

## **Growing and Sustaining a Diverse and Inclusive Environment: The 2010-2013 Virginia Tech Diversity Strategic Plan**

The 2010 – 2013 Virginia Tech Diversity Strategic Plan reaffirms the university’s institutional commitment to growing and sustaining a diverse and inclusive learning, living, and working environment. The university strives to be a 21<sup>st</sup> century learning community defined by excellence through the affirmation of differences in the composition of Virginia Tech’s leadership, faculty, staff, and students; the configuration of its policies, procedures, organizational structures, curricula, and co-curricular programs; and the fabric of its interpersonal relationships. This diversity strategic plan expresses a framework for enacting the university’s larger mission and for its values. The plan is shaped by Virginia Tech’s core values: freedom of inquiry, mutual respect, lifelong learning, a commitment to diverse and inclusive communities, *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve), personal and institutional integrity, and a culture of continuous improvement. The plan outlined here is aligned with the university’s goals articulated in the 2006-2012 University Strategic Plan in which Virginia Tech vows

*[to] transform itself as a 21st century university capable of responding effectively to opportunities presented in a dynamic and diverse domestic and global environment...; [to a] high quality and diverse student body, faculty, and staff who contribute to the robust exchange of ideas...; [to] building multicultural and international competencies...; [and to fostering] a diverse and inclusive community that supports mutual respect [and] an organizational culture that nurtures the next generation of leadership, enhances diversity, and sustains a positive momentum geared to a successful future.*

Fundamental to the priorities outlined in this plan are Virginia Tech’s Principles of Community, adopted in 2005 in the midst of a decade of progress associated with advancing a diverse and inclusive learning, living, and working environment (see “A Decade of Progress and Challenge” at the end of this document). In the Virginia Tech Principles of Community, the university affirms its commitment

*[to] increase access and inclusion; to create a community that nurtures learning and growth for all of its members; [to the] value of human diversity; and to take individual and collective responsibility for helping to eliminate bias and discrimination and for increasing our own understanding of these issues through education, training, and interaction with others.*

## The Inclusive Excellence Framework<sup>1</sup>

“Inclusive Excellence” is a framework designed to help campuses integrate diversity and quality efforts. As a model, Inclusive Excellence assimilates diversity efforts into the core of institutional functioning to realize the educational benefits of diversity. Applying the concepts of Inclusive Excellence leads to infusing diversity into an institution’s recruiting, admissions, and hiring processes; into its curriculum and co-curriculum; and into its administrative structures and practices. To have achieved Inclusive Excellence means that an institution has adopted the cohesive, coherent, and collaborative integration of diversity and inclusion into the institutional pursuit of excellence. Advancing the Inclusive Excellence model reflects the understanding that diversity and inclusion are catalysts for institutional and educational excellence, are to be invited and integrated into the core of the educational enterprise, and are not isolated initiatives.

The Inclusive Excellence framework provides specific definitions for the terms “diversity” and “inclusion.” In addition, Virginia Tech uses the term “underrepresented.” These terms mean the following:

**Diversity** – The term diversity is used to describe individual differences (e.g., personality, learning styles, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, and ability as well as cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations) that can be engaged in the service of learning and working together.

**Inclusion** – The term inclusion is used to describe the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in people, in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical). Inclusion describes the ways in which individuals might connect that increase one’s awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and emphatic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions. ([www.aacu.org/inclusive\\_excellence/index.cfm](http://www.aacu.org/inclusive_excellence/index.cfm)).

**Underrepresented** – In the Virginia Tech context, the term underrepresented has an evolutionary and changing nature. It is important to note that in addition to race and ethnicity, this term encompasses differences between disciplines, employment categories, and geography. When self-reporting demographics at, for example, the time of admission, enrollment, or employment, the federal reporting guidelines issued in October 2007 by the U.S. Department of Education and adopted by the Integrated Post-secondary Education Data System (IPEDS) allow students and members of the staff and faculty to indicate their ethnicity as either Hispanic/Latino or Non-Hispanic/Latino. In addition, individuals are asked to indicate their race or races from among the following choices: (1) American Indian or Alaska Native, (2) Asian, (3) Black or African American, (4) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or (5) White. In this document, students and members of the staff and faculty who self-identify their ethnicity as Hispanic/Latino per the federal guidelines are considered to be underrepresented. In addition,

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<sup>1</sup> The Inclusive Excellence model is based on three monographs disseminated by the Association of American Colleges and Universities: *Making Diversity Work on Campus: A Research-Based Perspective*, *Achieving Equitable Educational Outcomes with All Students: The Institution’s Roles and Responsibilities*, and *Toward a Model of Inclusive Excellence and Change in Postsecondary Institutions*. The papers are available on the AAC&U website: [www.aacu.org/inclusive\\_excellence/papers.cfm](http://www.aacu.org/inclusive_excellence/papers.cfm). Virginia Tech gratefully acknowledges the work of these scholars and AAC&U as an association that has provided national leadership in the conceptualization and dissemination of this work.

non-Hispanic/Latino students and faculty members who self-identify, in whole or in part, as American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander are considered underrepresented.

### **The Dimensions of Inclusive Excellence at Virginia Tech**

The model for Inclusive Excellence at Virginia Tech has four dimensions: **(1) Access and Success, (2) Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations, (3) Education and Scholarship, and (4) Institutional Infrastructure.** The framework for this plan should be conceptualized as a matrix of integrated initiatives designed to achieve institutional excellence infused with diversity and inclusion. Each dimension of the model represents an area in which initiatives are designed to achieve excellence. For planning and implementation purposes, information needs to be collected and analyzed and programs and policies need to be modified or developed to address deficiencies within each dimension. The dimensions create a framework that helps the institution monitor the progress of diversity and inclusion efforts to ensure that they remain integrated, intentional, and central to the core mission of the university.

The goals, objectives, strategies and indicators outlined below are intended to guide the actions of appropriate university units, including senior management areas, colleges, departments, and programs, in the delivery of initiatives, policies, and practices that advance diversity and inclusion. To coincide with the timeframe associated with the University Strategic Plan, initiatives outlined in this plan include the current year (2010) to 2013. As this plan is implemented, the creation of indicators for each of the four dimensions will result in an annual report to the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors that will include accomplishments, deficiencies, and plans for adjustments of efforts. The report associated with this plan will be presented annually, beginning in March 2011, to the Academic Affairs Committee of the board of visitors. (The annual census dates for students and employees occur in the fall, and a March reporting deadline would provide time for proper data collection and analysis.)

Indicators included in this plan draw on existing datasets wherever possible, especially those reports submitted to state or federal authorities that use standardized definitions and may allow cross-institutional comparisons. The plan's strategies and indicators are consistent with initiatives implemented under the auspices of the Race and the Institution Task Force and Implementation Team. Institutional and national surveys of faculty, staff, and students also provide important information for monitoring progress, guiding continuous improvement, and benchmarking against others when possible. Many units on campus participate in collecting and analyzing the data cited below, including Institutional Research and Effectiveness, the provost, the vice president and dean of undergraduate education, the Division of Student Affairs, Human Resources, Outreach and International Programs, and the Graduate School.

## Access and Success

**Goal:** Achieve a more diverse and inclusive undergraduate and graduate student body, faculty, and staff.

**Objective 1:** To achieve increased enrollments of diverse and underrepresented undergraduate students

### Strategies:

1. Implement selected pipeline initiatives with the potential to make Virginia Tech the institution of choice for high-achieving pre-college students from diverse and underrepresented groups. (The Achievable Dream Project and the Virginia Indian initiatives are two examples.)
2. Reduce the gap in yield rates for admitted freshmen or transfers from diverse and underrepresented groups, where applicable, through aggressive financial-aid packaging, broad engagement of the university community, assessment of special initiatives, and acting upon results.

### Indicators:

1. Number of pipeline program participants who enroll at Virginia Tech
2. Increased yield for admitted freshmen and transfer students from underrepresented groups
3. The number of first-time full-time undergraduate or full-time transfer students from underrepresented groups

**Objective 2:** To increase the academic success of diverse and underrepresented and first-generation students.

### Strategies:

1. Identify specific barriers to the academic progress and achievement of diverse and underrepresented students.
2. Enhance advising system for all students, with special attention to students from diverse and underrepresented groups.
3. Advance the academic, social, and cultural needs of first generation, low-income, and underrepresented students using First Year Experiences and the university's Quality Enhancement Project (QEP).
4. Ensure broad involvement of diverse, first generation, low-income, and underrepresented students in undergraduate research and experiential learning opportunities.
5. Assess the effectiveness of one or more pipeline or undergraduate academic support programs each year to ensure that efforts and outcomes are aligned with goals and that opportunities for continuous improvement are identified.

### Indicators:

1. First- to second-year retention rates by race and gender
2. The six-year graduation rates of underrepresented students by race/ethnicity (university scorecard)
3. Comparison of the academic progress and success of first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented students who participate in selected academic support programs with students who have similar entry profiles but do not participate (e.g., graduation rates, retention rates, time-to-degree rates)

**Objective 3:** To increase diversity and global inclusion within the graduate and professional student community at Virginia Tech.

**Strategies:**

1. Continue recruiting a diverse graduate and professional student population with the goal of making Virginia Tech the destination of choice for graduate students of diverse backgrounds.
2. Implement activities and programming that continue building the graduate community that exists in the Graduate Life Center, specifically addressing issues of work-life balance.
3. Continue expanding the Transformative Graduate Education programs, offering more academic courses that address diversity and global inclusion directly.
4. Create a benchmark to assess the effectiveness of key graduate student recruitment or retention initiatives to ensure that efforts and outcomes are aligned with goals and that opportunities for continuous improvement are identified.

**Indicators:**

1. Number of students admitted from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups
2. Grants submitted that support pipeline programs with minority-serving institutions
3. Time-to-degree and graduation rates of graduate students by race/ethnicity and gender
4. The number of graduate degrees awarded by race/ethnicity and gender

**Objective 4:** To achieve a more diverse faculty and staff

**Strategies:**

1. Implement special faculty-recruitment initiatives, such as the cluster hire in Africana Studies; the Future Faculty Initiative; and aggressive recruitment of women faculty in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields.
2. Strengthen mentoring and other faculty development and retention initiatives to increase the success of all faculty members.
3. Implement outreach and recruitment strategies to increase staff applicants and hires from diverse and underrepresented groups.
4. Implement the faculty/staff exit survey and use the results to identify issues and opportunities for continuous improvement.
5. Continue to implement mentoring programs, work place policies, and other initiatives aimed at retaining faculty and staff members.

**Indicators:**

1. Number and proportion of faculty by type by race/ethnicity and gender
2. Number and proportion of staff by race/ethnicity and job group
3. New faculty and staff hires by type or major employee group by race/ethnicity and gender
4. Track workforce composition, number of new hires and turnover rates for women and underrepresented faculty and staff.
5. Voluntary departure rates (or turnover rates as defined by the state for staff) by employee type, race/ethnicity, and gender
6. Number and proportion of faculty members who achieve tenure and promotion by cohort, race/ethnicity, and gender

**Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations**

**Goal:** Create and sustain an organizational environment that acknowledges and celebrates diversity and employs inclusive practices throughout daily operations.

**Objective:** Create a climate that is supportive and respectful and that values differing perspectives and experiences.

**Strategies:**

1. Use surveys and/or focus groups to periodically assess student and employee feedback on the climate for diversity.
2. Create meaningful dialogue between and among groups that increases understanding of varied perspectives and the nature of social and economic inequities.
3. Educate the campus community on the prevention of harassment and discrimination and productive ways to resolve conflict. Effectively address concerns and complaints.
4. Offer educational and celebratory events for students, faculty, staff, and the community that recognize, value, and honor diversity and promote inclusion. Evaluate selected programs for their impact on the climate for diversity.
5. Maintain high visibility of the Principles of Community, through annual on- and off-campus promotions, such as student and employee orientations and athletic events, and posting the principles in classrooms and offices.
6. Increase recognition programs that acknowledge contributions made to advancing diversity.

**Indicators:**

1. Perceptions of the climate for diversity as measured by relevant questions on the Employment Climate Survey and Employee Exit Survey that are analyzed by race/ethnicity, gender, employee type, and senior management area
2. Awareness and understanding of the Principles of Community as measured by questions on the Employment Climate Survey
3. Diversity and climate-related perceptions and experiences as measured by institutional, national, or multi-institutional surveys (e.g., National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Profile of Today's College Student (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators))

## Education and Scholarship

**Goal:** Engage students, faculty, and staff in learning varied perspectives of domestic and global diversity, inclusion, and social justice.

**Objective 1:** Offer courses, curricula, and learning opportunities at the undergraduate and graduate levels that achieve diversity and inclusion-learning goals.

### Strategies:

1. Implement the plan for undergraduate curricular transformation (including the establishment of the undergraduate Human Diversity and Community curriculum).
2. Use the International Strategic Plan to guide the development of opportunities for students to explore and achieve competencies with application in global settings.
3. Hire faculty and staff with content expertise in areas of study that examine diverse identities and cultures.

### Indicators:

1. Number of students enrolled in courses with the Human Diversity and Community designation
2. Number of undergraduate and graduate students engaged in internationalization efforts, using measures outlined in the International Strategic Plan (e.g., number of students participating in education abroad, studying foreign languages, etc.)
3. Number of students reporting increased dialogue between and greater understanding of other races or cultures on assessment surveys (e.g., NSSE, senior survey, or other relevant surveys of student experiences/outcomes).

**Objective 2:** Increase the multicultural competencies and capacities of the faculty and staff.

### Strategy:

1. Establish on-line and in-classroom professional development opportunities designed to improve cultural competencies for domestic and global settings.
2. Provide opportunities for faculty members to transform existing courses or create new courses that achieve diversity-related learning goals.
3. Develop opportunities that help faculty members learn how to assess the achievement of diversity-related learning outcomes in class or in co-curricular experiences.
4. Continue providing education and coaching for faculty members to assist students with disabilities in achieving their academic and personal goals.

### Indicator:

1. Participation by faculty and staff members in professional development programs related to curriculum transformation, diversity and disability awareness, and/or internationalization

## Institutional Infrastructure

**Goal:** Create and sustain an institutional infrastructure that effectively supports progress in achieving goals in the diversity strategic plan.

**Objective 1:** Sustain and increase university-wide efforts designed to amplify the potential to secure gifts, grants, and opportunities to advance the goals outlined in this plan.

### Strategies:

1. Invite university leaders to continue to strengthen their commitment, including making contributions and gifts, to advance the goals outlined in this plan.
2. Executive leadership, the Office for Diversity and Inclusion, the colleges, the Alumni Association, and University Development, among others, will implement collaborative initiatives designed to identify, nurture, and steward a robust and diverse group of university supporters comprised of alumni, parents, friends, and corporate partners.
3. Seek corporate and foundation support for key pipeline and academic support programs.
4. Continue to seek and secure federal (e.g., National Science Foundation) grant dollars that include commitments to the academic and professional advancement of underrepresented students and faculty.

### Indicators:

1. Identification of 200 individuals who have a clear understanding and appreciation for multicultural initiatives and the ability to financially support these initiatives
2. Development of a plan to be implemented by University Development, the Office for Diversity and Inclusion, and the Career Services office that identifies corporate sponsors with interest in providing funds for programs that advance the experiences of students
3. Increases in the number of scholarships in the President's Scholarship Initiative
4. Increases in the compositional diversity of members of advisory, alumni, and other groups associated with the colleges and university programs.

**Objective 2:** Engage key leaders and stakeholders in analyzing disaggregated data and special studies to better understand and address long-standing organizational challenges, recruitment, and yield of diverse and underrepresented undergraduate students and the loss of women and minority tenure-track faculty.

### Strategies:

1. Schedule regular and on-going meetings of key leaders and relevant university committees and commissions (Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity, academic advisors, college diversity committees, etc.) to review data and reports to increase organizational learning and understanding of significant issues to be addressed.
2. Set expectations that practices and outcomes related to diversity and inclusion are vital measures of institutional excellence. Create a culture of organizational learning and continuous improvement at all levels.
3. Institute reporting systems for accountability and continuous improvement to optimize the realization of the university's diversity goals.

4. Develop and report on indicators for key areas in all four dimensions of the diversity strategic plan.

**Indicators:**

1. An annual report to the Academic Affairs Committee of the board of visitors on selected indicators outlined in the diversity strategic plan
2. Reports on Inclusive Excellence goals, objectives, strategies, and indicators to academic and administrative units, commissions, and other bodies as appropriate.

**Objective 3:** Assess the effectiveness of the current organizational structure for diversity-related compliance and programming and make adjustments as needed.

**Strategies:**

1. Review allocation of funding for initiatives annually to determine importance of continuing those initiatives or reallocating funding for more effective use. Work toward a sustainable plan for financial support of key programs and initiatives.
2. Create effective collaborative structures among units with key responsibilities for attaining outcomes in the diversity strategic plan.

**Indicators:**

1. Successful completion of searches for leadership roles for equity and inclusion efforts

## **A Decade of Progress and Challenge (1998-2008)**

Virginia Tech has undergone a lengthy and often challenging metamorphosis, transforming itself from an all-white, all-male military academy prior to 1921, to an inclusive, comprehensive, innovative, and internationally respected research university with Virginia's largest full-time student population. The institution continues to strive to integrate its diversity and inclusion efforts with the pursuit of excellence.

In 1997, a controversy was ignited by the allegation that a residence hall bore the name of a former faculty member who may have had ties to two racist organizations as a student. Of concern was the individual's possible association with a student chapter of the Ku Klux Klan and with the Pittsylvania Club, whose logo, reproduced in the student yearbook, *The Bugle*, included a racially charged scene. This controversy contributed, in part, to the establishment by President Paul Torgersen of Virginia Tech's Office of Multicultural Affairs. In 1998, Benjamin Dixon was hired to lead the office as the first vice president of multicultural affairs.

In 1998, an extensive *Campus Climate Survey* of faculty, staff, and students revealed that women and minorities had significantly less positive perceptions and experiences of the Virginia Tech environment than did individuals in the majority. The *2000-2005 Diversity Strategic Plan* for Virginia Tech began to address those and other concerns by focusing on five broad goals: (1) increase and enhance student, faculty, and staff diversity at all levels; (2) improve the university climate; (3) implement a comprehensive program of education and training; (4) develop a system of responsibility, accountability, and recognition for increasing campus diversity and improving campus climate; and (5) develop internal and external collaborations and partnerships designed to increase collaborations on multicultural initiatives. The Office of Multicultural Affairs was tasked with leading the efforts to implement this plan.

Numerous academic support programs and programmatic initiatives designed to improve the climate for diversity and to facilitate student engagement resulted in the unveiling of the *2000-2005 Diversity Strategic Plan*. Among them were the creation of an annual Diversity Summit – begun in 1998 and at which members of the university community come together to discuss issues of diversity, inclusion, and community—and an annual Celebration of Diversity, highlighting diverse student communities at the university through performances and presentations. Under the auspices of the Division of Student Affairs, a Campus Climate Team was formed to address specific incidents and ongoing practices that adversely affect student life. A group of faculty and staff members created the Black Student Service Providers group, which later came to serve all underrepresented students, and, in 2004, was renamed the VT Academic Success Coordinators (VTASC).

In 2001, the Presidential Campus Enrichment Grant (PCEG) Program, a collaboration between the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid, was created to enhance diversity in undergraduate student recruitment and retention at Virginia Tech. Numerous other recruitment, pre-college outreach, and pipeline programs have followed. Joining the Black Caucus, formed in 1981, and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Caucus, formed in 1992, was the Hispanic/Latino Faculty and Staff Caucus, formed in 2002.

In March 2003, Virginia Tech's efforts toward becoming a more multicultural and inclusive institution faced a challenge when the board of visitors unexpectedly prohibited any consideration of race or ethnicity in admissions or the awarding of financial aid and modified the university's non-discrimination statement, eliminating the reference to sexual orientation. A

broad coalition of groups and individuals across campus protested the decision. The board of visitors quickly rescinded the decision, but these events significantly impacted the university's reputation on issues of diversity and damaged perceptions of its climate for inclusion. With the full support of the board, the university carefully reviewed a wide variety of programs and practices to assure compliance with evolving legal principles concerning affirmative action in admissions and employment. The end of the 1969 Accord, announced in April 2002, between the Commonwealth of Virginia and the U.S. Department of Education, which had been negotiating to dismantle a previously segregated system of higher education in Virginia, and U.S. Supreme Court decisions in the University of Michigan admissions cases (June 2003) required rethinking programs and admissions practices that targeted specific racial groups based on the legal rationale of "remediation." As a result of the "narrow tailoring" review, minor modifications were made to a number of programs to bring them into secure legal compliance, and a handful of strategies were eliminated as no longer sustainable. While difficult at the time, the shift in legal framework away from remediation and race-specific programs created a more inclusive and comprehensive approach to diversity programs and practices, including a far stronger articulation of the educational benefits of diversity to the entire student population. Even in the midst of those challenging discussions, the university took an innovative step to bring diversity issues into the mainstream of university decision making by establishing the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity in March 2003, providing a voice in governance for on-going university-level attention to issues and policies related to diversity.

Institutional transformation took a significant step forward with the awarding of a five-year, multi-million dollar grant from the National Science Foundation for *AdvanceVT*, a comprehensive program to promote and enhance the careers of women in science and engineering at Virginia Tech. Since 2003, the project has tackled issues of departmental climate; conducted multiple faculty surveys and studies; introduced or overhauled work-life policies and programs; supported leadership development and pipeline programs; and hosted many workshops, conferences, and events to educate and engage the entire university community.

In 2005, the Office of Multicultural Programs and Services was formed, integrating diversity work that had begun in the Office of the Dean of Students in the early 1990's. The university adopted the Virginia Tech Principles of Community as part of an effort to formally affirm and articulate the university's commitment to diversity and inclusion. The university strengthened mechanisms for responding to complaints of bias. One example is the SafeWatch program, which was designed to provide electronic capacity for reporting incidents of possible bias. In January 2006, Virginia Tech inaugurated the annual university-wide commemoration of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday during which no classes are held and university-wide celebrations occur.

By the middle of the decade, Virginia Tech had made significant strides toward fostering a more welcoming environment and creating an infrastructure to support diversity-related policies and programs. Despite these and many other concrete signs of progress, clear evidence indicated that the university needed to intensify its efforts in order to develop into a truly inclusive learning, living, and working environment.

In the spring of 2006, the non-reappointment of a black faculty member ignited strong concerns once again. Consequently, the provost formed the Task Force on Race and the Institution "to examine issues pertaining to race and racism and to suggest innovative strategies... ." The group was charged to review the current state of the institution; identify key issues limiting its progress

on recruitment, retention, and inclusion; identify best practices internally and externally; and propose short-term and long-term actions and strategies toward institutional progress. The task force issued its final report in April 2007, identifying six areas for action across all dimensions of the institution: (1) assessment and accountability; (2) cultural competency and campus climate; (3) communication, coordination, and collaboration; (4) curricular reform; (5) recruitment, retention, mentoring, and advising; and (6) resources. An implementation team was charged to identify and prioritize those recommendations that were financially and programmatically feasible and were likely to have the greatest impact on the institution. The resulting August 2008 report included a five-year implementation plan and budget, and a variety of identified initiatives have been launched or have been provided on-going funding, including the Office of Graduate Student Diversity Initiatives, a curriculum transformation project, cluster hiring in Africana Studies, and diversity-related recruitment for staff and faculty, among others.

The fall of 2007 saw the start of MOSAIC (Multicultural Opportunity and Social Awareness Interest Community), a multicultural theme housing and academic community for undergraduate students. In June 2008, the Office of Multicultural Affairs was renamed the Office for Equity and Inclusion (OEI). After the vice president's position was vacated in 2010, the office was reorganized and renamed the Office for Diversity and Inclusion (ODI).

In addition to these initiatives, the university has launched activities to address the need to increase the number of competitive scholarship packages and adequate need-based aid for low-income families. These recruitment tools have long been a challenge for Virginia Tech, directly affecting successful recruitment and retention of a diverse undergraduate student body. Virginia Tech's Funds for the Future program protects low-income undergraduate students from tuition and fee increases. The new Virginia Tech Presidential Scholarship Initiative (VTPSI) is designed to attract and retain more Virginia undergraduates from modest and low-income families, with preference given to first-generation students. Each year, 50 new qualifying students receive tuition, fees, and on-campus room and board in grant funds. In addition to funds, extensive services are provided that include academic and social support and cultural enrichment experiences. The first cohort of VTPSI awardees entered Virginia Tech in fall 2009, and a full complement of approximately 200 students will be on campus by 2012.

Toward the end of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Virginia Tech has positioned itself to become a high-quality multicultural organization. The combined efforts and initiatives across the institution have created conditions for unprecedented institutional will to actively and aggressively pursue, strengthen, and improve Virginia Tech's commitment to being a diverse and inclusive university. Only through a combination of multidimensional strategies can the university expect to achieve institutional transformation.

As the university looks forward, it aims to become an inclusive educational institution where diversity is recognized, celebrated, and engaged as a source of strength and excellence. To guide its efforts, Virginia Tech is adopting the framework of Inclusive Excellence. The diversity strategic plan outlined here is intended to provide definitions and standards for inclusion and diversity that can be applied to a wide range of areas across the university. The plan is grounded in the belief that inclusion and diversity are the responsibility of all members of the university community and are inextricably linked to Virginia Tech's goal of achieving 21<sup>st</sup> century institutional excellence.