



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

VIRGINIA FOUNDATION  
FOR INDEPENDENT  
COLLEGES



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Sweet Briar College  
cover: Shenandoah University



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## FROM The Leadership

DEAR SUPPORTERS OF THE VIRGINIA FOUNDATION FOR INDEPENDENT COLLEGES,

In Roman religion and myth, Janus is the god of beginnings, transitions, and passages. He is usually depicted as having two faces, one looking to the past and the other to the future, both at the same time. Writing this message, we can't help but feel a bit like Janus, looking simultaneously to the past and the future. And as we do, we are struck by the distinct differences between the year we just endured and the one that stretches out before us.

After months of lockdowns, tight budgets, virtual learning, and fragmented campus experiences for our students, the schools we serve have emerged from the year of the COVID-19 pandemic resilient, operationally strong, and mission focused. We are full of optimism for the year ahead, and we have good reason to be.

VFIC schools have exceptional leadership. The college presidents in our consortium led with optimism in the face of enormous pressure this past year. They exhibited it with colleagues and faculty, of course, but they really maintained a positive outlook in the way they interacted with students. That optimism translated into innovative thinking and problem solving, enabling them to pivot nimbly in the course of meeting a barrage of challenges.

Higher education won't be going back to the way things used to be. Instead, our college presidents and their teams will take what we've all learned through this disruption and apply it to their schools going forward . . . with agility, creativity, and, of course, with the effective use of technology.

Several events and programs feature prominently in the year ahead. On July 1, Virginia Union University joined our consortium. It's impossible to overstate

our enthusiasm for Virginia Union's membership in the Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges. While we believe VUU will benefit from being part of a consortium of notable institutions, our organization will benefit from the school's talented executive leadership, dedicated faculty and staff, and engaged student body.

Also, in July, we launched Heat Watch, a statewide campaign and research effort designed to determine where people in the Commonwealth are most at risk during extreme heat waves. Students, faculty, and community volunteers swarmed the state to collect highly detailed near-surface air temperature data, which government officials, municipal leaders, and decision-makers can use to develop plans for mitigating the negative impact of urban heat. Data can also be used to educate citizens about the causes of urban heat and encourage them to practice sound, informed environmental stewardship.

Just as our schools are determined to make sure students receive an excellent education, we are equally committed to helping those students transition from the classroom to the workplace following graduation. We help schools meet this commitment with programs such as Enhancing Career Preparation. Launched last spring, this program spanning three semesters complements the work of career development officers at VFIC schools by providing them with the special resources they need to help underrepresented students secure a fulfilling, lucrative job upon graduation.

At the Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges, we act on the moral imperative that students who want to earn a college degree should have the opportunity to do so. In the year

ahead, that philosophy will manifest itself through our collaboration with the Virginia Community College System to begin building stronger transfer pathways from two-year community colleges to our four-year private, independent schools. During the 2019-2020 academic year, VFIC schools accepted more than 600 transfer students from the VCCS. These students met our high standards for admission as they moved onto a path that leads to graduation. By cultivating relationships with these schools, we can build on this success by helping even more motivated, well-prepared students transition into our institutions.

VFIC schools teach a broadly pragmatic liberal arts and sciences education in environments that value and encourage ethical leadership and responsible citizenship. This past year, as the global pandemic turned the world on end, it seems our education included learning how to persevere, to reflect, to recalibrate, and to explore more deeply the benefits of change. Now that we've more fully developed a Janus-like perspective, one that enables us to visualize the past and future at the same time, we will remain diligent in our commitment to supporting our sixteen schools as they entertain new ideas and innovative approaches that enhance education.

Sincerely,



*Gary R. Thomson*  
Gary R. Thomson, CPA  
Chair  
VFIC Board of Trustees

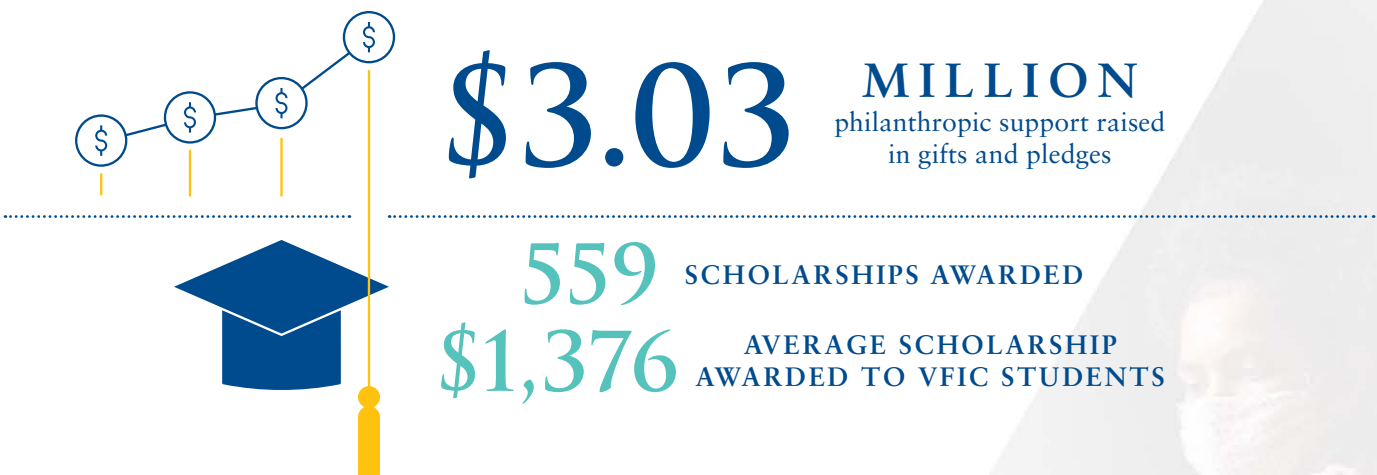


*Matthew Shank*  
Matthew D. Shank, Ph.D.  
President  
VFIC

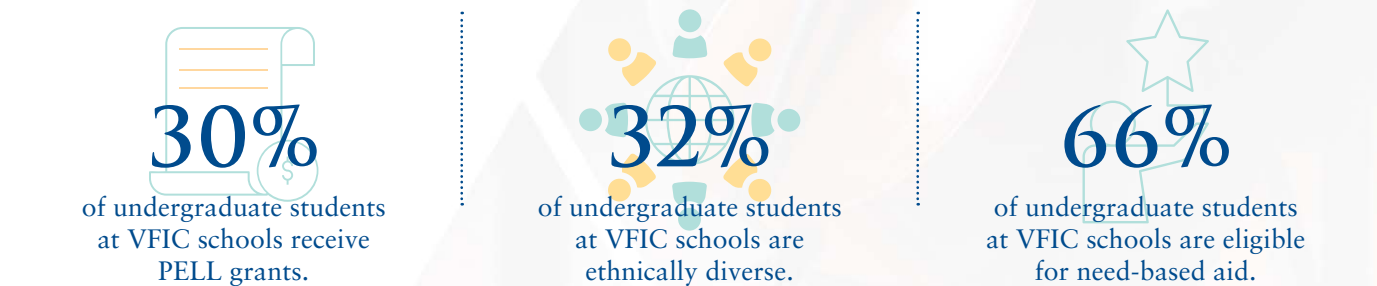
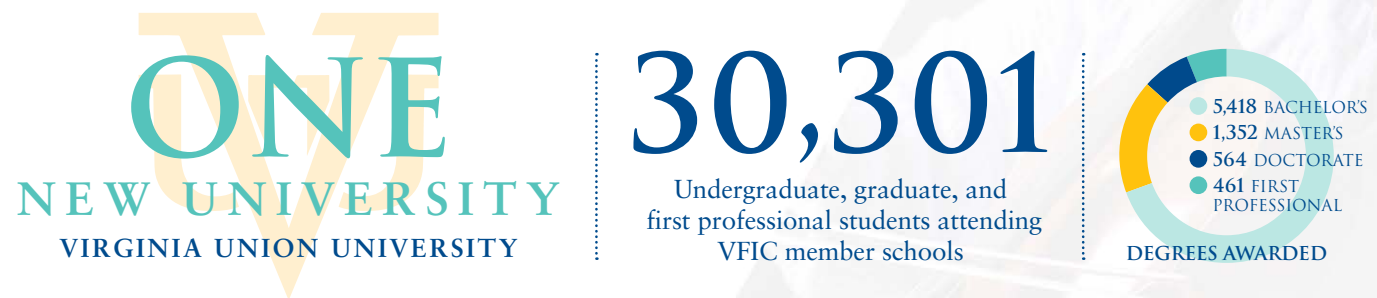


# IMPACT On Education

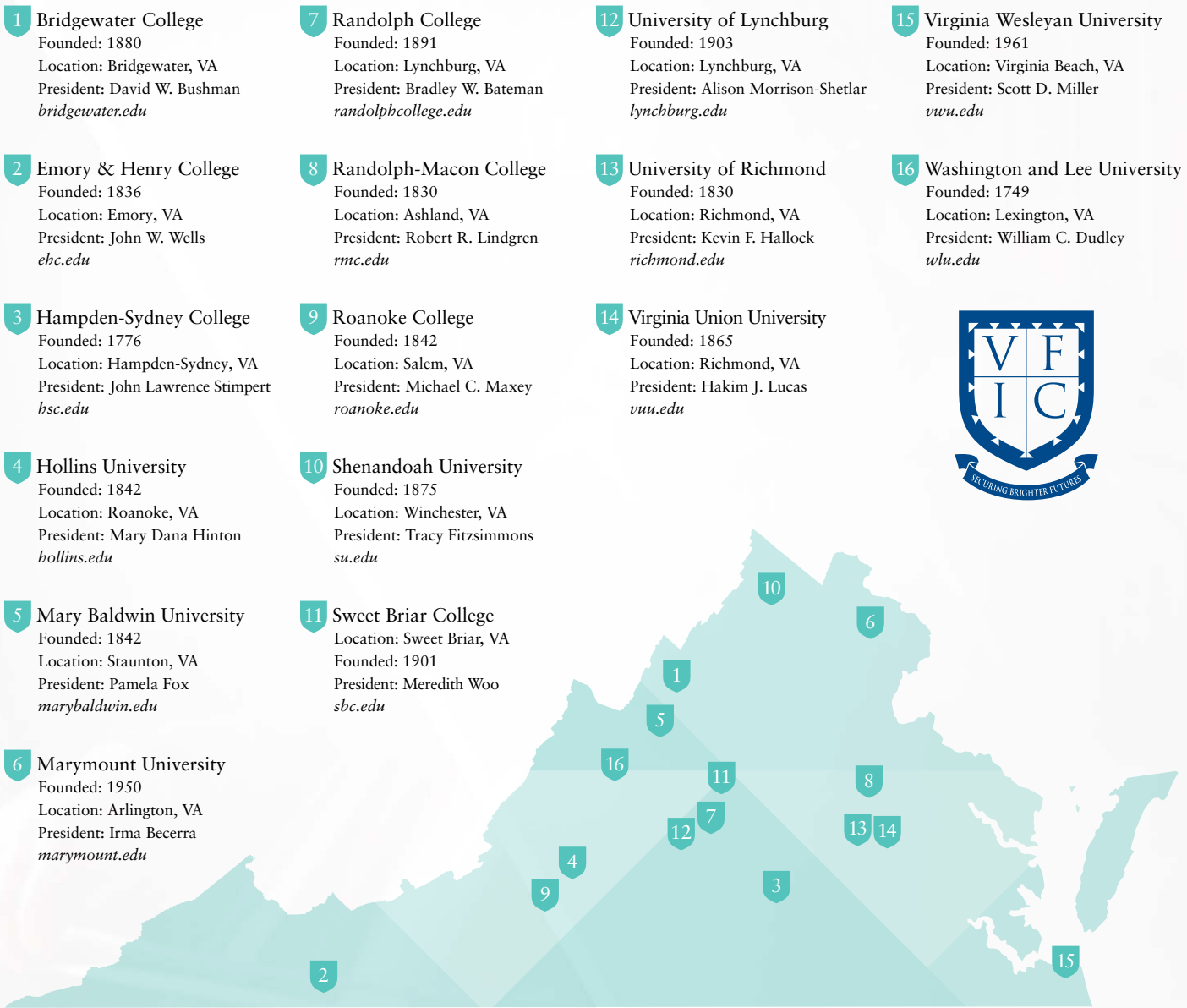
## SUCCESS AND GROWTH



## THE STUDENTS WE SERVE



# VFIC Member Schools



# MISSION and Vision

THE MISSION OF THE VIRGINIA FOUNDATION FOR INDEPENDENT COLLEGES is to advance the distinctive values and strengths of our sixteen independent Virginia member colleges and universities. We do this by securing financial support, increasing visibility, facilitating innovative and collaborative programs, and supporting initiatives which ensure that this personalized educational experience remains an affordable choice for tomorrow's citizen-leaders.

THE VISION OF THE VIRGINIA FOUNDATION FOR INDEPENDENT COLLEGES is to be recognized as a leading proponent for private higher education in Virginia by cultivating and leveraging partnerships with people and organizations that are committed to providing students at VFIC schools with an exceptional educational experience.



# BRIGHTER FUTURES Scholarships

## SIGNATURE SCHOLARSHIPS



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*Thank you so much! Your donations do not go unnoticed! I am extremely honored and blessed to be eligible for this scholarship. This VFIC scholarship will help me achieve my dreams of becoming a teacher who can make a difference within the school systems!*



- MADISON G.  
MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY, '23  
VFIC SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

*I truly appreciate this VFIC scholarship. It has really been a struggle for me finding ways to pay for college and earning this scholarship definitely takes off some of that burden. I cannot express enough how thankful I am for receiving this scholarship. This scholarship makes it easier for me to achieve my goal of becoming a physical therapist.*



- JACE D.  
RANDOLPH-MACON COLLEGE, '22  
VFIC SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

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- Ruth Camp Campbell Foundation
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- VFIC 50th Anniversary

## REGIONAL & STATE PROGRAMS

- Greater Lynchburg
- Greater Richmond
- Northern Virginia / Greater Washington
- Hampton Roads
- Roanoke / Southwest Virginia
- Virginia Scholars Fund

## GIVING TUESDAY / END OF YEAR CAMPAIGN

We raised over \$11,000 in scholarship support, thanks to this campaign and the help of a matching grant from the Jessie Ball duPont fund.

Roanoke College



# PROGRAMS

## PANDEMIC SERVICE AWARD

FACULTY AND STAFF AT EACH SCHOOL IN THE VFIC consortium provided students with enormous support during the past year as our campuses wrestled with the COVID-19 pandemic. The VFIC Distinguished Service Award for Pandemic Support recognized two people in particular who provided exemplary service to their students and helped campuses maintain a safe environment.

Nominated by their school's president, faculty, and students, winners of this special award were **Ruby Bryant, R.N.**, and **Thomas Rambo**. Bryant serves as Director of the Campus Health Center at Randolph College. Rambo is Director of Campus Safety and Associate Dean for Student Affairs at Roanoke College.

2020-2021 Contributors: *Anonymous*

## HARRIS AND MEDNICK AWARDS

THREE VFIC FACULTY from our consortium of schools received H. Hiter Harris awards during the past academic year. 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 **Libby and Hiter Harris Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award**.
- **Amber Peacock, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor of Education, Randolph-Macon College, received the **H. Hiter Harris III Rising Star Award**.
- **Lily Zhang**, Head of Instructional Design & Technology and Associate Professor, Randolph-Macon College, received the **H. Hiter Harris III Excellence in Instructional Technology Award**.

The **Mednick Faculty Fellowship Program** provided research fellowships to fifteen VFIC faculty members.

2020-2021 Contributors: *Libby & Hiter Harris Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Endowment Fund; H. Hiter Harris III Rising Star and Excellence in IT Endowment Funds; H. Hiter Harris III; Maurice L. Mednick Endowed Fund*

## ENHANCING CAREER PREPARATION

ENHANCING CAREER PREPARATION FOR UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS (ECP) 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 the Scott Foundation, as well as matching gifts from VFIC donors, this program will help underrepresented students at our sixteen schools address the challenges they face when it comes to career readiness, job opportunity, and wage equity.

Beginning with an orientation this past February, ECP runs through April 2022. We are currently offering career guidance to ninety-nine students from 15 schools on topics that address resume writing, interviewing in a virtual environment, networking, and workplace professionalism. Speakers include professionals from Disney Entertainment, Markel, Deloitte Consulting, and Sentara Health, to name a few.

2020-2021 Contributors: *Council of Independent Colleges; Graham Holdings; Markel Corporation; Optima Health; The William H. John G. Emma Scott Foundation*

## UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

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. And there's no better way to do that than by having our students conduct scientific research on real life challenges that affect us and our environment. This past year, the VFIC awarded twenty undergraduate fellowships.

2020-2021 Contributors: *NewMarket Corporation; Shelton H. Short, Jr. Foundation; William E. Betts, Jr. Endowed Fund*

## ETHICS BOWL

THE 2021 ETHICS BOWL WILL BE HELD ON JANUARY 30-31, 2022, at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia. Last year's event was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Teams from each school in our consortium during the 2020-2021 academic year will gather to discuss and deliberate the topic "Pandemic Ethics."

2020-2021 Contributors: *Wells Fargo Foundation; Roger H. Mudd Ethics Bowl Endowment Fund*

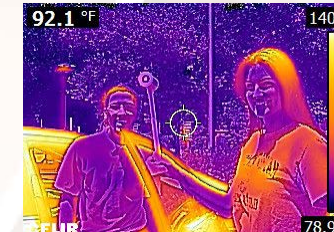
## HEAT WATCH

AFTER MONTHS OF PLANNING, students, faculty, and community volunteers from more than a dozen colleges and universities across the state hit the streets in July to collect data about how heat varies across communities. This campaign and research were part of a statewide effort to understand where residents are most at risk during extreme heat waves.

The heat assessment project, dubbed Heat Watch, involved collecting highly detailed near-surface air temperature data for the purpose of relating land uses like asphalt parking lots, community green spaces, and topography to temperatures. The project's deliverables will include maps of air temperature and

heat index, datasets of participant temperature observations, and a final report for each locality describing the methods, results, and interpretations.

2020-2021 Contributors: *CAPA Strategies; Capital One; Science Museum of Virginia; Virginia Department of Forestry*



Climate impacts are being felt around Virginia and are projected to continue. Communities have recognized the need to assess their strengths and vulnerabilities in the face of these climate challenges. The "VFIC Heat Watch" project to analyze heat islands is an important part of these efforts. Our data may reveal disproportionate vulnerabilities to heat, such as in historically red-lined areas. The results from the VFIC heat mapping campaign will help us develop equitable community-based strategies to address climate vulnerabilities and health risks. I look forward to working with our students to use these data for hands-on research to understand and advance community resilience objectives.



– **KARIN WARREN, PH.D.**  
HERZOG FAMILY CHAIR OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES & SCIENCE & SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL CO-CHAIR, RANDOLPH COLLEGE

Listed contributors supported the program with gifts of \$2,000 or more. Additional contributors appear in the Honor Roll of Donors.



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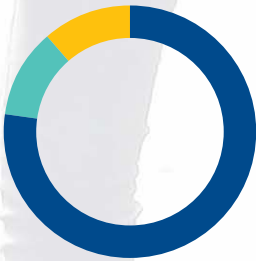
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The Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges is a not-for-profit corporation, tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law. Copies of the financial statement for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2021, audited by Mitchell Wiggins, are available upon request.

The VFIC has carefully prepared this report. However, in spite of our sincere efforts to avoid errors, they occasionally do occur. If your name has been inadvertently omitted, listed in the wrong place, or misspelled, we hope you will accept our apologies and advise us of the mistake.



● \$2,073,253 DISTRIBUTION TO COLLEGES & PROGRAM EXPENSES  
● \$307,255 MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL  
● \$297,711 FUNDRAISING

IN THE FISCAL YEAR that ended June 30, 2021, the VFIC generated income totaling \$2,973,671. The total distribution to the member colleges was \$1,783,431. The average distribution was \$118,895.

*100 percent of the management/fundraising/general expenses were covered by the VFIC endowment. Figures provided are unaudited.*

*The mission of the VFIC is to advance the values and strengths of its member institutions. Our board members lead in fulfillment of this mission by first pledging their financial support and then by rolling up their sleeves and providing time and talent. Our board's 100 percent commitment to this sets the stage for all that we do.*



– W. SHEPPARD MILLER III  
MANAGING PARTNER,  
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# FINANCIALS





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FOR INDEPENDENT COLLEGES

901 East Byrd Street, Suite 1625  
Richmond, Virginia 23219



*Hampden-Sydney College*





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Bold represents an increase from previous gift(s). *Bold italics* denotes a first-time donor. Gifts received July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021.

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Thomas J. Lyons, Jr.  
Lewis N. Miller, Jr.  
Miller Foundation  
The Morton Family Fund <sup>1</sup>  
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Robert A. Spivey  
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Suffolk Insurance Corporation  
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<sup>1</sup> The Community Foundation  
Serving Richmond & Central  
Virginia

<sup>2</sup> Arlington Community Foundation

<sup>3</sup> Hampton Roads Community  
Foundation

<sup>#</sup> Heritage Society Members

<sup>\*</sup> Deceased