



# Chief Executive Officer VMI Alumni Agencies Leadership Profile

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The Virginia Military Institute (VMI) Alumni Agencies Board of Directors, located in Lexington, VA, invites nominations and applications from individuals who wish to be considered for the Alumni Agencies' next Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

## About VMI Alumni Agencies

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**The Mission** of the VMI Alumni Agencies is to inform, engage, and inspire support for VMI. While the VMI Alumni Agencies collaborate, engage, and support VMI, it is not involved in the Institute's chain of command.

### Forming the Agencies

Between 2014–16, the heads of the Alumni Association, the Keydet Club, and the Foundation thoughtfully and intentionally formed a plan for a combined Agencies headed by a single executive to improve support for VMI. The resulting resolution proposed restructuring the Agencies under a single chief executive officer. This consolidated entity, known as the VMI Alumni Agencies, was formed in 2019.

### VMI Alumni Agencies Governing Boards

There are four governing boards that cast the vision and set the direction for the VMI Alumni Agencies (Alumni Agencies). In each, volunteer leaders of the highest caliber serve VMI alumni and the Institute by providing opportunities to connect and celebrate while securing the path for future graduates of VMI.

### VMI Alumni Agencies

The Alumni Agencies creates strength of purpose for efficient and effective operations, stewardship, fundraising, communications, events, advancement services, and engagement in support of the VMI alumni family, the Corps of Cadets, and the future of the Institute. The organization is governed by the VMI Alumni Agencies Board consisting of the president and vice president of the Foundation Board of Trustees, the Alumni Association Board of Directors, and the Keydet Club Board of Governors, as well as a representative from the VMI Board of Visitors.



### VMI Alumni Association

The primary purpose of the Alumni Association (VMIAA) is to organize alumni in one general body to keep alive the memories of Institute life and to efficiently aid in the promotion of the welfare of the Institute and the successful prosecution of its educational purposes in the future. The VMI Alumni Association supports alumni engagement and the Institute through chapter activities, admissions recruiting, career support, and alumni reunions with support from advancement services.



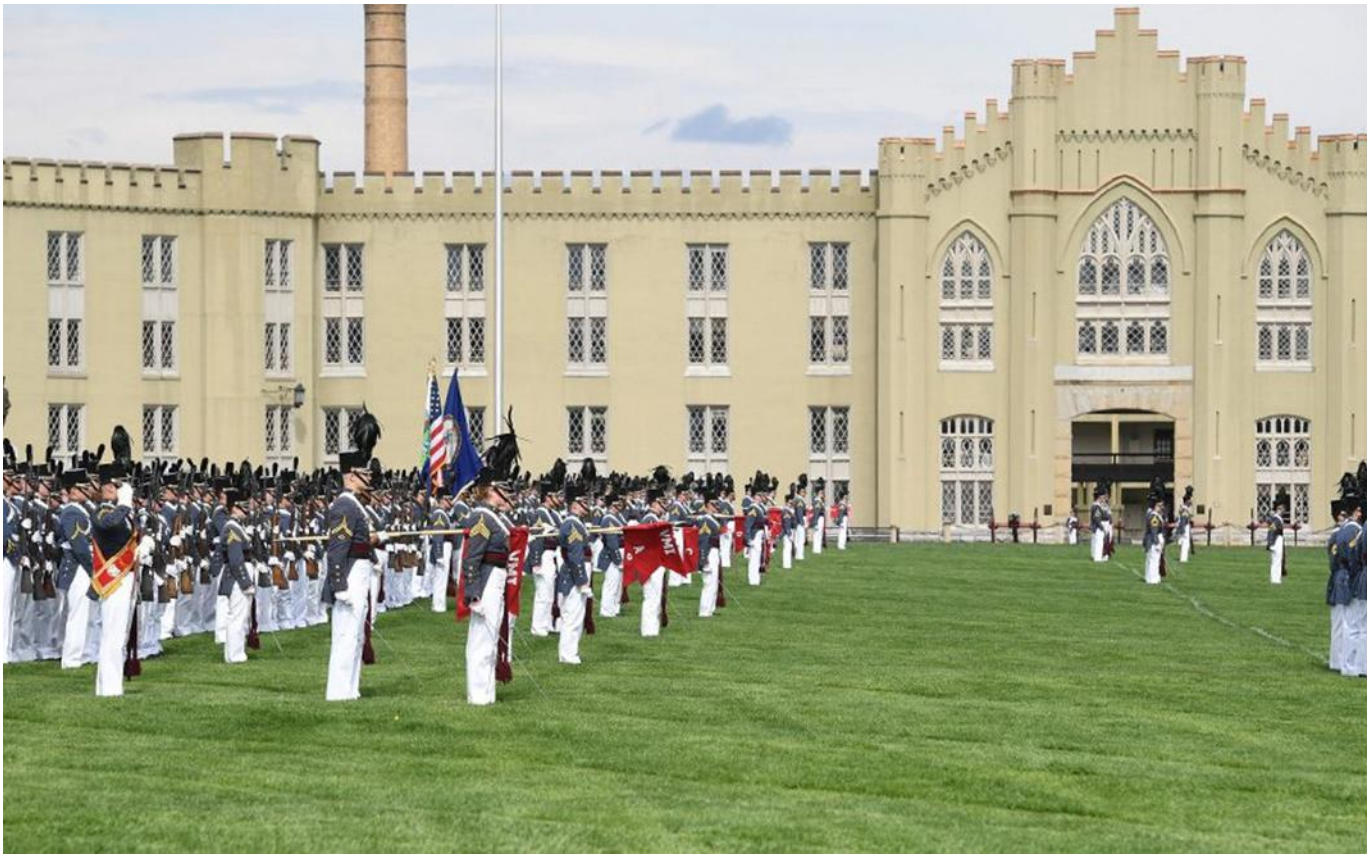
### VMI Foundation

The Foundation is responsible for fundraising and comprehensive giving options, including vital unrestricted funding, directed giving funds and scholarships, cadet life and leadership programs support, and planned giving—all types of financial support with the exception of NCAA Division I athletics. The **VMI Investment Holdings, LLC** board has the overall responsibility for the management of the VMI endowment, operating within fiscal best practices and processes to secure a strong future for the Institute.

### VMI Keydet Club

The Keydet Club is responsible for the financial support of NCAA Division I cadet athletes via scholarships, coaches' salaries, academic support, and operating budgets for VMI's 18 individual NCAA teams. The Keydet Club provides directed communications to donor leadership and supports engagement at sporting events. Financial support from the Keydet Club creates opportunities for cadet athletes.

For more information on the VMI Alumni Agencies, please visit their website: [About Us | VMI Alumni Agencies](#)



## The Chief Executive Officer

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Reporting to the Alumni Agencies Board of Directors, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) serves as the senior executive responsible for the overall strategic direction, leadership, and performance of the VMI Alumni Agencies—comprising the VMI Alumni Association, the VMI Foundation, and the VMI Keydet Club. Each organization is led by a Chief Operating Officer reporting to the CEO, who provides integrated leadership and strategic vision across all entities. Other leaders reporting to the CEO include Chief Financial Officer; Chief Communications Officer; Director of Human Resources; Director of Advancement Services, and an Executive Assistant. Overall, the CEO will provide leadership for the approximately 45 employees of the Alumni Agencies.

The CEO's primary charge is to shape and execute a unified advancement strategy that strengthens engagement among VMI's broad and diverse constituencies and secures sustainable philanthropic support. As the chief strategist and senior advancement leader, the CEO provides vision, coordination, and alignment across all development, alumni, and communications functions, ensuring their full integration in support of the Institute's mission and priorities. Working in close partnership with the Alumni Agencies Board and the Chief Operating Officers of the VMIAA, VMI Foundation, Keydet Club, and Institute stakeholders, the CEO will provide strategic guidance for institutional advancement, encompassing major and planned giving, campaign design and execution, donor stewardship, and alumni relations. The CEO ensures cohesion among the Alumni Agencies and their respective boards to achieve maximum impact on behalf of the Institute.

## Duties & Responsibilities

### Strategic Leadership and Management

- **Set Strategic Direction:** Define long-term goals and measurable objectives aligned with VMI's mission and strategic plan. Establish a shared vision and performance standards across all Alumni Agencies.
- **Lead Strategically, Operate Effectively:** Provide big-picture leadership, delegating operational management to COOs while ensuring organizational alignment, accountability, and coordination.
- **Serve as Senior Advancement Officer:** Lead by example in cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major and planned gifts.
- **Model Empowering Leadership:** Foster a culture of trust, innovation, and professional excellence. Encourage collaboration, initiative, and responsible risk-taking.
- **Achieve Best-in-Class Performance:** Benchmark against peer and aspirant institutions to continuously elevate operations, philanthropic outcomes, and stakeholder relationships.
- **Engage with the VMI Community:** Participate actively in the life of the Institute and its alumni network, maintaining a visible presence and residing within the Lexington/Rockbridge County community.

### Strategic Advancement and Program Development

- **Assess and Optimize Philanthropic Potential:** Assess the ability and capacity of the VMI Alumni Agencies to fulfill advancement requirements. Conduct long-term evaluation of giving capacity across alumni, parents, and friends. Develop and execute a multi-year advancement strategy that deepens donor engagement and broadens the base of support.
- **Diversify and Strengthen the Donor Pipeline:** Implement systematic approaches to identify, cultivate, and secure support from individuals, corporations, and foundations, with focus on both high-capacity and emerging donors.
- **Integrate Development, Communications, and Engagement:** Align messaging, branding, and outreach efforts with fundraising goals, ensuring consistent and compelling communication across all constituencies.
- **Advance Comprehensive Giving Programs:** Strengthen individual (annual, major, principal, and planned) and institutional giving programs to maximize philanthropic impact.
- **Leverage Insights from Recent Campaigns:** Analyze outcomes of prior campaigns to inform future strategic initiatives. Plan and prepare for the next major campaign by aligning staff, resources, and donor strategy.
- **Broaden Alumni Engagement:** Enhance programming and opportunities that foster lifelong relationships between alumni and the Institute, recognizing the diverse needs and capacities of VMI's constituencies.

### Leadership Support and Governance Engagement

- **Advise and Support Senior Leadership:** Partner with the Superintendent of VMI as chief advancement strategist and advisor in cultivating transformative gifts. Provide counsel to the Board of Visitors, Alumni Agencies Board, and the boards of the Alumni Association, Foundation, and Keydet Club.
- **Strengthen Volunteer Leadership:** Ensure that volunteer boards are well-informed, strategically engaged, and effectively deployed in fundraising and advocacy. Maximize each volunteer's impact through purposeful engagement and support.
- **Promote Alignment and Transparency:** Maintain open communication among all stakeholders to ensure unified direction, accountability, and shared success across the Alumni Agencies.

## Qualifications & Experience

The ideal candidate will bring a record of strategic leadership, advancement success, and organizational vision within higher education or a comparable mission-driven organization.

Desired attributes and experience include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Deep appreciation for the mission, traditions, and aspirations of VMI and the ability to articulate its enduring relevance.
- Experience reporting to, or working closely with, a governing board, preferably in a nonprofit environment.
- Strong understanding, or willingness to quickly gain an understanding, of Virginia's General Assembly and governmental processes.
- Exceptional strategic, analytical, and creative skills; good knowledge of all aspects of advancement, including development, alumni relations, communications, donor stewardship, and volunteer engagement.
- Strong preference for demonstrated success in planning and leading large-scale, transformational fundraising campaigns.
- Preference for 15 years of senior-level management experience, including fiduciary oversight of a significant endowment or comparable portfolio.
- Record of strengthening advancement programs to achieve measurable growth in philanthropic revenue and engagement.
- Proven ability to design and execute strategic plans that drive alignment and impact.
- Preference for a personal record of securing seven-figure or higher gifts from individuals, corporations, and foundations.
- Superior interpersonal and communication skills, with the confidence and integrity to build trust among institutional leadership, alumni, donors, and staff.
- A collaborative and decisive leader who inspires confidence and consensus.
- Willingness to travel (estimated to be 20% - 40%) and engage with alumni and supporters as needed.
- Bachelor's degree required, advanced degree preferred.

## Compensation

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Compensation will be commensurate with experience, including a competitive base salary plus a performance-based bonus, and a comprehensive benefits package.





## About Virginia Military Institute

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Founded in 1839, VMI is the oldest state-supported military college in the United States. Throughout its storied history, VMI has produced leaders and individuals whose daily lives reflect integrity, fairness, and appreciation for the value of hard work that is instilled at the Institute. For the individual who wants an undergraduate experience more complete and transformative than an ordinary college or university can provide, and more versatile in its applications than a military service academy affords, VMI offers a superb education.

*U.S. News & World Report* has ranked VMI among the nation's top undergraduate public liberal arts colleges since 2001. The Institute's efficacy is well demonstrated by generations of VMI graduates. Among the alumni of VMI are a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, 11 Rhodes Scholars, seven Medal of Honor recipients, a Pulitzer Prize winner, college presidents, and general and flag officers.

No other college in America is so attentive to and so proud of its product: citizen-soldiers prepared both for civilian leadership in their professions and for military leadership in times of national need. VMI graduates have made distinguished contributions both in the military and in fields as diverse as business, engineering, international affairs, medicine, and public policy, often at remarkably young ages. VMI's multi-faceted program is designed to instill in each cadet the lifelong values of integrity, devotion to duty, self-discipline, and self-reliance.



## Virginia Military Institute Today

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VMI continues to be a distinguished, co-educational, public institution combining rigorous academics, military discipline, and leadership development. The Institute has approximately 1,600 cadets, of which 60% hail from Virginia. Cadets come from 43 states and territories, in addition to Guam, the District of Columbia, and 10 foreign countries. All cadets are required to participate in one of the four ROTC programs: Army, Marines, Navy, or Air Force. Cadets also have the option of a direct commission in the U.S. Coast Guard through VMI's Coast Guard Auxiliary University Program. Commissioning is encouraged but optional. On average, over 50% of each graduating class pursues commissions. More than 87% of the Corps receive some sort of financial aid, with 42% of cadets qualifying for need-based aid. 97% of VMI graduates are employed or enrolled in graduate school within five months of graduation.

### Academics

Accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate degrees, the VMI academic program educates cadets in a rigorous environment that encourages lifelong learning and develops citizens of character who anticipate, respond, and lead in a complex and changing world. VMI offers cadets a challenging four-year core curriculum and 14 nationally recognized majors in engineering, the sciences, and the humanities, with an array of enrichment opportunities provided through the Institute Honors Program, undergraduate research, foreign study, internships, and the Institute Writing Program. Cadets are taught by a faculty where 96% of full-time teaching faculty members have a Ph.D. or a terminal degree in their field; the cadet-to-faculty ratio is approximately 10:1.



## The Honor Code and Cadet Life

The VMI Honor Code, a foundational principle stating, "A Cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, nor tolerate those who do.," and the traditions and rules of the Institute regulate the daily life of cadets. Cadets live in barracks, eat together, and wear the traditional cadet uniforms. Cadets take the VMI fitness test every semester. Cadet rights, privileges, and responsibilities are earned and increase each year of their cadetship through the class system. Several committees run the VMI cadet government and together handle issues of the Corps and enforce Institute regulations. The regimental system is the military component of the Corps of Cadets— nine rifle companies plus the regimental band company. About 70 clubs, club sports, and extracurricular organizations provide a wide range of activities and leadership opportunities for cadets.

## The Post

VMI's post consists of 80 buildings, many dating from the 19th century, on 200 acres. It is recognized as a national historic district with Old Barracks recognized as a national historic landmark. Since the dawn of the 21st century, there has been a consistent effort toward modernizing buildings to make them viable sites for learning and athletic competition. VMI also owns several off-post properties, including McKethan Park, which is the site of the VMI observatory, the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park, the Jackson House Museum and the adjoining Davidson-Tucker House in downtown Lexington. VMI also owns the Chessie Nature Trail, a multipurpose recreational trail linking Buena Vista and Lexington.

## Athletics

VMI participates in the NCAA Division I (FCS in football), primarily as a member of the Southern Conference. VMI sponsors 18 teams: 11 men's and seven women's. Approximately 30% of the Corps of Cadets participate in NCAA athletics.





## Mission

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Virginia Military Institute believes that the measure of a college lies in the quality and performance of its graduates and their contributions to society.

Therefore, it is the mission of Virginia Military Institute to produce educated, honorable men and women, prepared for the varied work of civil life, imbued with love of learning, confident in the functions and attitudes of leadership, possessing a high sense of public service, advocates of the American Democracy and free enterprise system, and ready as citizen-soldiers to defend their country in time of national peril.

To accomplish this result, Virginia Military Institute shall provide to qualified young men and women undergraduate education of highest quality -- embracing engineering, science, and the arts -- conducted in, and facilitated by, the unique VMI system of military discipline.

## Vision

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To be the premier small college in the nation, unequalled in producing educated and honorable citizen-leaders, with an international reputation for academic excellence supported by a unique commitment to character development, self-discipline, and physical challenge conducted in a military environment.

## Values

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### Honor

Honor is the heart and bedrock of the VMI experience. More than a set of rules and regulations, the objective of the honor code is the inculcation of honor as a lifestyle.

### Excellence

The VMI experience is predicated on pushing cadets to be the best version of themselves.

### Self-Discipline

Cadets learn very quickly there are deep wells of strength that are seldom used but are called upon to succeed at VMI. Cadets learn to do tasks that are seemingly insignificant but, in the end, develop in them the qualities of attention to detail and time management.



## Courage

VMI is no ordinary college. Courage is an early sign of a successful cadet. Developing and exercising the moral and physical courage to stand up as a leader, and also be a principled follower, is a cornerstone of a cadetship at VMI.

## Esprit de Corps

Although a VMI cadetship is challenging from the start, there is no lack of support. No single cadet's challenges are greater than another's. No one is left behind, no one struggles alone. Embracing these tenets is at the heart of "one corps, one VMI."

## Selfless Service

At VMI, self-centered pride takes a backseat to selfless service. Selflessness becomes a way of life. Success comes with honorable service and hard work.

## Resilience

Mental toughness inspires cadet life. There is no shame in asking for or receiving help, and help is readily available. There's no fear in failure, but rather a motivation for doing better the next time.

For more information on the history of VMI, please visit: <https://www.vmi.edu/about/history/>

For more information about VMI's mission, vision, and values, please visit the website for VMI's strategic plan:

Forging 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders: <https://www.vmi.edu/forgingleaders/plan/>

For more information on VMI in general, please visit the VMI website: [www.vmi.edu](http://www.vmi.edu).





## Lexington, Virginia

Lexington is a vibrant, small city located in Rockbridge County in the Shenandoah Valley. The county's economy is influenced by agriculture, education, and tourism, with Lexington serving as the economic and cultural hub, and known for its rich history, academic institutions, and picturesque surroundings. Lexington offers an array of well-preserved 19th-century buildings, a robust culinary culture, and

numerous locally owned shops. Serving as the county seat, Lexington has a population of approximately 7,320 as of the 2020 census. Lexington and Rockbridge County offer a unique blend of historical significance, academic excellence, natural beauty, and vibrant community life, making them a compelling destination for visitors and a cherished home for residents.

Founded in 1778, Lexington was named after Lexington, Mass., the site of the first battle of the American Revolution. The city played a significant role during the Civil War and is home to the graves of Confederate generals Robert E. Lee and Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson. Lee is buried in the University (formerly Lee) Chapel at Washington and Lee University, while Jackson rests at Oak Grove Cemetery. The Stonewall Jackson House, his only surviving residence, is now a museum owned and operated by VMI and open to the public. Lexington also honors Cyrus McCormick, inventor of the mechanical reaper, with a statue on the Washington and Lee University campus. The McCormick farm in nearby Raphine now serves as a satellite agricultural research center for Virginia Tech.

Surrounded by the Blue Ridge Mountains, Lexington offers abundant outdoor activities:

- Natural Bridge State Park featuring a 215-foot limestone arch and scenic hiking trails.
- Goshen Pass, a popular spot for kayaking, fishing, and hiking.
- Chessie Nature Trail, a seven-mile trail along the Maury River, ideal for walking and wildlife observation.

Rockbridge County, established in 1777 and named after the Natural Bridge, encompasses 601 square miles of diverse landscapes, including forests, rivers, and mountains. The county is bordered by the Blue Ridge Mountains to the northwest and the Allegheny Mountains to the west, and offers numerous outdoor recreational opportunities, e.g., golf, hiking, biking, kayaking, an outdoor theater, and several breweries and wineries. The region is also known for its picturesque autumn foliage, making it a popular destination for fall getaways.

For more information about Lexington, please visit: [www.lexingtonvirginia.com](http://www.lexingtonvirginia.com) and <https://www.co.rockbridge.va.us/>





## Applications, Nominations, and Referrals

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To make a nomination, provide a referral, or for additional information, please use the contact information below. Applications and nominations will be accepted until a successful candidate has been appointed. Review of applications will begin immediately.

To apply, please submit a resume and/or vita, and a cover letter, to [VMIAumniAgenciesCEO@buffkinbaker.com](mailto:VMIAumniAgenciesCEO@buffkinbaker.com)

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*VMI and the VMI Alumni Agencies are Equal Opportunity Employers. In a continuing effort to enrich its academic environment and provide equal education and employment opportunities, VMI encourages women, minorities, disabled individuals, and veterans to apply. AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, and other national service alumni are also encouraged to apply. VMI will provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with documented disabilities to ensure equal access and equal opportunities with regard to employment, educational opportunities, programs and services.*