

# The Value of a VMI Education

## On the Shoulders of Our Graduates

VMI's longstanding reputation of producing outstanding graduates has contributed to the strength of our communities, the progress of the Commonwealth, the advancement of private industry, and the security of our nation since 1839. Whether in the boardroom or on the battlefield, VMI alumni have built a foundation of trust in their communities for more than 180 years.

The strength of the Institute's standards and its commitment to excellence set VMI alumni up for success early in their careers and beyond. By its very nature, VMI levels the playing field. All cadets wear the same uniform, eat in the same mess hall, live by the same single-sanction Honor Code, and push themselves past self-perceived limits from the obstacle course to the disciplined regimental system. They become leaders and trailblazers among their peers. After graduation, on average, their **salaries rise higher and faster** than many of their colleagues from other colleges across the Commonwealth.

## A Legacy of Leadership

VMI cadets and alumni possess a distinct array of qualities that set them apart from the rest. **Honor, integrity, and a service-before-self mentality are not just buzzwords** at VMI but values that are instilled in every cadet from day one, including mastering time management while balancing academic, athletic, and military responsibilities.

VMI's unique and comprehensive educational method includes a broad, four-year curriculum with 14 academic degree programs in engineering, science, liberal arts, and social sciences; a proud history of Division I NCAA athletic competition; and a challenging military environment where cadets test their mettle and come to know who they are in the world and what they stand for. VMI also offers an array of enrichment opportunities, including study abroad, undergraduate research, service learning, and the Institute Honors Program. Combined with an expectation of physical readiness and training, as well as a robust offering of fully funded club sports and activities, cadets pursue their passion in and out of the classroom.

Lastly and most importantly, each year of the VMI experience provides hundreds of leadership learning opportunities. By initially learning to follow, the tough but professional first year at the Institute sets the bar in all areas. The second year of study offers opportunities to practice leadership on a smaller scale under the watchful eye of upper-class cadets. During the third and fourth years, cadets are offered real-world experiences in leadership successes and failures and begin to build the skills and lessons learned they will rely on for the rest of their lives. VMI is hands-on leadership.

## VMI Alumni Take Action and Make a Difference

VMI alumni are known for their unwavering support of the Institute. In fact, year after year, **VMI alumni support nearly 25% of VMI's annual operations budget**. This generous support helps fund critical programs, scholarships, and facility improvements that benefit current and future cadets. Alumni know they are not only investing in the future of VMI but also in the future of the cadets who will follow in their footsteps. Long after graduation, many alumni continue to stay involved with VMI through financial contributions, volunteering, attending events, and remaining closely associated with one another. They understand the importance of giving back to the Institute that helped shape them into the individuals they are today.

VMI alumni also serve as **mentors and role models for current cadets**, sharing their experiences and offering guidance and support. Their dedication and commitment to VMI are testaments to the lasting impact it has on its graduates. The VMI alumni network is built upon the tight bonds of friendship forged during the VMI experience. Care and support for one another extend well beyond life in barracks.

**No ordinary college. No ordinary alumni. No ordinary life.**

97%

97% of graduates are employed or attending graduate school within five months of graduation (2023). (Source: VMI Office of Career Services)

No. 2&3

Institute alumni are 2nd in the state for earning an average of \$78,200 early in their careers and 3rd for earning \$145,300 in mid-career by Payscale's 2023 College Salary Report.

No. 4

For more than 20 years, VMI has been ranked in the top four public liberal arts colleges in the nation by U.S. News and World Report, behind only the nation's federal military academies.

4.5/5

Awarded one of America's Best Colleges and rated 4.5 out of 5 stars by Money magazine Best Colleges for quality of education, affordability, and salary earnings (June 2023).

No. 5

Ranked No. 5 Best Value Liberal Arts Colleges in Virginia (in-state) by Payscale's 2023 College Salary Report.

[noordinary.vmialumni.org](https://noordinary.vmialumni.org)

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