



VMI ALUMNI AGENCIES  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION • FOUNDATION • KEYDET CLUB

## **Report on the Status and Future of the Institute**

*Commissioned from McGuireWoods LLP by the VMI Alumni Agencies  
May 26, 2021*

*The VMI Alumni Agencies, in conjunction with outside counsel, conducted a review of metrics related to the Institute's performance on diversity, equity, and inclusion. This review included VMI's academic program, military system, and alumni success. This report includes two main sections, which elaborate on VMI's Strong Foundation and Additional Measures to Promote Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. We, the VMI Alumni Agencies, believe this review and summary demonstrate that VMI's culture is institutionally fair and unbiased.*



## VMI ALUMNI AGENCIES - REPORT ON THE STATUS AND FUTURE OF THE INSTITUTE

### I. INTRODUCTION

For over 180 years, the Virginia Military Institute (“VMI”) has been producing leaders for our country and Commonwealth. Some are well-known and honored on Post with memorials. General George C. Marshall, for instance, led the United States to victory in World War II, and then became the only professional military officer in history to win a Nobel Peace Prize for developing the Marshall Plan as Secretary of State. And Jonathan Daniels, a civil rights activist, sacrificed himself in 1965 to save a 17 year-old Black girl from a shotgun blast, and was designated a martyr in the Episcopal Church in 1991. Each has an arch named after him on Post. Others have led lives of quieter, but no less steadfast, service, as members of our armed forces and leaders in business, education, healthcare, law, philanthropy and countless other areas of civic life. Our diverse cadets and alumni are an integral part of that tradition of leadership excellence.

One need not look far for two prominent examples here at home in Virginia. VMI has produced multiple Black military general officers, one of whom has recently returned home to serve as our fifteenth Superintendent. Today, a Black woman graduate who recently served in the Virginia House of Delegates is out on the campaign trail running for the Democratic nomination for Governor of Virginia.

VMI has made continuous progress over the past several decades in strengthening the diversity of our Corps of Cadets.<sup>1</sup> In fact, VMI’s diversity numbers compare favorably with some of Virginia’s largest and most well-known colleges, including James Madison University, Longwood University, and Christopher Newport University. VMI also outperforms similarly-sized Virginia private schools, such as Washington & Lee University (“W&L”) and Roanoke College, by a significant margin. Factoring in VMI’s enrollment of cadets from under-represented populations,<sup>2</sup> it becomes even clearer that the Institute provides world-class educational and leadership opportunities to students from many backgrounds, and across a wide socio-economic spectrum.

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<sup>1</sup> Since January 2021, VMI has been cooperating with a review of VMI’s culture, policies, and practices related to diversity and inclusion, ordered by the Governor. The review, which is being conducted by Barnes & Thornburg LLP, was prompted by press reports describing concerning allegations of racist incidents at our school, and the allegation that the Institute has a “clear and appalling culture of ongoing structural racism.” VMI has cooperated extensively with the independent review of the school, including through production of over 100,000 pages of documents; encouraging all alumni, cadets, faculty, and staff to participate in Barnes & Thornburg’s interviews and survey process; providing numerous substantive briefings to Barnes & Thornburg about the Institute; and making senior leaders available for interviews. The final report from that review is due on June 1, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (“SCHEV”) defines under-represented populations as students who are (1) non-white U.S. citizen and permanent residents; (2) students receiving Pell grants at any time during the last five-years; (3) age 25 or older at entry; or (4) students from 34 Virginia localities with low associate and baccalaureate attainment rates. SCHEV, [Distribution and Completion of Under-Represented Populations](#) (Fall 2018).



Many debate what aspects of the VMI experience are important to the development of cadets. Without question, the honor system is central. The single sanction honor system reflects the undeniable reality that integrity is a requirement for all leaders. It is certainly also the tough and demanding unique co-educational model – the Rat Line – that pushes young people beyond what they thought possible of themselves. These are cornerstone features of our school, and are critical to the continued success of our cadets and graduates.

Another thing is clear. VMI cannot fulfill its mission of producing educated and honorable men and women if it allows racism or bias to go unchecked or pervade the cadet or alumni experience. This does not mean, of course, that there are not incidents of racism at VMI. There are. Like any institution that relies on human beings to run itself, there are often examples of failing to live up to the standards we set for ourselves. Those incidents are unacceptable, and some valued members of our VMI family have experienced incidents of racism or bias. It is a foundational principle of VMI that all cadets, regardless of their background, ethnicity, gender, or religion begin their journey at VMI on equal footing, in the same uniform, and with the knowledge that they will need to rely on and learn from one another to succeed. Incidents of bias are an affront to that system. When they happen, VMI works hard to remediate them in the appropriate way—often in consultation with the Virginia Attorney General’s Office and with the leadership of a Board of Visitors.

Beyond the important work of strengthening the diversity of the Corps of Cadets, VMI over the past several years has also taken significant steps to enhance the experience of all cadets once they arrive on Post, and after they graduate. A few examples, of many, include:

- Hosting an on-Post celebration of the 50th Anniversary of VMI’s integration in 2019, including panel discussions with the members of the inaugural integrated class;
- Creating the position of Chief Diversity Officer, reporting directly to the Superintendent;
- Forming a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee of the VMI Board of Visitors;
- Renaming, relocating, or otherwise contextualizing Confederate iconography on Post; and
- Establishing a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Subcommittee for the VMI Alumni Agencies’ Board of Directors.

While that work goes forward, and as detailed below, cadets of color and women cadets are, and have been, an incredibly important part of cadet life, and have led the Corps as Regimental Commanders, Honor Court Presidents, Valedictorians, class officers, captains of athletic teams, and, later in life, as Board of Visitors members and volunteers. Upon graduation, they are met, like all graduates, with a typical rate of employment of roughly 98%. And those jobs are meaningful. Recent studies show VMI graduates rank second only to W&L among alumni from Virginia colleges in average salary five years after graduation. By mid-career, only the University of Virginia (“UVA”) has caught up to VMI.



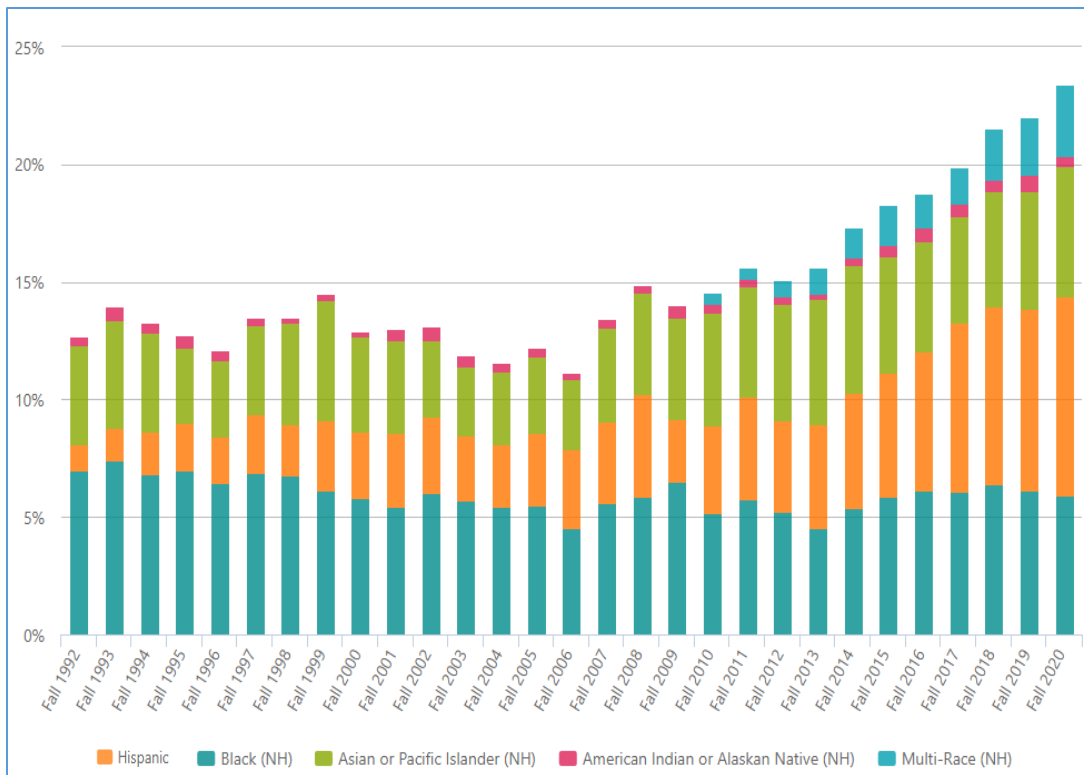
To be sure, there are many ways in which VMI is working hard to improve, and to provide a more valuable experience to all cadets. But it unquestionably remains a superb place for Virginians to educate their sons and daughters of all races and backgrounds.

## II. VMI'S STRONG FOUNDATION

### a. Student Diversity

As noted above, over the past three decades, VMI has worked to increase the number of women and cadets of color who enroll at the Institute. Between 1992 and 2020, for instance, enrollment of cadets of color increased from 12.7% to 23.4%,<sup>3</sup> which compares favorably to several other four-year public institutions in Virginia, including James Madison University (22.3% in 2020), Christopher Newport University (22.8% in 2020), and Longwood University (19.7% in 2020).<sup>4</sup> These figures also are positive compared to those of numerous similarly-sized private Virginia colleges, such as W&L (18.6% in 2020) and Hampden-Sydney College (15.8% in 2020).<sup>5</sup>

Ex. 1, Enrollment of VMI Cadets by Race/Ethnicity, Fall Headcount 1992-2020<sup>6</sup>



<sup>3</sup> SCHEV, [E22: Fall Headcount: Trends in Race Ethnicity \(schev.edu\) \(Fall 2020\)](https://www.schev.edu/2020/10/22/fall-headcount-trends-in-race-ethnicity/)

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*



Enrollment of cadets from under-represented populations (“URP”)—that is, (1) students who are non-white U.S. citizens and permanent residents; (2) students receiving Pell grants at any time during the last five-years; (3) students age 25 or older at entry; or (4) students from 34 Virginia localities with low associate and baccalaureate attainment rates<sup>7</sup>—has also increased every year for ten years except one, more specifically from roughly 29% in 2014 to approximately 35%, or 601 cadets, in 2020. In 2018 (the last year for which data is broadly available), VMI again either closely tracked, or compared favorably to, other Virginia institutions, with 34.5% enrollment of URP students.

Ex. 2. Fall Headcount Undergraduate Enrollment at Select Virginia Colleges by URP Status, 2018<sup>8</sup>

Institution	URP Enrollment, Fall 2018
Southern Virginia University	62.7%
Longwood University	45.4%
University of Virginia	41.4%
Roanoke College	39.5%
Virginia Tech	37.5%
William & Mary	36.3%
VMI	34.5%
James Madison University	34.2%
Christopher Newport University	32.7%
Hampden-Sydney College	30.4%
Washington & Lee University	22.6%

This is meaningful and noteworthy. Over one-third of the VMI Corps have URP status and, upon graduation, will enjoy the roughly 98% employment rates at relatively high incomes that characterize the VMI experience and are detailed later in this report. This underscores the value VMI provides to the Commonwealth and its citizens, across a wide socio-economic spectrum.

Since the first class of women arrived at the Institute in 1997—comprising 6.7% of the enrolled class<sup>9</sup>—VMI has worked diligently to recruit more women. In 2020, women represented 13% of the Corps, a slight decrease from a high of 14.1% in 2019. This figure is within range of the

<sup>7</sup> As defined by SCHEV. SCHEV, [Distribution and Completion of Under-Represented Populations](#) (Fall 2018).

<sup>8</sup> SCHEV, [E50: Fall Headcount Undergraduate Enrollment Trends by Under-Represented Populations Status](#) (Fall 2018).

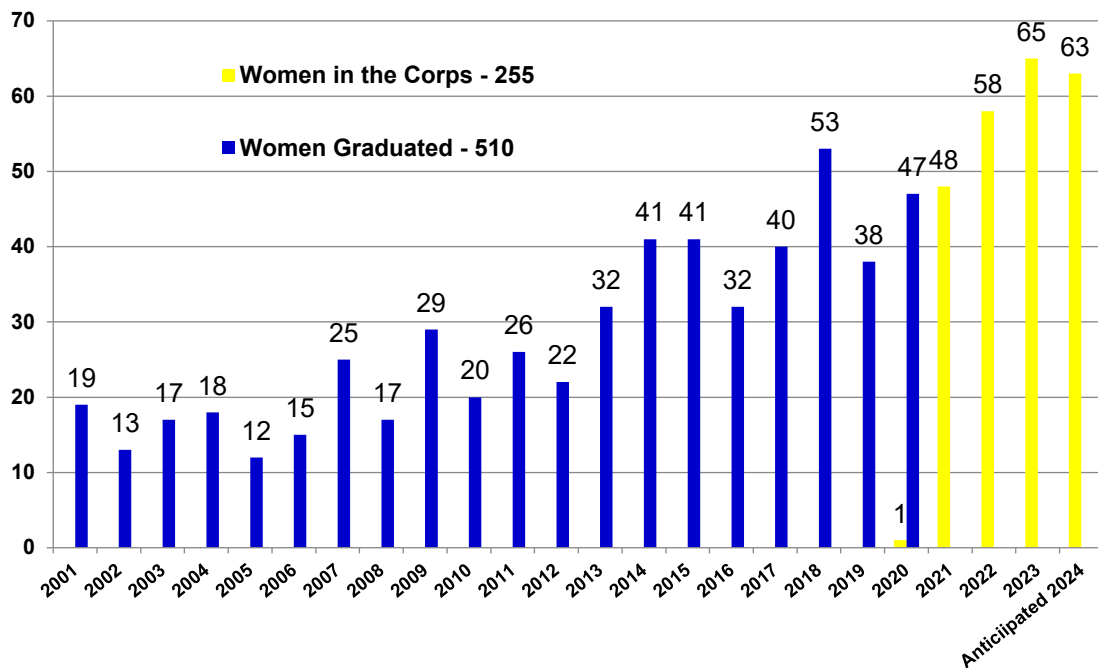
<sup>9</sup> First Female Cadets at V.M.I. Are in Class and in Uniform, NEW YORK TIMES (Aug. 19, 1997), <https://www.nytimes.com/1997/08/19/us/first-female-cadets-at-vmi-are-in-class-and-in-uniform.html> (noting that in 1997, 31 women and 430 men enrolled at VMI).



representation of women at other senior military colleges, although the Institute certainly aims to continue to improve it. For example, publicly available data for the Citadel indicates women comprised 13% of the student body in 2020.<sup>10</sup> Likewise, the Texas A&M University Corps of Cadets was 17% women at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year,<sup>11</sup> and the Virginia Tech Corps was roughly 18%.<sup>12</sup> The U.S. Service Academies—which have a stronger national draw—have somewhat higher percentages of women cadets:

- In 2019, the Corps of Cadets at the United States Military Academy at West Point was 23% female.<sup>13</sup>
- In 2020, women made up 28% of the Corps at the United States Air Force Academy,<sup>14</sup> and 27% of students at the United States Naval Academy.<sup>15</sup>

Ex. 3, VMI Women Cadets and Graduates, 2001-2024



<sup>10</sup> The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina, U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT (2021), <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/citadel-3423/student-life>

<sup>11</sup> The 2019-2020 State of the Corps, TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY CORPS OF CADETS (2019-2020), <https://corps.tamu.edu/the-2019-2020-state-of-the-corps/>

<sup>12</sup> FAQs, VIRGINIA TECH CORPS OF CADETS, <https://vtcc.vt.edu/join/faq1.html> (noting that the broader student body was 42% female).

<sup>13</sup> Cadet Diversity, THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY AT WEST POINT (as of October 2019), <https://www.westpoint.edu/about/cadet-consumer-information/cadet-diversity>

<sup>14</sup> United States Air Force Academy, U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT (2021), <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/united-states-air-force-academy-1369>

<sup>15</sup> United States Naval Academy, U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT (2021), <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/united-states-naval-academy-2101/student-life>



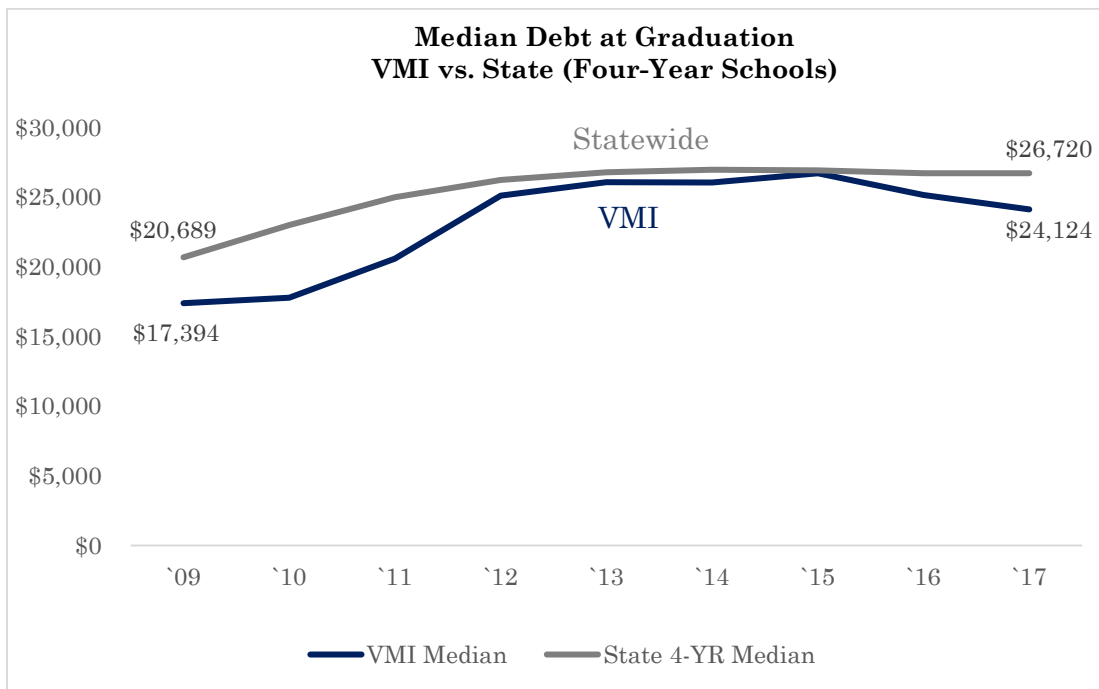
Looking to the future, VMI aims to continue to build on these upward trends in its diversity enrollment figures.

**b. Need-Blind Financial Aid**

VMI meets one hundred percent of the need-based aid requirements of all Virginia cadets, which of course includes all diverse cadets from the Commonwealth. Moreover, the Institute aims to meet the financial need of all out-of-state students, and aid is typically awarded to more than 83% of cadets.

Graduates of VMI also carry one of the lowest average debt loads in the Commonwealth for graduates of Virginia public institutions. It is not surprising, then, that, when coupled with its superb employment and income statistics for graduates, VMI was rated second in the world—behind only Stanford University—on Best Value Schools’ list of “Colleges Most Likely to Land You an Enjoyable Career.”<sup>16</sup> This is a mark of excellence for Virginia higher education, and it benefits a large spectrum of Virginians across many socio-economic areas.

Ex. 4, Median Debt at Graduation, VMI Compared to Virginia Public Four-Year Institutions



<sup>16</sup> Colleges Most Likely to Land You an Enjoyable Career, BEST VALUE SCHOOLS (Dec. 17, 2020), <https://www.bestvalueschools.com/rankings/colleges-enjoyable-career/>



### **c. Diversity of Cadet Leadership & Awards**

VMI is unquestionably unique. In addition to the Honor System, the school utilizes unique mechanisms to educate the whole person. The adversative model—the Rat Line—pushes young people beyond fear, stress, and limitations to achieve goals they did not think possible. The barracks itself is an important part of the training—a sort of leadership lab. Unlike many colleges and universities, where students essentially have the choice as to whether to interact with their peers, at VMI all cadets are required to live in a spartan barracks in close quarters. They have to lead and follow one another. In short, they are required to interact and deal with their fellow cadets on a human level, regardless of race, gender, or background.

This distinctive approach to higher education continues to prove its effectiveness in providing young men and women an environment that fosters intellectual, physical, and character development. Cadets take the lead in important elements of the Institute—the Corps of Cadets Regimental System (military organizational structure), the Honor Court, the Class System, on the athletic field, and in the various ROTC units. The manner in which these elements interrelate creates VMI's unique system of leadership development.

Like their peers, cadets of color and women are an integral part of this leadership structure, and have been consistently represented among VMI's student leader ranks, including through the appointment of VMI's first Black First Captain and Regimental Commander (the highest-ranking position a cadet can earn) in 1981. That same year, the same cadet was also elected by his classmates to serve on VMI's Honor Court. This cadet was future U.S. Air Force General Darren McDew '82, who went on to lead the United States Transportation Command.

Using a snapshot from the past decade, women cadets and cadets of color have played significant roles as student leaders in the Corps of Cadets, including by serving as:

- 20% of Regimental Executive Officers
- 20% of Battalion Commanders
- 10% of Battalion Executive Officers
- 26% of Regimental Staff Captains
- 19% of Company Commanders

This tradition of leadership will continue into the 2021-2022 academic year with the appointment of Cadet Kasey Meredith '22 to serve as VMI's first woman Regimental Commander. As Regimental Commander, Cadet Meredith will be the military commander of the Corps of Cadets, responsible to the Commandant of Cadets for the training, appearance, discipline, health, welfare, and morale of the Corps. Cadet Meredith has taken on increasingly responsible leadership positions during her cadetship, and her prior assignments demonstrate a high capacity for military proficiency and leadership. She previously served as the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Sergeant Major, a Color Guard corporal, and a fire team leader in the Marine Corps ROTC Detachment.





Over the years, many diverse cadets have also been elected by their peers to serve on VMI's Honor Court and as Class Officers, including at least three Black cadets who served as Honor Court President. The first of those was elected in 1989. More recently, in the past decade, cadets elected the first Hispanic President of the Honor Court, as well as the first woman—and first woman of color—to serve on the Court. This past academic year, Cadet Jordan Ward '21 served as the Vice-President of Education for the Honor Court, and was also a captain of VMI's 2020 Southern Conference Champion football team and this year's winner of VMI's Three-Legged Stool award.

Diverse cadets have also increasingly been recognized by VMI for their contributions to the Institute. Between 2016 and 2020, for example, the percentage of Institute awards earned by cadets of color and women cadets increased from 29% to 35% of the total awards. Moreover, in the last ten years, 20% of the winners of the Society of Cincinnati Medal—VMI's highest student award, which is given by the faculty to the member of the graduating class most distinguished by efficiency of services and excellence of character—were women.

#### **d. The Honor System**

The Honor System is the foundation of VMI. During the Rat Line, new cadets learn the Honor Code—"a Cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, nor tolerate those who do"—as well as the responsibility of each cadet to abide by it, and the repercussions for failing to do so. Cadets learn that the Honor Code does not just apply in the academic setting, but also in everyday life. The Honor System at VMI treats all Cadets equally—regardless of race, gender, class year, or rank. While the Institute is always examining ways in which the Honor System can be strengthened or improved, data relating to honor trial guilty verdicts do not on their face point to obvious bias.

Honor Court procedures are designed to ensure that only legitimate allegations of Honor Code violations are pursued. Before they are referred to the Honor Court, complaints are vetted at several levels. Those originating with a faculty or staff member, for example, are reviewed first by the relevant Department Head, who determines whether the complaint warrants referral to the appropriate senior vice-president. Upon further independent review, it is determined whether complaints should be referred to the Honor Court for investigation. Similarly, even when a complaint is referred to the Honor Court, only some referrals result in charges after investigation. Honor Court investigations and trials are also kept strictly confidential, to enable cadets who are not charged, or who are found not guilty, to return to the Corps without prejudice.

Over time, the process for handling honor violations has evolved. Major changes have included the addition of a jury system in the late 1990s, as well as the restructuring of the Honor Court between 2005-2010, resulting in the creation of Honor Court Vice-Presidents who are specifically charged with educating the Corps about the honor system, and ensuring that accused cadets receive an adequate defense.

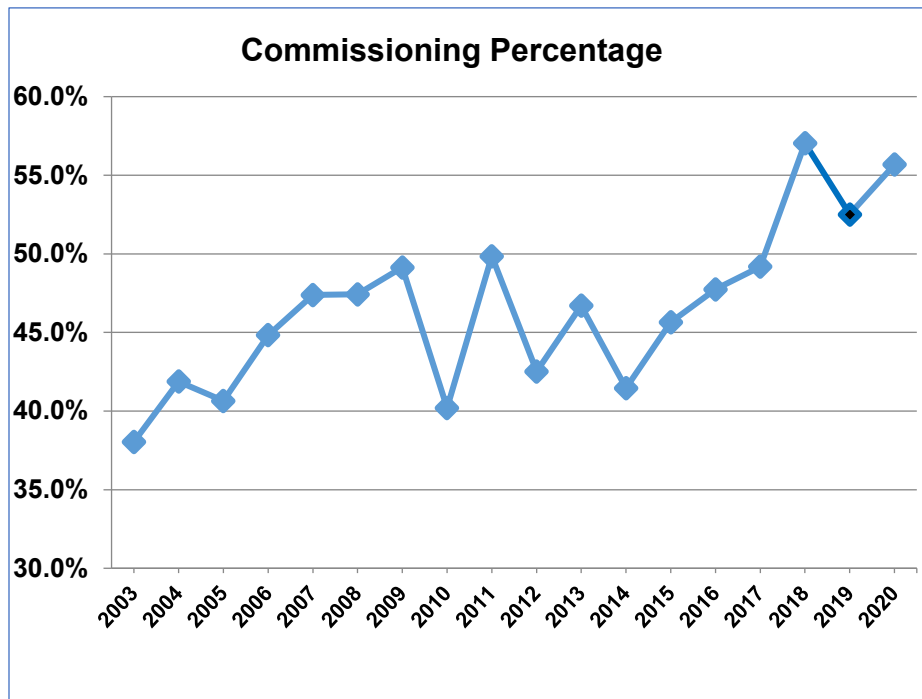
VMI's Superintendent has made it clear that, while the Honor Code and single sanction are critical to VMI's unique educational system, honor court procedures are always subject to further refinement to ensure fairness and accuracy.



### e. Commissioning Rates

VMI takes seriously its mission to produce citizen-soldiers who are educated for civilian life and also prepared to serve their country in the armed forces. In the past several years, between 50% and 58% of the graduating class has commissioned into the U.S. military, making the Institute a top source of newly commissioned officers into the United States Army, second only to the United States Military Academy at West Point. Moreover, approximately 18% of VMI graduates complete full military careers to retirement. Twice in the last four years, VMI was rated as the top ROTC detachment in the country by the United States Army Cadet Command, a remarkable achievement given the significant competition in this category.

Ex. 5. Commissioning Percentages, 2003-Present



By preparing its graduates—including cadets of color and women—to pursue military service, VMI has contributed to efforts to correct the historical disparities in race between the officer and enlisted ranks of the United States Armed Forces. Indeed, the United States Department of Defense Office of Manpower & Reserve Affairs routinely ranks VMI in the top seven highest sources of minority commissioned officers in the United States, ahead of significantly larger schools, such as the University of California Los Angeles, the Citadel, and Virginia Tech. Schools that rank ahead of VMI—such as the University of Puerto Rico, Texas A&M University, University of Southern California, and the University of Hawaii—are located in significantly more diverse areas.



Ex. 6. Department of Defense, Office of Manpower & Reserve Affairs, Ranking of 5-Year Averages for Minority Officer Commissions

	Army ROTC	Air Force ROTC	Naval ROTC	DoD Combined
1	University of Puerto Rico – Mayaguez* (40)	University of Texas – San Antonio* (13)	Savannah State University* (15)	University of Puerto Rico – Mayaguez*
2	University of Puerto Rico – Rio Piedras* (29)	University of California – Los Angeles** (11)	Florida A&M University* (9)	University of Puerto Rico – Rio Piedras*
3	University of Hawaii (26)	Tennessee State University* (11)	Texas A&M University (8)	Texas A&M University
4	Campbell University** (25)	Samford University** (10)	Morehouse College* (7)	University of Southern California**
5	Florida International University* (23)	California State University – Fresno* (10)	University of California – Los Angeles** (7)	University of Hawaii
6	Texas A&M University (22)	University of Puerto Rico – Rio Piedras* (9)	Old Dominion University** (7)	Virginia Military Institute
7	University of Southern California** (21)	University of Georgia (8)	Prairie View A&M University* (7)	University of California – Los Angeles**
8	The Citadel (20)	University of California – Berkeley** (8)	Virginia Tech (7)	The Citadel
9	Claremont McKenna College** (20)	Virginia Tech (8)	Southern University A&M (7)	Virginia Tech
10	Virginia Military Institute (18)	East Carolina University (8)	University of California – Berkeley** (7)	Campbell University**
	299 Commissions (5-yr Avg) 15% of AROTC Minority Production	96 Commissions (5-yr Avg) 23% of AFROTC Minority Production	80 Commissions (5-yr Avg) 30% of NROTC Minority Production	368 Commissions (5-yr Avg) 14% of All DoD Minority Commissions

VMI’s contributions to the United States Armed Forces are routinely recognized by senior military and foreign policy leaders:

- “VMI has trained some our country’s most distinguished leaders. It is, as you know, one of the largest producers of commissioned officers to the United States military and the only military college whose graduates have led three of the four services – the Army, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps twice.”  
- Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, April 3, 2012<sup>17</sup>
- “One of the reasons I wanted to come here is, I owe you a debt. I owe this school a debt because many, many times, I have had graduates of this school serve around me, above me, under me and there is a debt that our country owes that goes back many, many decades, as you know, for a school that develops this sense of service before self, of putting others first.”  
- Secretary of Defense James N. Mattis, Sept. 25, 2018<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Hillary Clinton’s Remarks at VMI, STILL4HILL (April 3, 2012), <https://still4hill.com/2012/04/03/hillary-clintons-remarks-at-vmi/>

<sup>18</sup> Remarks by Secretary Mattis at the Virginia Military Institute, Lexington Virginia, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (September 25, 2018), <https://www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/1645050/remarks-by-secretary-mattis-at-the-virginia-military-institute-lexington-virgin/>



There has been significant recent press coverage regarding VMI’s historic ties to the Confederacy and the fact that the Corps of Cadets fought in the Battle of New Market. In fact, beginning even before the Civil War, with the Mexican-American War, and into the present, VMI graduates have served in every major armed conflict, including 592 graduates who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

**f. Graduation Rates**

Despite its rigorous academic program and demanding military training, VMI consistently maintains one of the top four-year graduation rates among Virginia Public Four-Year institutions, as detailed below:

- 2016-2017 Entering Cohort (Class of 2020): 64.6% (5th out of 15 for Commonwealth public schools)<sup>19</sup>
- 2015-2016 Entering Cohort (Class of 2019): 63.4% (6th out of 15 for Commonwealth public schools)<sup>20</sup>
- 2014-2015 Entering Cohort (Class of 2018): 75.9% (3rd out of 15 for Commonwealth public schools)<sup>21</sup>

**g. Post-Graduation Success**

*U.S. News & World Report* has ranked VMI among the nation’s top undergraduate public liberal arts colleges since 2001 and, every year since 2015, has rated it the fourth-best public liberal arts college in the nation, behind only the United States Military Academy at West Point, the United States Naval Academy, and the United States Air Force Academy. As noted above, in 2020, VMI was rated second in the world—behind only Stanford University—on Best Value Schools’ list of “Colleges Most Likely to Land You an Enjoyable Career.”<sup>22</sup>

Ex. 7. Notable VMI Rankings 2019-2021

Source	Rankings
Forbes (2019) <i>*Forbes did not produce college rankings in 2020</i>	America’s Top Colleges: No. 205 Top Public Colleges: No. 63 Top Liberal Arts Colleges And Universities: No. 73 Top Colleges in the South: No. 40 America’s Best Value Colleges: No. 133
PayScale.com (2020)	Return On Investment Among All Colleges And Universities Nationally: No. 51 (No. 95 for out of state)

<sup>19</sup> SCHEV, [GRS 10: Graduation Rates of Virginia Traditional Four-Year Institutions](#)

<sup>20</sup> SCHEV, [GRS 10: Graduation Rates of Virginia Traditional Four-Year Institutions](#)

<sup>21</sup> SCHEV, [GRS 10: Graduation Rates of Virginia Traditional Four-Year Institutions](#)

<sup>22</sup> Colleges Most Likely to Land You an Enjoyable Career, BEST VALUE SCHOOLS (December 17, 2020), <https://www.bestvalueschools.com/rankings/colleges-enjoyable-career/>



Source	Rankings
	Best Value Colleges in Virginia: No. 2 (behind UVA) Best Value Public Colleges: No. 28 (No. 46 for out of state) Best Value Colleges for Engineering Careers: No. 186 for in state
Money Magazine Best Colleges (2020)	Best Small College Nationally: No. 3 Best Public Schools in the U.S.: No. 16 Best colleges in the U.S.: No. 26
U.S. News & World Report (2021)	National Liberal Arts Colleges: No. 69 (of 239 public and private schools) Top Public Liberal Arts Colleges: No. 4 (of 20 public schools listed) Engineering Programs (no doctorate): No. 29 (of 220 ABET programs) Computer Science Programs: No. 210 (out of almost 500)
Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education Ranking (2020)	National Colleges And Universities: No. 151, among top 20 percent (out of 797) Top 100 Public Universities in the U.S.: No. 37
Washington Monthly (August 2020)	National Liberal Arts Colleges: No. 35 (out of 218 colleges nationally) Best Bang For The Buck, Southeast: No. 63 Promotion of Public Service: No. 1 nationally
Best Value Schools (2020)	Colleges Most Likely to Land You an Enjoyable Career: No. 2 (behind Stanford University ( <a href="https://www.bestvalueschools.com/rankings/colleges-enjoyable-career/">https://www.bestvalueschools.com/rankings/colleges-enjoyable-career/</a> ))

These rankings are supported by the outcomes we have seen VMI graduates achieve. Among the alumni of VMI are Nobel Peace Prize recipient George C. Marshall; civil rights martyr Jonathan Daniels; more than 230 military general flag officers (more than any senior military college in the nation); thousands of captains of industry and finance; doctors; world explorers; scientists; advisors to the nation’s highest office; 11 Rhodes Scholars (including Kenya native Michael Lokale ’03); seven Medal of Honor recipients; a Pulitzer Prize winner; an Emmy Award winner; and individuals who are leaders and active members in their local communities. The success of our graduates is particularly remarkable given VMI’s comparatively small student body; VMI’s entire living alumni network is slightly smaller than the current undergraduate population at many larger institutions of education.

Indeed, whatever their chosen path, and whatever their background, VMI graduates are overwhelmingly successful upon graduation from the Institute. In each of the last three years, for example, roughly 99% of respondents to a survey by the Office of Career Services had secured employment by October of the graduating year, with survey participation rates ranging from 97-98% in those years.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Reports on First Destination of VMI Graduates, VMI OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES, <https://www.vmi.edu/media/content-assets/documents/career-services/First-Destination-Report-2017-2018.pdf>; <https://www.vmi.edu/media/content-assets/documents/career-services/First-Destination-Report-2018-2019.pdf>; <https://www.vmi.edu/media/content-assets/documents/career-services/First-Destination-Report-2019-2020.pdf>



VMI alumni similarly report higher-than-average earnings post-graduation. With respect to graduates in the class of 2018 and the class of 2019 who reported their starting salaries to VMI, 76% of the accepted offers reported were above the national salary data means. For 2019-2020 graduates, 52% of cadets who reported accepted employment offers had salaries above the national salary data means for their respective majors. In 2019, Forbes determined VMI’s early-career graduate salary is the best of colleges in Virginia (tied with W&L).<sup>24</sup>

This trend continues as alumni advance in their careers. For instance, data collected by Georgetown University’s Center on Education and the Workforce indicate that, among Virginia schools, VMI ranks in the top 6 for median earnings for graduates ten years after enrolling. This places the Institute close to, or slightly ahead of, other elite Virginia colleges and universities. such as the University of Virginia, Virginia Tech, the Colleges of William and Mary, and James Madison University.<sup>25</sup>

Other public ranking resources rate the VMI degree as having the second highest net present value<sup>26</sup> (“NPV”) of all colleges in Virginia at the twenty- and forty-year marks. VMI is ranked behind only W&L, whose NPV is ranked 2nd in the entire nation for all liberal arts colleges.

Ex. 8. Top ten degrees by NPV for all Virginia colleges<sup>27</sup>

Rank	Institution	20-year NPV	40-year NPV
1.	Washington and Lee Univ.	\$724,000	1,578,000
2.	Virginia Military Institute	\$637,000	\$1,375,000
3.	University of Richmond	\$593,000	\$1,317,000
4.	Virginia Tech.	\$612,000	\$1,313,000
5.	University of Virginia	\$604,000	\$1,291,000
6.	Chamberlain University	\$613,000	\$1,268,000
7.	George Mason University	\$583,000	\$1,255,000
8.	College of William & Mary	\$571,000	\$1,227,000
9.	James Madison University	\$546,000	\$1,181,000
10.	Sentara College of Health Sciences	\$540,000	\$1,160,000

<sup>24</sup> America’s Top Colleges 2019, FORBES (Aug. 15, 2019), <https://www.forbes.com/top-colleges/#7d01d06b1987>

<sup>25</sup> Ranking Your College: Where You Go and What You Make, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY CEW, <https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/college-rankings/#interactive>

<sup>26</sup> Per the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, “The net present value is how much a sum of money in the future is valued today. This metric includes costs, future earnings, and the length of time it would take to invest and earn a certain amount of money over a fixed horizon.”

<sup>27</sup> Ranking ROI of 4,500 U.S. Colleges and Universities, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY CEW, <https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/collegeroi/>





## **h. Faculty Diversity**

VMI recognizes the importance of diversity among its faculty. Since 2011, the percentage of women full-time tenure track professors has risen from 18% to 34% of the faculty. As of August 2021, two of fifteen department heads are women. Currently, 11% of full-time tenure track professors are persons of color, a number VMI is working to improve via a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Recruitment Plan that is under development. The plan will aim to help the Institute identify, attract, and retain diverse faculty and staff, and to advance a climate on Post that fosters inclusive excellence.

## **i. Focus on Diversity and Inclusion**

In addition to working to improve the representation of women and people of color in the Corps of Cadets and among faculty and staff, VMI has taken a number of additional measures over the past several decades to celebrate and foster diversity on Post. These measures include, among others:

- Honoring Jonathan Daniels: In 1997, the VMI Board of Visitors established the Jonathan M. Daniels '61 Humanitarian Award to emphasize the virtue of public service and to recognize individuals who have made significant personal sacrifices to protect or improve the lives of others. Recipients of the Daniels Award include former President Jimmy Carter, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Andrew Young, international humanitarian worker Paul Hebert '68, Georgia Congressman and Civil Rights leader John Lewis, and Children's Rights activist Carolyn Miles.

In March 2004, VMI dedicated a courtyard and arch on Post to Jonathan Daniels. The courtyard, which is adjacent to Barracks, currently is undergoing enhancements, including the addition of markers to denote key dates in Daniels' life, additional quotes, and enhanced landscaping.

- Hosting a Diversity Conference to Solicit Ways to Improve: In 2013, VMI hosted a Diversity Conference on Post. The conference included focus groups consisting of women, people of color, and NCAA athletes, who provided insights and feedback to the Institute. VMI used this input to revise and expand its marketing campaign, with the aim of reaching a more diverse population and recruiting cadets from those constituencies. As a result of these efforts, VMI achieved a 43% increase in inquiries from diverse students over a five-year period. In addition, VMI has experienced a 100% increase in female early decision applicants, and a 46% increase in all woman applicants, since 2006.
- Hosting Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg to Mark the 20<sup>th</sup> Year of Co-Education: In February 2017, VMI invited Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg to Post to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> year of co-education at the Institute. Justice Ginsburg was interviewed by two of her biographers on stage in Cameron Hall before the VMI community, and also met with women cadets and graduates. The event received national press coverage.



- Celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Integration at VMI: In 2019, VMI celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of integration of the Corps by hosting a panel discussion with the first Black cadets to matriculate at the school in 1968.
- Creating a Diversity Dashboard: In October 2019, VMI launched a Diversity Dashboard to monitor admissions, graduation rates, and hiring at the Institute.
- Releasing the Five Pillars Action Plan: In July 2020, the VMI Superintendent published a letter to the VMI Community disavowing a culture that tolerates or promotes racism and discrimination. The letter laid out an action plan with five pillars to achieve the following goals: “(1) to retain the foundation of values and principles set in the Institute’s early years; however, we will shift the emphasis and celebrations to our remarkable history of our second century; (2) enhance recruiting, especially among marginalized youth, and meet the need for a more diverse faculty and staff; (3) provide greater leadership education for our cadets and thus a civil and respected environment on post, with cadets well prepared for leadership roles after graduation; and (4) provide greater access to our alumni network for all graduates.”<sup>28</sup> The five pillars are (1) Education; (2) VMI Corps of Cadets; (3) Promote Increased Commissioning; (4) VMI Symbology; and (5) Alumni.

#### **j. State Resources & Oversight**

VMI is managed by a sixteen-member Board of Visitors appointed by the Governor of Virginia. The current Board includes two members who are women, as well as four persons of color. All members were appointed, or reappointed, by the current Governor and his predecessor.

VMI consistently meets the Commonwealth’s requirements and recommendations for institutions of higher education in Virginia. In its 2020 Financial and Administrative Management Standards for Public Institutions of Higher Education Compliance Review, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia found that VMI met all standards required by Va. Code § 23.1-1001.

VMI also has access to, and regularly consults with, attorneys in the Education Section of the Virginia Office of the Attorney General, including with respect to significant compliance, employment, and policy issues. A Senior Assistant Attorney General currently represents VMI as well as other institutions, and, in the summer of 2021, VMI will have designated counsel from the Office of the Attorney General on Post.

### **III. ADDITIONAL MEASURES TO PROMOTE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

As detailed above, VMI has made major strides over the past several decades to create a more diverse community on Post. More recently, the VMI Board of Visitors, Superintendents and other Post leadership, and alumni have taken significant steps to continue to promote inclusivity and

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<sup>28</sup> Letter from Superintendent J.H. Binford Peay III '62 (July 29, 2020), <https://www.vmialumni.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Way-Forward-for-Greater-Understanding-Fair-and-Equality.July-2020.Formatted.docx.pdf>





foster the potential of all cadets. Many of these measures have been, or will be, implemented under the guidance of VMI's new Superintendent, Major General Cedric T. Wins, who was appointed in April 2021 via a unanimous vote of the Board of Visitors to serve as VMI's 15<sup>th</sup> Superintendent.

- Forming a Diversity Equity and Inclusion (“DEI”) Committee: In October 2020, the VMI Board of Visitors created a DEI Committee to oversee and monitor race and gender related matters. The Committee includes members of the Board of Visitors, two non-voting members of the VMI staff, and one non-voting cadet member.
- VMI Alumni Agencies Diversity Discussions: Between June and December 2020, the Alumni Agencies held diversity discussions with alumni in response to social injustice concerns across our country. Thirty to forty alumni participated in each session.
- Forming a Ceremonies and Memorials Naming and Review Committee: In October 2020, the VMI Board of Visitors created a Ceremonies and Memorials Naming and Review Committee, consisting of board members, cadets, alumni, faculty, and historians. This committee was tasked with making recommendations to the Board of Visitors to ensure that Post provides an inspiring and inclusive landscape for all members of the VMI community and that VMI's memorials reflect the Institute's core values. At its May 2021 meeting, the Board of Visitors approved the following recommendations:
  - Removing Stonewall Jackson's name from various locations and buildings around Post.
  - Preserving the Clinedinst mural in Memorial Hall and directing the VMI Museum to develop a system to provide visitors with appropriate context for the mural.
  - Expanding the symbolism of Virginia Mourning Her Dead to honor all former VMI Cadets who have died in wars and military conflict from 1839 to present.
- Relocating Parade Ground Flag Poles and the Stonewall Jackson Statue: In October 2020, the Board of Visitors unanimously voted to remove the statue of General Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson from Post. The Parade Ground flagpoles will also be moved and centered on New Barracks (Marshall Arch). The flagpoles were previously centered around the Stonewall Jackson statue and Old Barracks (Jackson Arch).
- Forming a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Subcommittee on the VMI Alumni Agencies' Board: In November 2020, the Alumni Agencies formed a subcommittee to represent racial, gender, religious, and LGBTQ diversity. The subcommittee authored and distributed engagement surveys to minority alumni to learn about the experiences of diverse alumni and ways to improve engagement of diverse alumni.
- Modifying the New Market Ceremony: The New Market Ceremony has been expanded to honor all former cadets who have sacrificed their lives in military service and has been renamed the Memorial Parade. The inaugural Memorial Parade was held on May 14, 2021.



- Modifying New Cadet Orientation: The New Cadet Oath Ceremony will now take place on Post, as opposed to the New Market Battlefield. VMI has discontinued the re-enactment charge on the New Market Battlefield.
- Superintendent Listening Sessions: Since arriving at VMI in November 2020, Maj. Gen. Wins has conducted at least twenty-four “listening sessions” with cadets, faculty, staff, and alumni on key issues such as race and gender relations in order to assess the culture, policies, and procedures currently in place at the Institute.

VMI is focused on the work that remains to be done and—consistent with our core values of integrity, honor, and civility—the Institute intends to attack that work with vigor. The additional steps planned include:

- Hiring a Chief Diversity Officer: VMI will soon announce its first Chief Diversity Officer, with a target start date of July 9, 2021. The Chief Diversity Officer will report directly to the Superintendent.
- Enhancing Racial Sensitivity Training: VMI is currently developing a cadet-led cultural awareness training for cadets, faculty, and staff, with the goal of enhancing the understanding of cultural differences and promoting civility and respect amongst members of the Corps.
- Adding a Course on the U.S. Civil Rights Movement to its Core Curriculum: VMI will require all cadets to take a course on the U.S. Civil Rights Movement.
- Enhancing the Human Resources Diversity Hiring Program: VMI is working to review and enhance its Human Resources Diversity Hiring Program. Efforts include expanding advertising to increase diverse applicants, revising training for hiring committee members, and including an equity coordinator on each hiring committee.
- Expanding Recruiting Initiatives for Diverse and Under-represented Cadets: VMI is currently in the process of developing a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Recruitment Plan with a goal of identifying, attracting, admitting, and retaining a more diverse matriculating class. These initiatives include:
  - Participating in regional and national college fairs and other recruiting programs that focus on attracting students of color, women, and other underrepresented groups.
  - Identifying regional and Virginia high schools that enroll a high percentage of students of color and conduct admissions recruiting visits to these schools on a regular basis.
  - Developing partnerships with schools, programs, and associations that work within communities to assist first generation, low-income and other underrepresented students in achieving academic success and provide opportunities for these students



to learn about the educational opportunities of higher education.

- Working with the Alumni Agencies' as they establish their “Red/Yellow Officers” program, in which dedicated alumni in various locales across the country will help shepherd prospective cadets through the admission process and prepare them for matriculation.
  - Establishing an “advisory” group comprised of cadets, faculty, staff, and alumni to provide suggestions, feedback and guidance related to recruiting activities and other admissions functions geared toward the established goal.
  - Investigating potential membership in the Coalition for College organization, a group of 150+ colleges and universities aiming to increase higher education access among underrepresented students and ensure that all students have equal access to college-planning tools.
  - Reviewing ways in which accepting the Common Application could positively impact the identification, recruitment and enrollment of underrepresented groups.
  - Expanding VMI's existing direct mail campaign to increase the number of underrepresented populations reached.
- Hosting an Engagement Conference for Alumni: The Alumni Agencies are hosting an Alumni Engagement Conference on July 22-24, 2021. One of the two keynote speakers at the conference will focus on diversity and inclusion as well as three of the eight breakout sessions planned.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Since the review of VMI was announced last fall, we have had an opportunity to hear from many members of the VMI family. The insights and feedback we received were as wide ranging and varied as they were passionate. We heard frustration about the press articles and the investigation. We heard from others who welcomed the investigation and felt confident in VMI. Many of these individuals felt that a review would show our environment was as good as—if not better than—many other Virginia schools, and believed VMI would implement any further necessary changes. And we heard from some alumni who are proud graduates, but who also experienced incidents that are unacceptable, and who offered thoughtful feedback on ways we could improve.

Yet, to the last, all were united by the strong conviction that—whatever work lies before us—the “clear and appalling culture” of ongoing institutional racism attributed to us at the outset of this investigation is simply inaccurate. Our review of the metrics, detailed in this report, coupled with the hundreds of conversations had with alumni, have borne that out. Like many colleges and institutions across our country, there is much that can—and will be—done to continue to identify and combat incidents of discrimination in all its forms. Even as we engage in that work, however, we are confident that VMI unquestionably remains one of the best institutions of higher learning in the Commonwealth, and a superb place for men and women of all backgrounds to receive an education.