

April 23, 2021

Dear Radford Family:

Due to the continued dedication and hard work of Highlander students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends, I am pleased to share the Mid-Term Progress Report for the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan. Although much has changed in the past year for our campus, our community, and our Commonwealth, Highlanders have remained sharply focused on achieving our vision and furthering our mission.

Since the adoption of the plan by the Board of Visitors in December 2017 and its subsequent implementation by the campus community beginning in January 2018, much has been accomplished. This report outlines some of the major accomplishments and other highlights. Additional information regarding the strategic plan, as well as its implementation and progress, is available at the following links.

- Full plan with all strategies and key performance indicators: https://www.radford.edu/content/strategic-planning/home.html
- Regular updates regarding progress: https://www.radford.edu/content/strategic-planning/home/progress.html
- Annual reports for each year in the planning cycle: https://www.radford.edu/content/strategic-planning/home/annual-reports.html

Although a great deal of challenging and exciting work remains ahead for the Radford family, our campus should be proud of all that has been accomplished and the many opportunities created for current and future Highlanders!

With Highlander Pride,

Brian O. Hemphill, Ph.D.

President

VISION

Radford University aspires to be the premier, innovative, student-centered university in the Commonwealth of Virginia and beyond with a keen focus on teaching, research and service.

Adopted on December 8, 2017

MISSION

As a mid-sized, comprehensive public institution dedicated to the creation and dissemination of knowledge, Radford University empowers students from diverse backgrounds by providing transformative educational experiences, from the undergraduate to the doctoral level, within and beyond the classroom. As an inclusive university community, we specialize in cultivating relationships among students, faculty, staff, alumni and other partners, and in providing a culture of service, support and engagement. We embrace innovation and tradition and instill students with purpose and the ability to think creatively and critically. We provide an educational environment and the tools to address the social, economic and environmental issues confronting our region, nation and the world.

Adopted on December 8, 2017 and revised on October 3, 2018

CORE VALUES

Student Empowerment and Success — We engage and support our students in the discovery and pursuit of their own unique paths.

Excellence — We expect our community to strive for the highest standards.

Inclusiveness — We are committed to a spirit of cooperation and collaboration, embracing and honoring the diversity of our community.

Community — We foster relationships and a culture of service within and beyond our university community.

Intellectual Freedom — We encourage and defend a fearless exploration of knowledge in all its forms.

Innovation — We inspire and support creativity in research, scholarship, pedagogy and service.

Sustainability — We are committed to integrating sustainable practices into all aspects of our operations and engage students across the curriculum to learn, discover and contribute to positive current and future environmental solutions.



Academic Excellence and Research

Goals

- 1. Be a leading institution of higher education in the Commonwealth of Virginia to produce students with a high level of applied learning capabilities for productive professional and personal lives
- 2. Garner recognition for signature academic programs in health sciences, healthcare, and human services across the lifespan
- Garner recognition for signature academic programs that provide expertise for enhancing information safety and security for Virginians and the global community
- 4. Increase faculty and student-faculty collaborative research, scholarship, and creative activities that are externally validated through peer review and supported by grants

Featured Accomplishment

On July 1, 2019, Jefferson College of Health Sciences became an integrated part of Radford University with the establishment of Radford University Carilion, or RUC. The merger followed more than 18 months of collaboration and planning. The merger would not have been possible without the expertise and support of Carilion Clinic. Carilion officials continue to be collaborative and strategic partners in healthcare education and research efforts. 2019-2020 marked the first academic year with an official one-year anniversary on July 1, 2020. RUC is nearing completion of its second academic year.

At RUC, we are on the frontlines of ensuring there are capable and dedicated healthcare workers to fill the jobs of both today and tomorrow. We are honored to do this critical work, and we look forward to making an even greater impact moving forward!

Data Highlights

- From Fall 2019 to Fall 2020, overall enrollment increased from 1,046 students to 1,101 students.
 - This 6.3 percent increase is especially important given the global health pandemic, which had adverse impacts on many institutions with regard to enrollment.
 - Currently, RUC is on track for another year of enrollment growth based on applications, admissions, and confirmations for the 2021-2022 academic year.

- 88 percent of RUC students are residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- o 79 percent of RUC students are female.
- 21 percent of RUC students identify as an ethnic minority.
- The average age of an RUC undergraduate student is 25.
- The average age of an RUC graduate student is 29.

• Programmatic Highlights

- Southwest Virginia is experiencing a healthcare workforce crisis right now, which will continue in the coming years.
 - We are proud that RUC is educating the healthcare workforce in Southwest Virginia.
 - Over the last five years, approximately 86% of RUC nursing students accepted placements to work in Southwest Virginia hospital and healthcare settings after graduation.
- The University remains sharply focused on growing the pipeline of nursing graduates to serve the employment needs in the local region, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and beyond.
 - Most recently, Radford University announced a new collaboration with Academic Partnerships to expand enrollment in the RN to BSN program, thereby significantly increasing the number of students and graduates in this area of need!

Other Highlights

• <u>Highlander Research Rookies Program</u>: Beginning with the 2018-2019 academic year, the Highlander Research Rookies Program provides 15 apprenticeships each year to high-achieving and highly-motivated first and second year students. Students, selected as Highlander Research Rookies through a competitive process, are paired with a faculty mentor, working alongside him or her for 10 hours per week, thereby maximizing opportunities for research-based engagement and learning. Students earn a \$4,000 stipend (\$2,000 at the end of each semester with the submission of their research progress report).

The aim of the program is to engage highly motivated first and second-year students in faculty-mentored, hands-on research, and creative scholarly activities. Research Rookies explore their selected topics, while developing relationships with expert faculty in areas of interest and gaining valuable research and critical-thinking skills.

Northam announced the creation of the Tech Talent Investment Program (TTIP), a statewide workforce initiative that will poise Radford University as a lead institution in producing graduates prepared to fill the emerging tech talent pipeline. Through the TTIP, Radford University will receive approximately \$17.3 million in funding over the next 20 years to produce nearly 400 additional graduates beyond current degree production. The new program, announced by Governor Northam during an event at Virginia State University, is the result of Amazon's construction of a second headquarters, HQ2, in Northern Virginia. Amazon, a multinational technology company, plans to hire 25,000 employees for its new location over the next decade.

Radford University is honored to be selected to participate in the Commonwealth's TTIP. Designated as a Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education by the National Security Agency and Division of Homeland Security, Radford University has a strong academic background and proven history that continues to grow in new and profound ways, including a new delivery platform through the Vinod Chachra IMPACT Lab and a new program offering of the Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity. Both of these advancements marked a first-of-its-kind endeavor at a four-year public institution in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

With TTIP funding, Radford University is in the process of implementing several strategic initiatives, such as focusing on community college partnerships; expanding degree pathways; and improving retention efforts, in order to double its number of graduates, specifically those in the Artis College of Science and Technology's Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and Technology degree program. The program is designed to produce professionals with expertise in a range of technical skills that are highly sought after, including cybersecurity and software development.

As a leader in the Commonwealth and as articulated in our five-year strategic plan, Radford University is garnering recognition for signature academic programs that provide expertise for enhancing information safety and security for Virginians and the global community. To date, much progress is being made in expanding access for our students and the impact we are having in enhancing security for our citizens. TTIP participation marks another significant step forward for Radford University in serving the Commonwealth, our nation, and the world!



Brand Identity

Goals

- 1. Cultivate a fierce pride among internal constituents (i.e., current students, faculty, and staff) through a shared understanding and experience of the Highlander identity and values (Responsive, Resilient, Real)
- 2. Integrate the Highlander brand identity and values (Responsive, Resilient, Real) into communications with external constituents (e.g., alumni, employers, prospective students, and family members)

Featured Accomplishment

Radford University students, faculty, and staff, as well as the broader community, have embraced the 3Rs (Responsive, Resilient, Real), through both visual and written formats, and what these elements mean to the University's brand and identity. As defined in the strategic plan, Highlanders are responsive, resilient, and real! Since the creation of the plan, the Radford family has thoughtfully engaged to further define the collective Highlander experience and the individual Radford journey. Their observations are as follows.

- <u>Responsive</u>: We balance empathy and accountability. We seek to understand other perspectives and accept our own responsibility.
- <u>Resilient</u>: We balance grit and rest. We strive to succeed, while balancing time in the performance zone.
- <u>Real</u>: We navigate between success and failure. We are authentic as we build character and become well-rounded individuals, while learning from failures.

Radford University is a truly special place, because of the people who uphold our mission, believe in our vision, and live our values each and every day. We are a community of overcomers and achievers; people who are willing to put in hard work and are dedicated to the pursuit of our hopes and dreams for ourselves, our families, and our communities. Together, with a strong sense of Highlander pride, we are making an impact on communities locally, regionally, and globally. Through our shared Highlander values, we navigate frustration, fear, and fun to achieve success! We are confident in our right to "be at the table" and know we positively contribute to our chosen fields and communities.

Data Highlights

Merchandise Sales

2017: \$1,139,548
2018: \$1,119,219
2019: \$1,254,820
2020: \$891,179

Royalties Collected

2017: \$90,4862018: \$99,8672019: \$103,3602020: \$78,020

Licensees

2017: 1182018: 1192019: 1272020: 116

Programmatic Highlights

- o In the Spring of 2019, "Responsive. Resilient. Real." launched as an online story series. The series, which is on-going, celebrates the Highlander spirit of students, faculty, staff, and alumni by sharing their unique stories and their strong sense of Highlander pride. For more information, visit https://www.radford.edu/content/three-r/home.html.
- In the Spring of 2020, "Highlanders Rise" was launched in response to the COVID-19 global health pandemic. The inspirational and motivating campaign, which remains on-going, was defined by video messages, personal stories, and direct engagement from those both near and far. For more information, visit https://www.radford.edu/content/highlanders-rise/home.html.
- In the Summer of 2020, the Radford University Brand Guide was released to the campus and the community. The document outlined a series of expanded and updated colors, fonts, photography style, and graphic elements, as well as patterns and textures. For more information, visit https://www.radford.edu/content/university-relations/home/our-services/graphic-identity.html.
- In Fall of 2020, the University entered into a partnership with VisionPoint to further its regional and national marketing efforts.

 In Spring of 2021, the University launched a new focus on programmatic marketing with direct outreach to students, aligning them with their chosen area(s) of study, and expanded marketing placements, reaching greater levels of coverage across all mediums.

Other Highlights

<u>"I am a Highlander!"</u>: In addition to a revamped look and feel for all collateral and materials in digital and print formats, Radford University has worked diligently to personalize its brand with both internal and external audiences. Radford University is known as a caring, supportive, and inclusive community. That is why we often refer to our campus and our community as the Radford family! As such, it is critical our brand reflects the personal and caring nature of who we are.

We bring this essence of our brand to life through the use of our custom font, the Highlander Handwritten Font, and various materials that include this hand-written element. We know that someone's handwriting is a personal reflection of who they are and shows the utmost in care. That is why Highlander Handwritten Font is often found on items ranging from t-shirts, stickers, and notebooks to magazine advertisements and postcard mailers. We have been working diligently to ensure that the community, both near and far, knows that the Radford family is very real and being a member of this family is an integral part of becoming a Highlander!

<u>Healthcare Heroes</u>: Launched in the late Spring of 2020, Radford University launched a specialized marketing and promotional campaign to bring greater attention to the important role that healthcare workers play in our community and for our families. Most recently, in the Spring of 2021, the campaign approach and wording was revised to reflect the General Assembly's allocation of \$10 million annually to support Virginia residents studying in undergraduate programs at Radford University Carilion, or RUC. This investment in tomorrow's healthcare professionals means that we are able to reduce tuition for many RUC programs beginning with the 2021-2022 academic year.



Economic Development and Community Partnerships

Goals

- 1. Contribute to overall economic growth and increased employment opportunities in the region through both indirect and direct economic development activities in the health, education, arts and culture, natural resources, and infrastructure sectors
- 2. Facilitate and support the City of Radford and the New River Valley as focal points for business, social, tourism, and cultural activities

Featured Accomplishment

On September 8, 2017, Radford University launched IMPACT, a competency-based education, or CBE, program targeting the adult student population with an initial focus on cybersecurity and geospatial intelligence, which was later expanded to include K-12 professional development. On March 21, 2018, the Vinod Chachra IMPACT Lab was unveiled in honor of Dr. Chachra and his generous support of the University, as well as his accomplished career and many contributions. In the past three years, the program has grown significant in terms of impact through student engagement and reach through business partnerships.

Data Highlights

CBE Enrollment Snapshot

October 2017: 8

October 2018: 465

October 2019: 2.518

October 2020: 2,227

• Programmatic Highlights

- o In the Fall of 2017, shortly after the initial program launch, Radford University's Innovative Mobile Personalized Accelerated Competency Training (IMPACT) program was awarded a historic three-year, \$13.9 million grant by the U.S. Department of Education's Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) Grant Program.
 - The SEED grant expanded IMPACT to include Appalachian Support for Specialized Education Training (ASSET), which includes the development, implementation and evaluation of online, self-paced, CBE training designed to increase teacher effectiveness and workforce capacity in underserved rural communities in Appalachia.

- ASSET served 5,000 K-12 educators with the primary goal of increasing the number of highly effective educators in K-12 highneed schools in rural Appalachia, including Virginia, Tennessee, and West Virginia by building educators' knowledge and skills in evidence-based practices through CBE learning models.
- The grant began on October 1, 2017 and ran through September 30, 2020.
- It represents the largest grant in the history of the University.
- The growth and success of the Vinod Chachra IMPACT Lab is directly tied to strong relationships built with a diverse cross section of business and industry companies and leaders.
 - To date, the Vinod Chachra IMPACT Lab has a total of 32 corporate partners.
- The future of the Vinod Chachra IMPACT Lab will be made possible through further expansion in both programmatic and delivery approaches, including work with Academic Partnerships, as well as planning for a B2C, or business-to-consumer, model, in addition to the current B2B, or businessto-business, model.

Other Highlights

- <u>Venture Lab Initial Opening and On-Going Operation</u>: On September 26, 2019, the Radford family joined together to celebrate the opening of the Venture Lab. The new home for student entrepreneurship at Radford University was made possible through the conversion of a previously unfinished and unoccupied space on the lower level of the Davis College of Business and Economics. The Venture Lab operates as a bridge between idea formation to concept launch. It was established to work with students from all disciplines to map and facilitate the pathway from initial thoughts to market fruition. With the growth of our MakerSpace ecosystem and entrepreneurial activity by students at Radford University, we seek to provide students with a way to discover and grow "Value in Their Ideas." The Venture Lab is designed to counsel students as they formalize, develop, and strengthen innovation efforts.
- World-Class Hotel Partnership Project: Following more than a year of planning, demolition of four existing structures on the hotel site, at the intersection of Tyler Avenue and Calhoun Street, has officially begun to make way for The Highlander, the highly anticipated hotel to be constructed right off Radford University's main campus. The project is a joint effort between the University and the Radford University Foundation to bring an upscale, full-service boutique hotel to the area.

The Highlander, with 125 rooms, is designed to reflect the local region and its rich history, as well as Radford University's tradition of hard work. In addition, it will provide amenities not available at current area hotels, such as a stunning rooftop steakhouse and bar that will overlook campus with a backdrop of the Blue Ridge Mountains. A highlight of the structure will be a 4,000-square-foot conference space that will accommodate 250-300 people, allowing the University to potentially host large-scale events, such as business expos and conferences.

A team of private companies, working with Radford University and the Radford University Foundation, have partnered to deliver this project including:

- o S.B. Ballard, of Virginia Beach, as the general contractor;
- o Blur Workshop, of Atlanta, Georgia, as the designer;
- o Preston Hollow Capital, of Dallas, Texas, as the capital partner; and
- o Aimbridge Hospitality, of Arlington, Texas, the largest third-party management company in the U.S., as the manager of the hotel.

Demolition is scheduled to be completed by the end of May 2021 with construction to immediately follow. With a formal groundbreaking event planned for June 15, 2021, the hotel will be completed in late 2022.



Philanthropic Giving and Alumni Engagement

Goals

- 1. Broaden engagement for all constituents
- 2. Increase giving and engagement
- 3. Inform constituents about giving opportunities and highlight success and impact

Featured Accomplishment

Radford University has worked diligently to build a culture of engagement and philanthropy among all Highlanders. In the first year of implementing the strategic plan, the University secured more than \$15 million in gifts and pledges, thereby reaching the five-year goal in the first year. Since that time, giving has remained a strong focus for the Radford family; however, additional factors, such as the COVID-19 global health pandemic, have impacted such efforts. There is a great deal of energy and excitement for Radford University among those who provide generous support and create expanded opportunities.

- Data Highlights
 - Fundraising

FY 2017: \$10,792,480

FY 2018: \$15.340.113

• FY 2019: \$12,510,840

• FY 2020: \$7.489.470

FY 2021: \$16,233,581 (as of March 31, 2021)

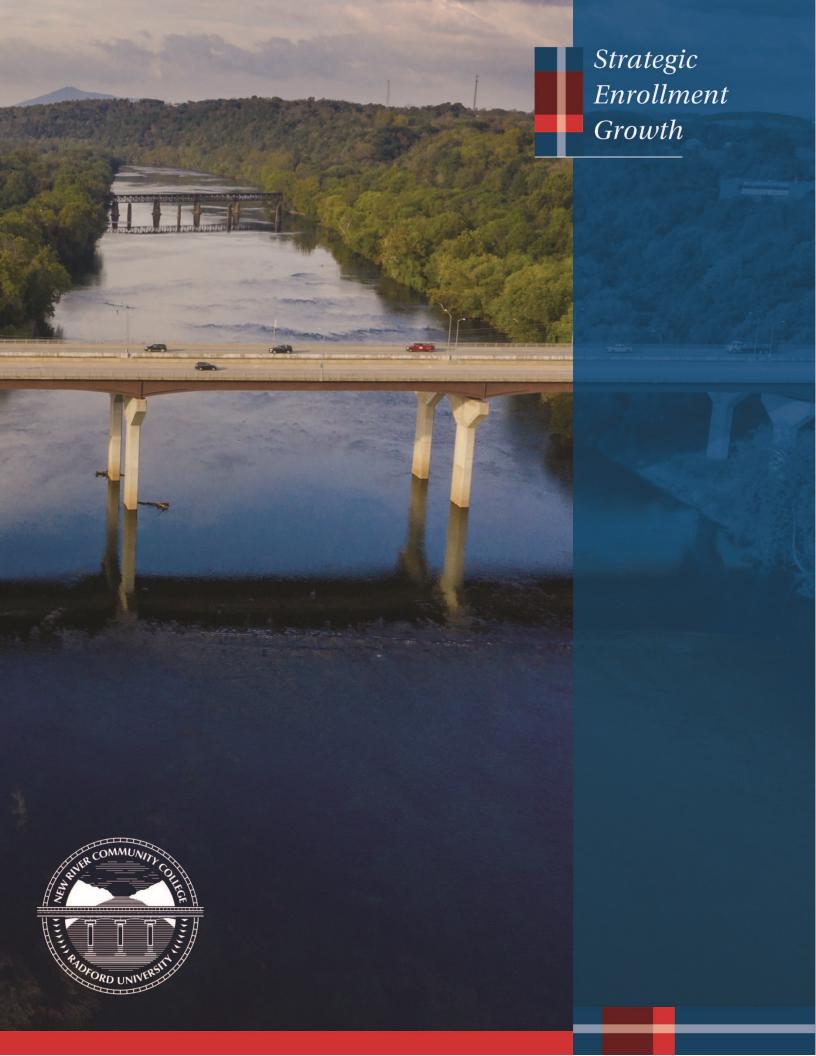
• Programmatic Highlights

- On October 3, 2018, the Radford family joined together as we announced a landmark \$8 million gift from Sandra C. Davis and William C. Davis as part of a campus-wide momentous event.
 - The generous and landmark gift endowed scholarships for students studying in Radford University's College of Business and Economics and College of Visual and Performing Arts.
 - As part of the event, the University announced the naming of the Sandra C. Davis and William C. Davis College of Business and Economics and the Sandra C. Davis and William C. Davis Performance Hall, which is located in the Covington Center for Visual and Performing Arts.

This month, Radford University will publicly launch TOGETHER, the University's most significant capital campaign. With broad-based engagement and expanded outreach, continued support and forward momentum will be focused on the campaign's pillars of access and opportunity; academic excellence and research; student success and engagement; the athletic experience; and emerging needs. The campaign goal is \$100 million with \$74 million raised thus far.

Other Highlights

- Operations and Staffing: Shortly after adoption of the strategic plan, significant focus was devoted to ensuring adequate levels of support in terms of both operations and staffing. The Advancement team, including Major Gifts, Alumni Relations, Annual Giving, Donor Relations, Advancement Communications, and Advancement Services and Operations are fully staffed and have been provided needed operational support to carry out their duties and functions consistent with the defined goals.
- <u>Highlander Family Tour</u>: During the Spring and Summer of 2019, the Highlander Family Tour featured eight stops in Bristol, Virginia; Raleigh, North Carolina; Atlanta, Georgia; Charlotte, North Carolina; Roanoke, Virginia; Virginia Beach; Richmond, Virginia; and Centreville, Virginia. The tour provided an opportunity to celebrate and reminisce with alumni and friends, while sharing a University update, showcasing a featured student, and awarding the Spirit of the Tartan to an incredible Highlander advocate and champion at each stop.
- Highlander Wisdom Series: During the pandemic, the Alumni Association hosted free webinars as part of the Highlander Wisdom Series. The series featured a total of 30 webinars ranging from a local educator to a national speaker and an international traveler. The highly-successful series was held at various times throughout the day in order to maximize overall attendance and individual flexibility.



Strategic Enrollment Growth

Goals

- 1. Support enrollment growth through the development and utilization of actionable data and predictive analytics
- 2. Grow in-state freshman student headcount enrollment by three percent annually
- 3. Grow out-of-state freshman student headcount enrollment by three percent annually
- 4. Grow new transfer student headcount enrollment by three percent annually
- 5. Grow veteran and active military student headcount enrollment by ten percent annually
- 6. Grow international student headcount enrollment by 50 students annually
- 7. Grow graduate student headcount enrollment by three percent annually
- 8. Increase academic success of the undergraduate student population

Featured Accomplishment

In December of 2019, Radford University announced the establishment of the Highlander Distinction Program, a four-year, renewable scholarship for incoming students studying on the main campus. Through the program, the University is investing approximately \$13 million in new financial aid to be awarded over a four-year period. The Highlander Distinction Program offers both merit-based and need-based awards, as well as a combination of both award types. The awards, which are available to both in-state and out-of-state students, are renewable throughout an undergraduate student's four years with a 3.0 GPA requirement for continued eligibility.

- Data Highlights
 - Annual Expanded Investment
 - FY 2021: \$3.2 million
 - FY 2022: \$3.8 million
 - FY 2023: \$3.4 million
 - FY 2024: \$3.4 million

• Programmatic Highlights

- In addition to existing University-funded scholarships and the significant investment in the Highlander Distinction Program, Radford students are receiving more than \$2 million in scholarships made possible by generous donors through the Radford University Foundation during the 2020-2021 academic year.
- The Foundation's level of scholarship funding has doubled in the past decade due to increased funding from dedicated supporters.
- In combination with other existing forms of financial aid, such as state and federal initiatives, the Highlander Distinction Program represents a substantial step forward in keeping a Radford University education accessible, affordable, and attainable for future students and their families.

Other Highlights

- <u>Bridge Program</u>: A unique partnership between New River Community College and Radford University, the Bridge Program is a rigorous and supportive residential program that provides an opportunity for participants to enhance their academic skills before fully enrolling at Radford University. Bridge students live at Radford and engage in all aspects of campus life, but take classes at New River. The program goal in the initial year (the 2020-2021 academic year) was 50 students, which was exceeded with the arrival of the first Bridge students in Fall of 2020.
- Partnership Agreements: In recent years, Radford University has signed numerous partnership agreements to provide increased opportunities for Highlander students. Those include Northern Virginia Community College in August of 2017 for guaranteed transfer; the Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University in October of 2017 for a dual degree program; Emory & Henry College in November of 2018 for graduate degree programs; New River Community College in April of 2019 for guaranteed transfer; and Appalachian College of Pharmacy in February of 2020 for a dual degree program.
- <u>Academic Partnerships</u>: In January of 2021, Radford University announced an agreement with Academic Partnerships to provide its highly sought-after and affordable degree programs throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia and beyond. The partnership supports the delivery of existing programs in an expanded online format, beginning with Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN), Master of Science in Nursing Administration, and Master of Business Administration degrees.

Through this partnership, Radford University will also expand its outreach of the Vinod Chachra IMPACT Lab by offering cybersecurity and geospatial intelligence certificates to help individuals accelerate their careers in technology, with additional certificate programs planned in the future, to meet the expanding workforce demands of Virginia and beyond. The expanded programs will also help combat the impact of COVID-19 on the economy by providing working adults with affordable and easily accessible degree programs in critical, high-growth fields.

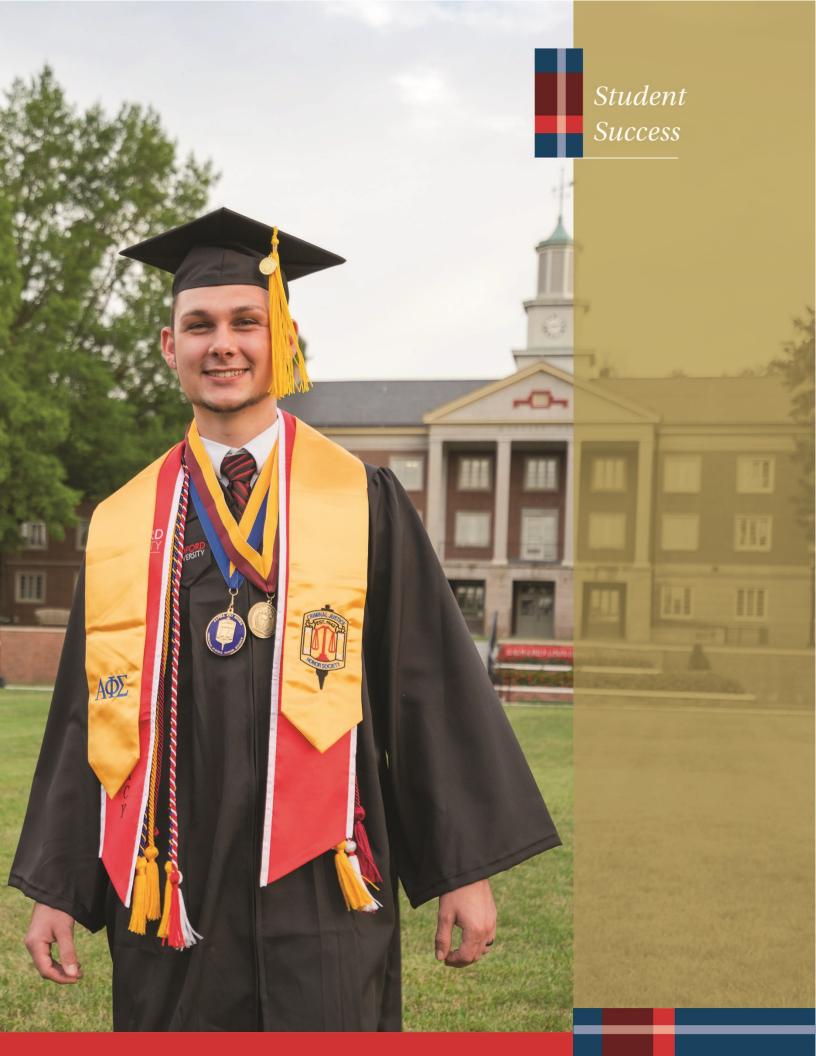
Helping facilitate this affordable and quality delivery model is Academic Partnerships, a leading online facilitator in the U.S. Based in Dallas, Texas. Partnering with more than 50 universities across the country, Academic Partnerships engages primarily with regional public universities by helping those institutions expand access to top-quality, affordable, and workforce relevant education.

Enrollment Projections Snapshot

Year	New Freshman	International (NEW)	Transfer	Continuing Undergraduate	Total Undergraduate	Graduate	СВЕ	Total
Fall 2019	1,750	100	649	5,663	8,062	1,323	1,888	11,273
Fall 2020	1,753	150	610	5,367	7,649	1,294	2,050	10,993

Enrollment Actuals Snapshot

Year	New Freshman	International (NEW)	Transfer	Continuing Undergraduate	Total Undergraduate	Graduate	СВЕ	Total
Fall 2017	1,848	49	672	5,890	8,410	1,000	8	9,418
Fall 2018	1,762	46	593	5,535	7,890	957	488	9,335
Fall 2019	1,651	30	704	5,575	7,930	1,323	2,617	11,870
Fall 2020	1,336	14	648	5,313	7,297	1,336	2,062	10,695



Student Success

Goals

- 1. Assist students in becoming more independent, self-confident, and effective learners who disseminate knowledge, innovate, and solve problems creatively
- 2. Increase student engagement in both the social and academic arenas to enrich the Radford experience and increase student retention and success
- 3. Intentionally lead students from their transition into Radford University through graduation toward their unique path in life

Featured Accomplishment

On February 11, 2020, the establishment of the Academic Success Center was formally announced. Much work led up to this announcement. That work began in January of 2019 when the Radford family came together for the inaugural Retention Summit to brainstorm ways to combat the loss of 25 to 30 percent of each incoming class, which is a troubling trend and an unsustainable model for our campus and its operations. Much of that work was driven by a strategic partnership with Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) and a collaborative effort of the Task Force on New Student and Family Programs, Student Success and Retention, and Academic Advising.

As a proven organization with a successful record of working with hundreds of institutions, RNL outlined four broad changes for Radford University.

- 1) Develop a first-year advising model with a case management approach to include staffing ratios, training needs, early-alert procedures, and retention goals.
- 2) Integrate predictive and early-alert technology across the first-year experience to enable proactive interventions by advisors.
- 3) Identify approaches to integrate advising and student support services through appropriate organizational structures and physical co-location.
- 4) Train advisors on developmental and "intrusive" approaches to student dialogue and advising.

With these specific recommendations in clear focus, the First-Year Success Team was established in August 2019 and met on a regular basis to refine a holistic student engagement and success model for the main campus. From informative research and in-depth discussions of the Task Force on New Student and Family Programs, Student Success and Retention, and Academic Advising, a number of overarching recommendations were made including, but not limited to, the following areas.

- 1) Create a centralized first-year advising experience based on a case management model. Striving to obtain a clearer, consistent, and easy-to-navigate experience, while reflecting the unique needs of colleges and disciplines. A case management model of advising should be considered to address the unique needs and interests of students.
- 2) Leverage data and analytics to provide enhanced student success monitoring, warnings, and alerts; and also to drive personalization of student support where needed. We should continue to enhance our ability to use analytics to identify and predict the factors contributing to student success and retention.
- 3) Provide professional development for faculty and staff by developing a series of training programs to better engage faculty and staff in the first-year experience and establish a better understanding of needs and challenges of freshmen and first-generation students.

At Radford University, students always come first. And, by working tirelessly to enhance student engagement and success, we are making significant progress in both establishing and implementing actionable plans and measurable results. As such, the co-location of professional advisors in partnership with staff from the Office of New Student and Family Programs and the Office of Student Success was formalized in a one-stop shop configuration to more effectively serve our students.

Beginning in the Fall of 2020, the vision for the Academic Success Center came to life in Young Hall, which is serving as the home to representatives from various academic and functional areas as they are now seamlessly working together for the benefit of our students. And, in the Summer of 2021, the remaining professional academic advisors will join their esteemed colleagues in this co-located and expanded space. For more information, visit https://www.radford.edu/content/academic-success/home.html.

Other Highlights

<u>Living-Learning Communities</u>: In recent years, the University has worked diligently
to expand the availability and utilization of Living-Learning Communities, or LLCs.
Students, who engage in such community-based formats, are able to build both
intellectual and social relationships with classmates and faculty through shared
experiences and increased time together.

In Fall of 2018, the University launched The Schoolhouse, which connects and inspires prospective educators from all disciplines and grade levels. Students have the opportunity to participate in the Schoolhouse for their entire undergraduate careers. The establishment of The Schoolhouse underscores the University's proud tradition of cultivating the next generation of educators in an engaging and supportive environment.

Another newer LLC is Environment-Community (ECO) Connections, which was made available following a multi-year pilot phase. The establishment of the ECO Connections underscores the University's strong commitment to engage Highlanders in learning, discovering, and contributing to positive current and future environmental solutions.

Currently, the University offers a total of seven LLCs for freshmen with small groups of students typically taking one or more courses together focusing on a common theme or discipline, while also living in the same residence hall. Faculty and peer instructor teams work together to assign readings, create assignments, and coordinate activities that connect the courses.

- <u>Traditions Week</u>: In Spring of 2018, the University started a new tradition with the Halfway There Celebration, which celebrates sophomore students as they approach the halfway mark to commencement. The event includes the tossing of a commemorative coin into the fountain, which is a defining characteristic of our picturesque campus and a special symbol for Highlander alumni. In Spring of 2019, Junior Twilight and Senior Signing were added, thereby formally establishing Traditions Week. In Spring of 2020, all three events were held virtually due to the COVID-19 global health pandemic. The event format took on the form of a social media campaign, which resulted in the highest level of participation to date. In Spring of 2021, two additional events were added, thereby rounding out Traditions Week. For main campus, First Year Field Day was held. At Radford University Carilion, or RUC, the first-ever RUC Spring Fling was held.
- <u>Highlander Discovery Institute</u>: At the inaugural event of the Highlander Discovery Institute held on September 19, 2019, students, faculty, staff, and members of the community experienced an insightful discussion focused on the nexus of politics and society. The Highlander Discovery Institute was established to provide the campus and the surrounding community with the opportunity to experience new ideas and ways of thinking, specifically in the areas of teaching, research, and service.

The inaugural Highlander Discovery Institute event featured three renowned individuals: Katie Couric as the moderator and Donna Brazile and Ana Navarro as panelists. During a thought-provoking and inspirational 90-minute discussion, difficult and challenging topics were explored from gun control to global warming, as well as polarizing politics to the role of media in society. The panelists modeled civil discourse as they passionately and thoughtfully expressed their views without interrupting each other or showing disrespect. The post-event featured a series of breakout sessions to further the dialogue. The sessions were well-attended by students and led by faculty.

 The REAL Education Model: In Fall of 2021, Radford University will implement a faculty-driven, multi-year planning effort to revamp general education approaches and requirements. For the upcoming academic year, Radford University is launching the most innovative approach to higher education in the Commonwealth. REAL follows a traditional 120 credit hour bachelor's degree program by fulfilling general education requirements and acknowledging the learning and skills taking place in majors, minors, and certificates across our campus. Rather than a menu of courses, students fulfill REAL requirements as they complete credentials in four areas of knowledge (reasoning, expression, analysis, and applied learning). Students can build their own pathway through REAL, thereby ensuring they are successful far into the future. For more information, visit https://www.radford.edu/content/real/home.html.

Retention and Graduation Rate Projections Snapshot

Year	Retention Rate	Graduation Rate
2018-2019	73.2%	51.6%
2019-2020	74.8%	52.6%

Retention and Graduation Rate Actuals Snapshot

Year	Retention Rate	Graduation Rate
2016-2017	75.7%	55.2%
2017-2018	70.9%	59.3%
2018-2019	71.3%	55.4%
2019-2020	74.8%	56.0%

