businesses and organizations that support our foundation,” says Shank, “we will give our students the best opportunity to become productive contributors to a competitive workforce.”

## IN MEMORY OF



**JOHN G. STALLINGS, JR.**  
*VFIC Board Trustee (2012-2020)*  
*February 1967 - November 2020*

## ETHICS BOWL 2021 UPDATE

Due to ongoing concerns about COVID-19, the VFIC has postponed the 2021 Ethics Bowl event and dinner until winter 2022. We'll announce the new date in January 2021.

The event will still be held on the campus of Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia.

Stay tuned!

# NEWS FROM OUR MEMBER COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

## BRIDGEWATER COLLEGE

This fall, Bridgewater College launched the Master of Science in Human Resource Management and Master of Science in Psychology-Mental Health Professions programs, bringing the school's total graduate programs to four.

## EMORY & HENRY COLLEGE

Emory & Henry's Theatre Department joined professionals from the Barter Theatre to present a virtual, digital series, called "*Outbreak: Appalachia in the Time of Covid-19.*" They are rehearsing and recording using safe practices.

## HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE

In August, Hampden-Sydney College received a \$6 million gift from Rob '87 and Cindy Citrone to support Compass, the college's experiential learning program.

## HOLLINS UNIVERSITY

To help students pursue advanced degrees and careers in high-demand fields, Hollins finalized admission agreements with Mary Baldwin University's Murphy Deming College of Health Sciences and Virginia Tech's College of Engineering.

## MARY BALDWIN UNIVERSITY

This fall, Mary Baldwin University opened a campus pantry to provide food and other essentials to help combat food insecurity on campus, which research shows affects college students at a higher rate than other demographics.

## MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

Marymount University is offering new fully-online programs in the fields of physical and occupational therapy designed to advance the working professional through an innovative educational experience.

## RANDOLPH COLLEGE

Randolph College received a \$1 million grant from the National Science Foundation to expand the popular SUPER program with mental health and inclusion initiatives to advance undergraduate degree completion in STEM fields.

## RANDOLPH-MACON COLLEGE

Randolph-Macon College dedicated its newest facility, Payne Hall, in fall 2020. This 30,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art facility houses the college's Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program.

## ROANOKE COLLEGE

Dr. Chris Lassiter, professor of biology, was honored as an outstanding mentor to biology students. Lassiter received the Council of Undergraduate Research's Biology Mentor award for mid-career faculty.

## SHENANDOAH UNIVERSITY

Through its Bernard J. Dunn School of Pharmacy, Shenandoah University is conducting its own SARS-CoV-2 surveillance testing through the use of pooled saliva samples. Shenandoah is one of only a handful of universities in the country to conduct this testing.

## SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE

Sweet Briar had a successful fall semester with students on campus and remaining largely healthy despite the pandemic. The new greenhouse officially opened, the vineyard saw its first harvest, and school enrollment continued to rise.

## UNIVERSITY OF LYNCHBURG

The University of Lynchburg is lowering tuition, as well as room and board, for fall semester 2021-22 from about \$54,000 to just under \$46,000. The average net cost for students will be \$24,000.

## UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND

The University of Richmond's new Well-Being Center is a collaborative, high-impact environment designed to support student learning and well-being. It houses all campus health care and includes mindfulness and meditation facilities.

## VIRGINIA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

Virginia Wesleyan University and Lakeland University (Wisconsin) have partnered to jointly operate a campus in Tokyo under the name Lakeland University Japan and Virginia Wesleyan University Global.

## WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY

Washington and Lee University welcomed students back to campus for fall term. Tom Jennings joined the university in August as vice president for advancement and Lena Hill was named provost, effective July 1, 2021.





# VFIC RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS SUPPORT STEM-H EDUCATION

URBAN HEAT has a detrimental impact on communities and the people who live in them, and, at the VFIC, we're creating and funding undergraduate research opportunities to study this phenomenon.

*"One of our goals at the VFIC is to provide undergraduate students at our colleges with educational opportunities that enhance their learning in science, technology, engineering, math, and health care – the STEM-H fields," says Matt Shank, VFIC president. "And what better way to do that than by having our students conduct scientific research on real life challenges that affect us and our environment."*

Urban heat islands are created in cities, places that are densely populated with lots of heat generating activity from cars, buses, and industrial buildings. Making matters worse is the fact that buildings in these areas tend to be constructed close together, and any heat that escapes through well-insulated walls tends to circulate around the structures.

"Urban heat islands can have worse air and water quality than their rural neighbors because more pollutants from vehicles, industry, and people are being pumped into the air," says Shank. "There's also the adverse impact on the personal health of those who experience urban heat – respiratory problems, heat stroke, asthma, and general exhaustion and discomfort."

Undergraduate students, led by faculty from VFIC schools, will assess urban heat and its impact on people and urban cores in Virginia. In doing so, they will focus on ways to integrate accurate measurements with community engagement to solve the problem. Students will work under the guidance of seasoned faculty who are engaged in research and innovation.

The VFIC is eager and excited to initiate this research project that we believe will have many positive outcomes. Not only will it provide valuable data for our schools and the Commonwealth, it also presents a tremendous model for how multiple universities can collaborate on high impact research that has important practical implications.

## NEW VFIC TRUSTEES AND SCHOOL PRESIDENTS



**John McNamara Curtis**  
Sr. Chairman, President,  
and CEO  
Perspecta Inc



**Mary Dana Hinton, Ph.D.**  
President  
Hollins University



**Esther C. Lee**  
President and CEO  
Refraction



**Alison Morrison-Shetlar, Ph.D.**  
President  
University of Lynchburg



**Charlotte Porterfield**  
Civic Leader  
Roanoke, VA



**Brian K. Skinner**  
Sr. Exec VP/Chief  
Banking Officer  
TowneBank



VIRGINIA FOUNDATION  
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## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



EZEKIEL H.  
Virginia Wesleyan  
University '21, VFIC  
Scholarship Recipient

*Your gift helps me in my endeavors as a student and lessens the burden of financial stresses. Your consideration to award me a Brighter Futures scholarship comes with the deepest gratitude, not only for helping me but also all the other students that you help during their academic journey as well. With the deepest sincerity, I say thank you for your help and everything you do.*



ROANOKE COLLEGE