

External Engagement Committee

June 2026



Radford
UNIVERSITY



External Engagement Committee
1:00 p.m.**
June 4, 2026
Kyle Hall, Room 340, Radford, VA

DRAFT
Agenda

- **Call to Order** Ms. Betsy D. Beamer, *Chair*
 - **Approval of Agenda** Ms. Betsy D. Beamer, *Chair*
 - **Approval of Minutes** Ms. Betsy D. Beamer, *Chair*
 - March 19, 2026
 - **Economic Development and Corporate Education Report** Dr. Angela Joyner, *Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education*
 - Strategic Partnerships & Community Engagement
 - Student Success & Experiential Learning
 - Academic Achievement & Intellectual Discovery
 - Communication and Collaboration
 - Culture of Care
 - **Advancement and Alumni Relations Report** Ms. Penny Helms White, *Vice President for Advancement and Alumni Relations*
 - Fundraising
 - Divisional Priorities Updates
 - Spring Commencement
 - Volunteer Pathways to Philanthropy
 - Student Highlight
 - Upcoming Events
 - **Other Business** Ms. Betsy D. Beamer, *Chair*
 - **Adjournment** Ms. Betsy D. Beamer, *Chair*
- ** All start times for committee meetings are approximate. Meetings may begin either before or after the listed approximate start time as committee members are ready to proceed.**

Committee Members

Ms. Betsy D. Beamer, Chair
Mr. George Mendiola Jr., Vice Chair

Mr. Dale S. Ardizzone
Mr. William C. Davis
Ms. Mary Anne Holbrook
Mr. Chris Settle

Meeting Materials



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Economic Development and Corporate Education

Mission in Motion

Angela Joyner, Ph.D.

June 4, 2026



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Our North Star: Be a catalyst for good.



"Our mission is to help communities thrive by bringing people together, connecting them to opportunities and serving as a trusted partner."

The pillars guiding our strategic roadmap



**Strategic Partnerships and
Community Engagement**



**Student Success and
Experiential Learning**



**Academic Achievement
and Intellectual Discovery**



**Organizational Excellence and
Continuous Improvement**



Communication and Collaboration



Culture of Care

Strategic Partnerships & Community Engagement

Bringing people together and connecting
them to opportunities in our region

Roadshow & Community Town Halls

August – October 2026

- Meet communities where they are.
- Bring together stakeholders and surface local needs
- Create direct pathways to the resources and partnerships that help people thrive.



Strategic Integrated Roadmap

Our roadmap isn't just a plan — it's a promise. The Joint Commission Impact Report documents how our integrated strategy is translating into measurable outcomes and stronger institutional alignment.



Key Outcomes

- ✓ Shared accountability across teams
- ✓ Documented community impact metrics
- ✓ Foundation for future partnership investments
- ✓ Demonstrates trusted partner credibility



July 2026



Unlocking Downtown Radford's Potential

Downtown Action Planning & Implementation



Deliverables

5-year strategic plan with recommendations for:

- Policy & Administration
- Design
- Tourism & Promotion
- Economic Vitality
- Implementation Plan

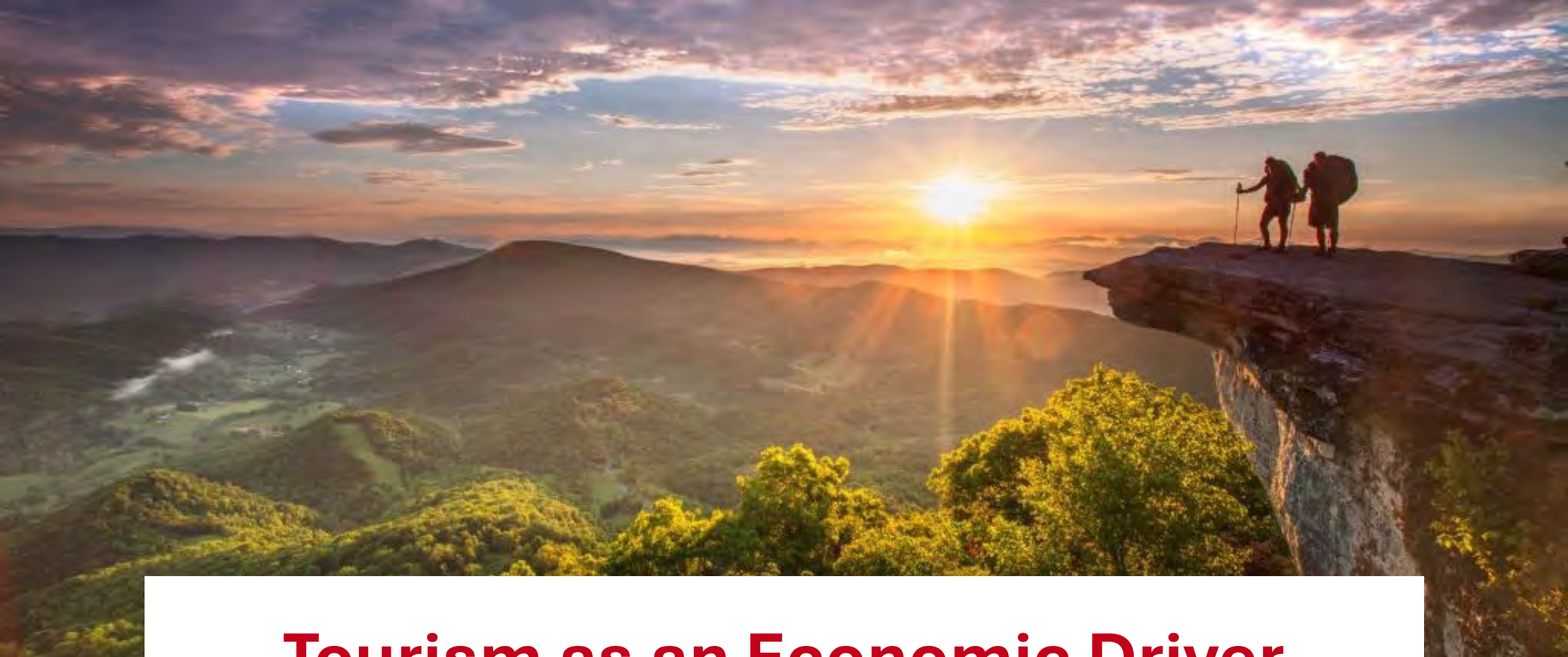
Action Team Implementation

Focus Area 1: Policy & Administration

Item	Priority	Lead	Start	End	Status
Policy & Administration	1.1	Radford University	2020	2025	Open
Policy & Administration	1.2	Radford University	2020	2025	Open
Policy & Administration	1.3	Radford University	2020	2025	Open
Policy & Administration	1.4	Radford University	2020	2025	Open
Policy & Administration	1.5	Radford University	2020	2025	Open
Policy & Administration	1.6	Radford University	2020	2025	Open

Desired Outcomes

- ✓ Vibrant downtown space
- ✓ City of Radford as a destination for business and tourism.
- ✓ Thriving businesses
- ✓ Confident and supported businesses owners.



Tourism as an Economic Driver

AdventureWorks!

A powerful example of regional collaboration in action. This summit brings together local government, small business, education, and tourism—the kind of ecosystem approach that helps entire communities thrive.



September
8-9

AdventureWorks!

Curated Outdoor Experiences

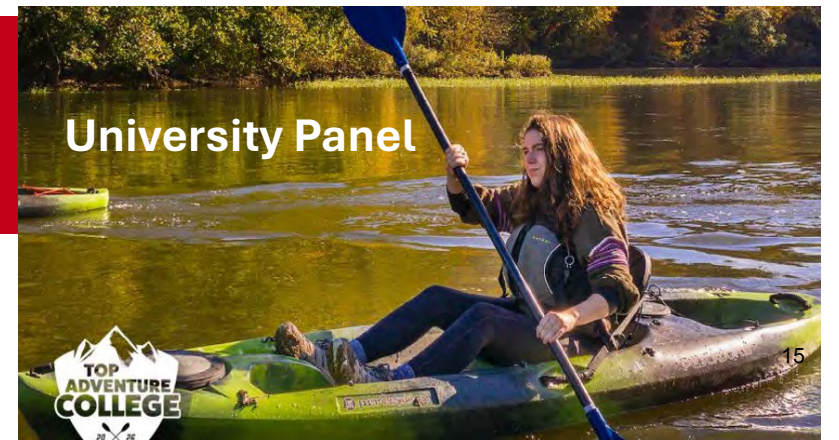
State of the economy



Small Business Panel



University Panel



Student Success and Experiential Learning

Investing in the next generation — and rooting them in the region.



Expanding the network of opportunity



RB TC ROANOKE BLACKSBURG TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL

TECHNITE

Thursday, May 7
Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center
Roanoke, VA

Title Sponsor
 WoodsRogers

www.rbtc.tech





Growing talent from within

Desi Yopp

Multi-Media Assistant



What I am Learning

- ✓ Partnership development
- ✓ Community engagement
- ✓ Project management
- ✓ Regional economic development
- ✓ Communications
- ✓ Event coordination



Kyleigh Mills

Asst. Program Coordinator Intern

Academic Achievement and Intellectual Discovery

Connecting our expertise to the broader professional and continuing education community





Commonwealth Cyber Initiative SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA



CCI Southwest Virginia Panel at UVA Wise



2026 CCI Impact Award

SOLAR2026

Summit for Online
Leadership and Administration

UPCEA®

JULY 29–31, 2026 • BOSTON, MA • #UPCEASOLAR

The session highlights a workforce education model that integrates:

- coursework
- micro-credentials
- industry certifications
- registered apprenticeship pathways



Communication and Collaboration

Great communities depend on great communication.



A NEW PLATFORM FOR CONNECTION

- Transparent, timely communication
- Keeps community stakeholders informed and engaged
- Reflects our value of serving as a trusted partner

Launched: May 1

EXCHANGE

RECENT RECAPS



THE ITINERARY



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



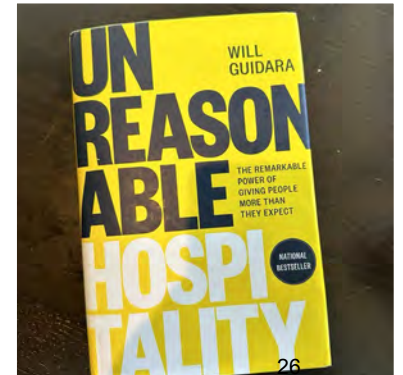
COLLABORATION IN ACTION



VENTURES



RESOURCE HUB



Culture of Care

Nurturing the people who bring our mission to life every day

Earth Day



Culture of care in practice

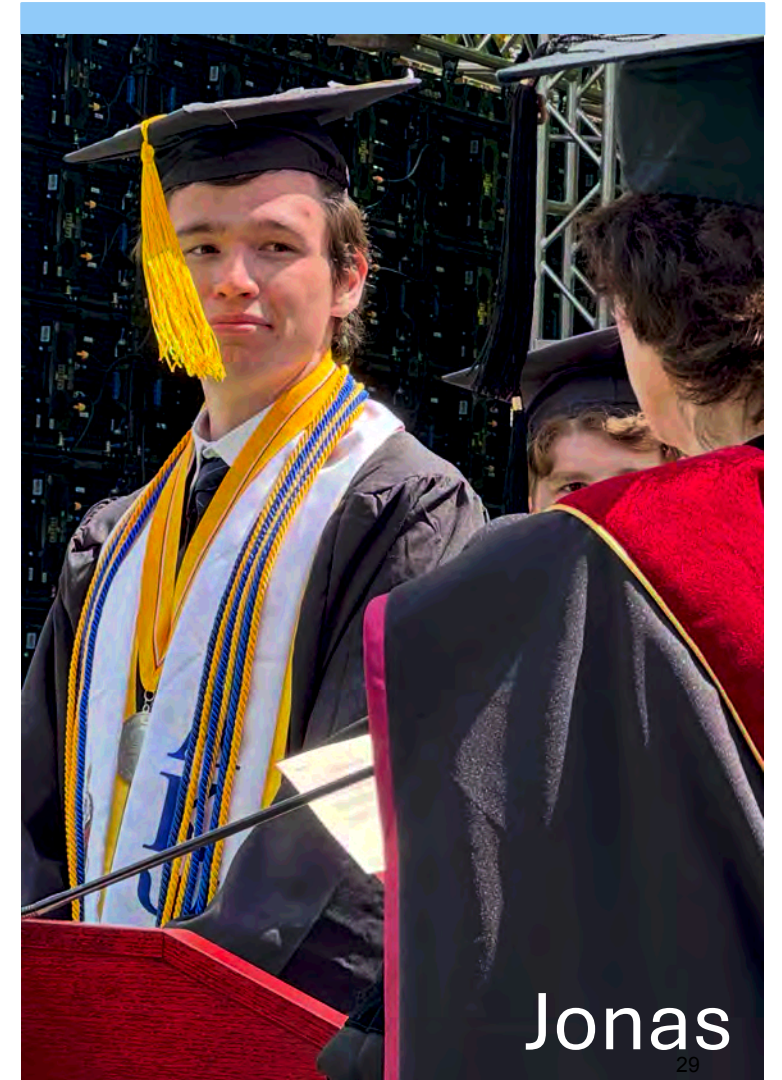
Every graduation is a community victory



Mary



Mady



Jonas

Our Mission in Every Action

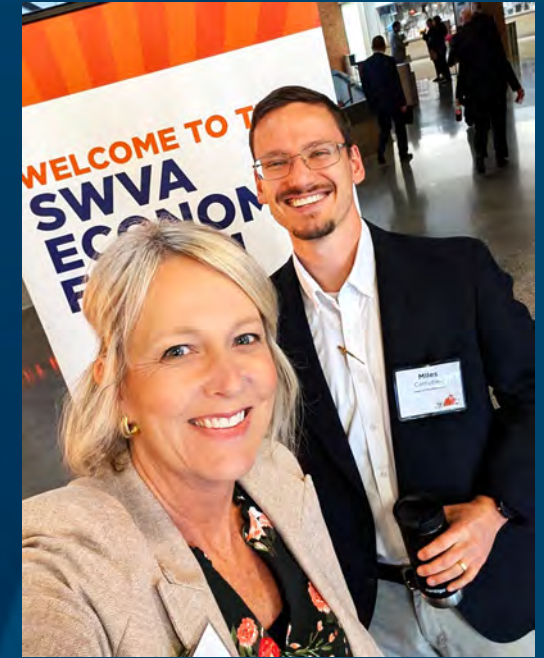
Help communities thrive — be a catalyst for good.



Bringing People Together



Connecting to Opportunity



Trusted Partner for Good

Stronger Together | One Story at a Time

Discussion

Board of Visitors Report

Penny Helms White '85, MBA '87

Advancement and Alumni Relations

June 4, 2026



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VISION

A future where every Highlander is engaged, connected, and proudly invested in Radford University.

MISSION

To champion Highlander pride, build meaningful connections, and inspire philanthropic giving that shapes Radford University's future.



FY26 Fundraising
\$9,885,744

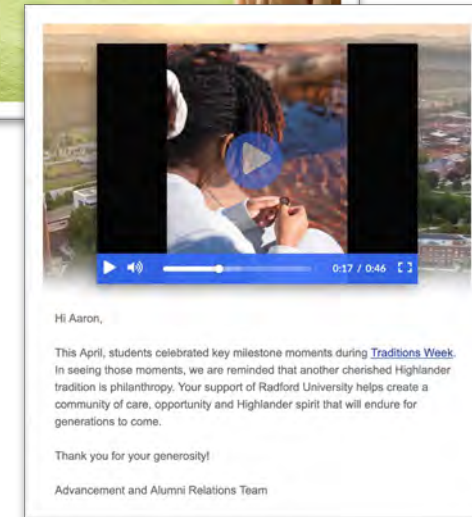
Athletics Philanthropy and Engagement

- Director of Advancement and Revenue Generation for Athletics
- Form an Athletic Philanthropy Council
- Former Athlete Engagement
- Highlander Athletics: The Next Chapter



Donor Growth Retention and Stewardship

- Red Brick and New River Societies Pre-Game Social
- Traditions Week ThankView



Planned Giving Legacy and Engagement

- 2026 Spring Magazine
 - Nancy Sullivan Ray '55
 - Dean Bonnie Hurlburt '58
 - Monica Weinzapfel
- Retiree event – August 12th
- 2026 Fall postcard



Young Alumni Connection and Early Stage Connection

- Traditions Week
 - Senior Block Party
- Tartan Toast
- Commencement





**Traditions Week
Senior Block Party**





Tartan Toast

Spring Commencement 2026

- AAR led Commencement Planning
- Keynote speaker, Eugene Naughton '89
 - Gift to graduates
 - Video from Dolly





Graduate Hooding Ceremony



Undergraduate Commencement

Volunteer Pathways to Philanthropy

Laura Turk, '87, M.S. '90

Executive Director

Alumni Relations

Why Volunteer Engagement is Important:

- Creates volunteer leadership opportunities
- Role models success for students
- Shares impactful stories that promote brand
- Serves as recruitment opportunity for next generation
- Cultivates for philanthropic giving

Life Cycle of Radford Alumni Engagement

- Activity/Event Participant
- Volunteer
- Donor
- Stewardship



Alumni Volunteer Opportunities

- Boards and Councils
- Admissions Ambassador
- Career Connector
- Class/Affinity Leader
- Regional Ambassador
- Campus Speaker
- Community Service Liaison
- Digital Ambassador
- Student Ambassador
- Special Initiatives



Volunteer Training Opportunities

Power of the Referral

How you can help!

Shannon Herrity '27



Highlighted Events

- June 4 - Highlander Athletics: The Next Chapter
- June 25 – National Capital Region Alumni and Friends Golf Tournament
- August 7 – Radford Night at Nationals Park
- August 12 – Radford University Retiree Event
- August 13 – Radford Night at Party in Elmwood Park

Minutes



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External Engagement Committee
12:45 p.m.
March 19, 2026
Kyle Hall, Room 340
Radford, VA

DRAFT
MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. George Mendiola Jr., Vice Chair
Mr. Dale S. Ardizzone
Ms. Mary Anne Holbrook

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Ms. Betsy D. Beamer, Chair
Mr. William C. Davis

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Tyler W. Lester, Rector
Mrs. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, Vice Rector
Ms. Jeanne S. Armentrout
Ms. Joann S. Craig
Dr. Betty Jo Foster
Mr. David A. Smith
Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet
Ms. Callie M. Dalton
Mr. James C. Turk

OTHERS PRESENT

Dr. Dannette Beane, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Communications
Mr. Ryan Bowyer, Chief of Staff
Ms. Lisa Ghidotti, Assistant Vice President for Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives
Dr. Robert Hoover, Vice President for Finance and Administration
Dr. Angela Joyner, Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education
Ms. Susan Richardson, University Counsel
Dr. Bethany Usher, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Ms. Penny Helms White, Vice President for Advancement and Alumni Relations

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. George Mendiola Jr., Vice Chair, formally called the External Engagement Committee meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. Kyle Hall in Room 340, Radford, Va.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. George Mendiola Jr., Vice Chair, asked for a motion to approve the March 19, 2026, agenda, as published. Mr. Dale S. Ardizzone made the motion and Mrs. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, Vice Rector, seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. George Mendiola Jr., Vice Chair, asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 4, 2025, meeting of the External Engagement Committee meeting, as published. Mrs. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert made the motion. Mr. Dale S. Ardizzone seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CORPORATE EDUCATION

Dr. Angela Joyner, Vice President of Economic Development and Corporate Education, presented her division's strategic roadmap and its alignment with the university's broader strategic plan. The division maintains core partnerships throughout the New River Valley and Roanoke regions, with additional relationships extending into Southwest Virginia, including Danville, Martinsville, and the South Boston area. The division's strategic priority areas include partnership and economic impact, student success and experiential learning, continuing education and workforce development, community engagement and regional tourism, and organizational excellence and culture.

Dr. Joyner reported that Radford University is an active participant in the Strong ACC (Accountable Care Community) in Richmond. Ms. Nichole Hair, Director of Economic Development and Community Engagement, visited General Assembly representatives from Southwest Virginia as part of a coalition advocating for constituent support spanning early childhood through career readiness.

Radford University is actively collaborating with regional partners to advance a series of community-focused research initiatives across the New River Valley. In partnership with the City of Radford, the University is currently conducting both a retail analysis and a transportation study. The retail analysis will examine local business trends and market conditions to identify strategies that strengthen business attraction and retention over the long term. A housing study is also underway, coordinated in collaboration with the New River Regional Commission, to assess regional housing needs and inform future planning decisions.

The Economic Development and Corporate Education division advances student opportunity through a coordinated suite of experiential programs, including a deliberate Student Employment Strategy, the Economic Development and Corporate Education Internship Program, the Onward NRV Experience Program, and Highlander Gigs. Each initiative is designed to connect classroom learning with meaningful professional experience while strengthening the economic vitality of the broader region.

Our partnership with the Virginia Department of Education on a Statewide Workforce Development Initiative demonstrates Economic Development and Corporate Education's capacity for high-impact workforce training. Since launching in 2022, the custom development training has served over 2,700 Virginia educators and generated more than \$444,000 in investment. Tom Bennett II, Senior Director of Business Operations and Planning, has been instrumental in leading the implementation and continuing the relationship.

UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS

Ms. Penny Helms White, Vice President of Advancement and Alumni Relations provided an update to the committee on several areas within the Division of Advancement and Alumni Relations. To better align with the university's strategic plan, Advancement and Alumni Relations has expanded and refined several priorities to reflect our goals and the impact we aim to have across the university. These priorities include Athletics Philanthropy and Engagement; Donor Growth, Retention and Stewardship; Planned Giving and Legacy Engagement; Volunteer Pathways to Philanthropy; and Young Alumni Connection and Early-Stage Engagement.

In reporting on fundraising progress for fiscal year 2026, Ms. Penny Helms White shared that, as of the end of February, total fundraising stands at \$9.2 million.

In Athletics Philanthropy and Engagement RAD48 raised nearly \$170,000 from 1,262 donors, demonstrating strong engagement and continued growth in participation. The division also introduced a new Athletics Stewardship Plan, which creates a broader vision for athletics philanthropy and enhances how we engage and recognize donors who support Radford Athletics.

Two recent gifts were highlighted that directly support the university's strategic plan. The Virginia Credit Union Financial Success Center received a \$2.5 million gift, which will provide financial literacy resources for both students and members of the surrounding community. In addition, alumni Mary and Kory Hummer made a gift to support the Hummer Championship Pickleball Courts, contributing to the expansion of club sports opportunities on campus.

Rebekah LaPlante, Director of Gift Planning, provided an update on planned giving initiatives. Efforts are focused on growing the planned giving pipeline through a relationship-first approach while identifying potential legacy donors through new donor societies, consistent annual donors, and lifetime giving data. The program is also increasing engagement with Radford University retirees.

Additional work has focused on making planned giving more approachable through a legacy giving website, targeted print and digital communications, and donor stories featured in Radford Magazine. Legacy donors are recognized through the Society of 1910. Planned giving continues to play an important role in sustaining donor-funded scholarships year after year.

To stay current with best practices in the field, the division continues to participate in professional development opportunities. Seven Advancement and Alumni Relations staff members attended the CASE District III Conference, where the division also received recognition for the Together Campaign closing celebration video.

In closing, Ms. Penny Helms White shared several upcoming events including Radford Night with the Rail Yard Dawgs Hockey on March 27, the Senior Block Party/Celebration on April 9, and Tartan Toast on April 17 also celebrating the New River Society and Red Brick Society members. Spring Commencement will take place May 1–2 with Eugene Naughton '89 serving as the commencement speaker.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 1:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

End of Board of Visitors Materials

