Virginia’s Community Colleges: Chancellor Search
A Letter from the Chair

As we seek to hire the next chancellor of Virginia's Community Colleges, we aspire to create and consider a diverse, talented, experienced, and creative pool of inspiring leaders who demonstrate a passion for our mission. After all, the hundreds of thousands of students and the thousands of businesses we serve deserve nothing less.

Virginia’s Community Colleges seek a chancellor who will personally embrace and advance our mission of helping individuals obtain the skills and knowledge they need to elevate their lives and communities.

Our diverse array of community colleges includes some of the nation's largest institutions, some of the smallest, and everything in-between. What's on our 40 campuses is only part of what we have to offer.

Virginia is a growing and diverse state. From majestic mountains to sunny shorelines to unmatched history, the commonwealth often sits atop national listings for the best places to work, live and play. And Virginia’s ranking as the nation’s best state for business – two years in a row – is a high-profile reminder of our growing and exciting business climate.

If you crave the challenge of changing lives, and inspiring teams of talented, student-focused professionals, then I would encourage you to apply today.

Sincerely,

Nathaniel L. Bishop
Chair, State Board for Community Colleges
VCCS For-Credit Enrollment

Enrollment vs Virginia Population

2019-2020 ENROLLMENT
218,985

POPULATION OF VIRGINIA
Over 8.47 Million

Enrollment by Student Age

25 31%
18-24 52%

VCCS Enrollment by Gender, Race, and Ethnicity

Gender

MALE 43%
FEMALE 57%

Minority

56%

44%

Race/Ethnicity

White 130,632
Black or African American 44,333
Hispanic/Latino 27,003
Asian 17,690
American Indian or Alaska Native 803
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander 707
Two or More Races 10,553
Unknown/Not Specified 2,648
VCCS Signature Statewide Initiatives

While Virginia’s 23 community colleges are independently accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), they share a single governing board, the Virginia State Board for Community Colleges. Virginia’s Community Colleges work collectively in the pursuit of a statewide mission statement and in addressing statewide challenges. Those efforts include the essential priority initiatives contained on the next several pages.
In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the social justice movement inspired by the death of George Floyd and others, and its own challenges in serving Virginians of color, the Virginia’s Community College System created Opportunity 2027, a new six-year strategic plan laser focused on eliminating equity gaps across its 23 institutions. The plan which went into effect July 1, 2021, and features a single over-arching goal:

Virginia’s Community Colleges will achieve equity in access, learning outcomes, and success for students from every race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic group.

• The task force that created Opportunity 2027 developed a definition of equity to provide a common understanding of this value within the context of the work of our colleges: Equity is the existence of an environment in which policies, practices, and beliefs are grounded in the principle of fairness and that acknowledges structural racism, gender disparities, and systemic poverty, while honoring the diversity of humanity. This environment explicitly prioritizes the success of all students to ensure that they have the necessary resources to fulfill their college and career goals.

• The plan includes five supporting goal areas which include biennial objectives.

• Opportunity 2027 represents the fourth six-year statewide strategic plan implemented by Virginia’s Community colleges in the 21st century.

Learn more at https://www.vccs.edu/opportunity-2027-strategic-plan/.
FastForward

There are thousands of jobs open across Virginia, and many of these essential fields don’t require a college degree. For those seeking a safe, affordable job career training program, we offer FastForward – a short-term training program for high-demand industries, helping Virginians get the jobs they want and the salaries they need. Our training is offered locally throughout Virginia’s Community Colleges.

• In FastForward’s first five years, the program helped Virginians earn more than 33,000 high-demand credentials. These programs are the most affordable option in higher education today with a typical out-of-pocket cost of only $700.

• FastForward programs include training for 40 careers across seven industries.

• FastForward graduates have been hired for jobs that boost their take home pay by 25% - 50%, provide them more stable, family-friendly work schedules, and give them access to benefits like health insurance and paid time off.

Learn more at https://www.fastforwardva.org/.
Begun in July 2021, G3 (Get a Skill, Get a Job, Get Ahead) is one of the largest statewide initiatives Virginia’s Community Colleges has undertaken in its history. Offered across all 23 of Virginia’s Community Colleges, G3 helps low- and moderate-income Virginians pursue high-demand industry-focused degree programs, and serves as an important tool to address the skills gap in high-demand careers while helping businesses find skilled talent sourced right from their communities. The program equips students from all backgrounds with the necessary skills to enter or return to the workforce. G3 can help those who qualify to pay for school, allowing students to train for the right career, right where they are, right now.

- G3 is a last-dollar scholarship that covers tuition and fees for individuals living in Virginia who qualify for state financial aid with a household income that’s generally less than $100,000 (400% of federal poverty).

- G3 programs are divided into stackable credentials that allows participants to quickly obtain a job and then continue to learn while they work.

- More than 9,000 students have been awarded G3 scholarships in the programs first three months.

Learn more at https://virginiag3.com/.
Dual Enrollment

VCCS Dual Enrollment programs allow eligible high-school students to enroll in college coursework while still in high school. Courses are taught by full or part-time faculty who meet VCCS credentialing requirements. While some courses are taught on community college campuses, most are taught at high schools.

• VCCS Dual Enrollment courses have been offered regularly since they began in 1985.

• 40,000 Virginia high school students take Dual Enrollment programs annually.

• 75% of Virginia Dual Enrollment students pursue postsecondary education after graduating from high school.

Learn more at https://www.vccs.edu/high-school-dual-enrollment/.
Statewide Guaranteed Transfer Agreements

Virginia’s Community Colleges offer students a transfer gateway to the Virginia’s four-year colleges and universities. Through Guaranteed Admissions Agreements, students who graduate from one of Virginia’s 23 community colleges with an associate degree and a minimum grade point average may obtain guaranteed admission to more than 30 public and private colleges and universities.

- The first guaranteed admissions agreement was signed by Virginia’s Community Colleges and Virginia Tech in 2007.
- The Virginia General Assembly created the Two-Year College Transfer Grant Program (CTG), up to $3,000 annually, to encourage qualifying students to complete their associate degree at a Virginia two-year public college and then transfer to a participating Virginia four-year college or university.
- On-going collaborations between the VCCS and public universities continue to strive to make the transfer process easier to understand and navigate for Virginia families.

Learn more at https://www.vccs.edu/transfer-programs/
Chancellor Job Description

The State Board for Community Colleges of the Virginia Community College System is positioned to continue its progressive trajectory as a national model for promoting the value of higher education, meeting public accountability, and building partnerships. The State Board seeks a leader to galvanize the state and its diverse communities around its compelling vision for the future. Broadening educational opportunity requires strong leadership and an understanding of how to utilize public policy and public/private investment in today’s higher education environment.

The opportunities for the system and its chancellor abound. VCCS’s latest goal, Opportunity 2027, is quite ambitious with its main objective requiring that the states’ community colleges “achieve equity in access, learning outcomes, and success for students from every race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic group.” The system and institutions, administrators, faculty, and staff are all cohesive in their commitment to support this goal. However, to achieve this goal, the next chancellor must have considerable experience and skill, and be a strong leader and manager of people and programs.

Minimum Qualifications:

Significant senior-level administrative experience in an educational, governmental, or business environment; understands the most important issues affecting higher education in the Commonwealth of Virginia and nationally.

The communication and human relations skills to lead a complex organization with multiple constituencies.

An understanding of the educational value of full access and inclusion and the mission of community colleges in supporting the economic health of their communities.

Personal commitment to and a strong vision for diversity, equity, and inclusion, anti-racism, and a passion for serving first generation, economically disadvantaged, and minority students and promoting a campus and community culture that celebrates diversity and inclusion.
The ideal candidate should have a history of successful experience:

• In bringing bold, new vision to propel higher education institutions to greater heights; achieving national prominence by advancing higher education and fulfilling the legislative mandates.

• In casting a compelling vision for the future of higher education and effectively leading constituents in achieving that vision.

• Awareness of contemporary trends in community college education and in successfully advocating for the needs of community colleges.

• In crafting seamless alignment among public institutions, even when there are competing priorities.

• In leading innovative best practices for effective and efficient results for quality improvement.

• For attracting traditional and non-traditional students into both transfer and workforce programs and promoting approaches to enhance their opportunities for success.

• With budgetary decision-making, framed by the financial issues currently facing higher education.

• In identifying and recruiting high quality talent committed to excellence at all levels —and a record of building, empowering, mentoring, and holding accountable; a strong, skilled, and collaborative leadership team.

• At crisis management.

• Supporting entrepreneurial opportunities.

• At employee engagement and effectiveness.

• In promoting collaboration and unity at all levels within the system.

• Securing resources to further the mission of the system.

• In being politically proactive with proven advocacy skills leading and lending influence effectively at the state, federal, and local levels of government.

• A track record of increasing management responsibility and skills that will assist the system in growing enrollment and retention.

• In listening to and acting upon the needs of business and industry in increasing workforce readiness throughout the state and strengthening economic development partners in response to regional and national labor market needs.

• Demonstrating a commitment to the use of technology to improve student learning, to deliver high quality instruction via distance education, and to support excellence in delivering services to students and in achieving administrative efficiency.

• Addressing critical issues for students including housing insecurity, food insecurity, and mental health.
Preferred Characteristics/Traits

• Visionary leader.
• Successful relationship builder.
• Capacity to manage and foster change.
• Values diversity, equity, and inclusion among employees and students.
• Understanding and appreciation of the evolution of higher education globally, and the agility to respond in this dynamic environment.
• Politically savvy and proactive with proven advocacy skills and solid understanding of recent local, state, and national legislation that impacts community colleges.
• Bold, entrepreneurial leadership and personal humility.
• Visible and approachable leadership style.
• A role model of integrity, honesty, resilience and disciplined work ethic.
• Celebrates and promotes the success of employees and students.
• Understands the need to be accountable and holds others to the same high standards.
• Appreciation for the challenges and opportunities that the geographic diversity of the Commonwealth brings to the system.
• Polished, professional demeanor that earns the respect of a wide range of constituents.

Principal Responsibilities of the VCCS Chancellor

• Advance the mission of the Virginia Community College System and work collaboratively with the Board, the colleges, and all constituents in advancing the system’s strategic objectives.
• Serve as a leader in propelling the economy of Virginia and the economic and social well-being of the system’s students.
• Provide leadership, management, and resource development as CEO for the System.
• Provide strategic leadership that maximizes an annual operating budget of nearly $900 million.
• Execute the policies of the VCCS Board.
• Promote academic excellence through policy leadership and the oversight of program development, delivery, and assessment.
• Participate in the System’s overall strategic planning and implementation, allocation, and evaluation operations.
How to apply

Greenwood/Asher & Associates, Inc. is assisting VCCS in this search. Applications and nominations are now being accepted. For a full application package, please include a cover letter, CV, and list of five references. Confidential inquiries, nominations and application materials should be directed to Greenwood/Asher and Associates. Submission of application materials as PDF attachments is strongly encouraged. Initial screening of applications will begin immediately and will continue until an appointment is made.

Inquiries, nominations, and application materials should be directed to:

Betty Turner Asher, Founder, Greenwood/Asher & Associates  
Vice President and Managing Partner, Kelly Julie Holley, Senior Executive Search Consultant  
E-mail: bettyasher@greenwoodsearch.com  
E-mail: julieholley@greenwoodsearch.com

The Virginia Community College System, an EEO employer, welcomes applications from people of all backgrounds and recognizes the benefits of a diverse workforce. Therefore, the VCCS is committed to providing a work environment free of discrimination and harassment. Employment decisions are based on business needs, job requirements and individual qualifications. We prohibit discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation, mental or physical disabilities, political affiliation, veteran status, gender identity, or other non-merit factors.

The VCCS is an EOE and Affirmative Action Employer. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Acts (ADA and ADAAA), VCCS will provide, if requested, reasonable accommodation to applicants in need of access to the application, interviewing and selection processes.