

*A Brief History of
Virginia Highlands
Community College
1967-2006*

*by Helen Wilson
Professor of English (retired)*



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President's Message

Just what is a community college?

Since the first one was founded in 1901, there has been significant discussion and debate, and a bit of writing, toward answering this question. The work of Dr. George B. Vaughan, former VHCC Dean of Instruction, and now prominent national community college leader, researcher and historian, has provided a valuable resource in establishing a broad basic answer, beginning with his publication “The Community College Story” (American Association of Community Colleges).

To me, a community college is a state of mind, an attitude of service to the student and the community. The community college philosophy incorporates such tenets as open door admissions, a student-centered faculty and staff (not distracted by research requirements), programs and services focused on student and community needs (not only on academe), and high quality at a modest expense (at least for higher education). Community colleges serve *all* students, not just the elite students. The current VHCC Mission Statement (see Appendix A) clearly defines these varied and important goals.

Combining all the discussions, articles and statements regarding the role of community colleges, however, leads to a simple and straightforward conclusion: Community colleges provide hope and opportunity to area residents. Indeed, the response of Virginia residents to this “hope and opportunity” has been nothing short of amazing. Today there are more students in community colleges than universities!

Our history attempts to show Virginia Highlands Community College's place in the greater community college story and how we have served our community throughout our 39 – and counting – years of service.

F. David Wilkin
President

A Brief History of Virginia Highlands Community College

Foreword

We are delighted to present “A Brief History of Virginia Highlands Community College.” This work was primarily completed by English Professor Helen Wilson (retired) with assistance from the Washington County Public Schools, the Historical Society of Washington County, the Washington County Public Library, the faculty and staff of Virginia Highlands who responded with their memories and editorial comments, Public Relations/Marketing Specialist Anne Dunham, and with special thanks to the staff of the College’s Library and Learning Lab.

As a first effort, despite all our care, we will undoubtedly discover omissions and errors. You, our readers, can be of great assistance to the College by providing any needed additions and/or corrections to: The Office of the President, Virginia Highlands Community College, P.O. Box 828, Abingdon, Virginia or to dwilkin@vhcc.edu.

We trust that you will enjoy this Brief History. We look forward to hearing from you and to future editions.

VHCC
December 2006

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Virginia Highlands Community College - circa 1969. The College's programs initially were offered at the Washington County Technical School.

Introduction

A glance at the College logo or a check of any map of the area will provide a link to the origins of the name of Virginia Highlands Community College. Geologically separated from the other sections of Appalachia, the College sits in what is termed the "Southern Highlands." This is a land of mountains, valleys and plateaus located between the famous Blue Ridge Mountains and the Cumberland Plateau. The College itself is situated on a hilltop with a clear view of the highest point in Virginia, Mt. Rogers, and its nearby second-highest peak, Whitetop. The College's name, then, echoes these prominent features.

The limestone-floored valleys of these highlands were attractive to early settlers because the soil provided good pastures for agriculture. The Cherokee were among the first to arrive, followed by French hunters and trappers. European permanent settlers followed, primarily the Scots and Irish as well as English and German pioneers. Resources such as the salt works in Saltville, the proposed and failed iron industry in Damascus, the timber industries located in the Konnarock area and the later railroad connecting Abingdon and Bristol, all combined to create a region settled early in the country's history.

So - not surprisingly, in 1954, when the Virginia General Assembly's interest in post-secondary education moved the state toward a more accessible college experience for its citizens, the region provided a prime location for such a college. Even before the time of the Civil War, the town of Abingdon in Washington County had been a prominent part of Southwest Virginia. Later, in her 1860 diary written in the Abingdon area and published as "The Private War of Lizzie Hardin," Miss Hardin wrote that she was living in "the fairest portions of that fair land."

Getting Started

With typical government speed, it was not until 1959 that a study, commissioned by the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV), actually recommended a system of two-year colleges to give residents occupational and adult-oriented programs primarily designed to provide employment training. And it was not until July 1, 1966, that the General Assembly passed the bill creating the Virginia Community College System (VCCS). Soon afterward, the Virginia State Board for Community Colleges (SBCC) was created, and the Board then developed a Master Plan, which called for 22 state-wide regions designed to give all residents access to post-secondary education within a reasonable driving distance. The plan was later amended to create 23 such community college regions.

The concept of this new regional educational facility created some overlap with existing facilities in the area's public schools. Exactly how a new community college would impact the existing programs offered by the Washington County Vocational-Technical School was not clear, but two community leaders agreed to find out. James Moore, president of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce, and George B. Hutton, chairman of the Washington County Board of Supervisors, began gathering information from state leaders. They were soon convinced that the region needed a community college and began looking for a suitable site.

Several options were explored, but Moore and Hutton favored a 100-acre site just off Interstate 81 known as the Barker and Bundy property. They convinced the owners to sell and then convinced the Washington County Board of Supervisors to buy the tract — even though there was no guarantee that the state would approve the site. The county purchased the property in August 1967 for a sum of \$115,000 (Historical Society of Washington County, Virginia).

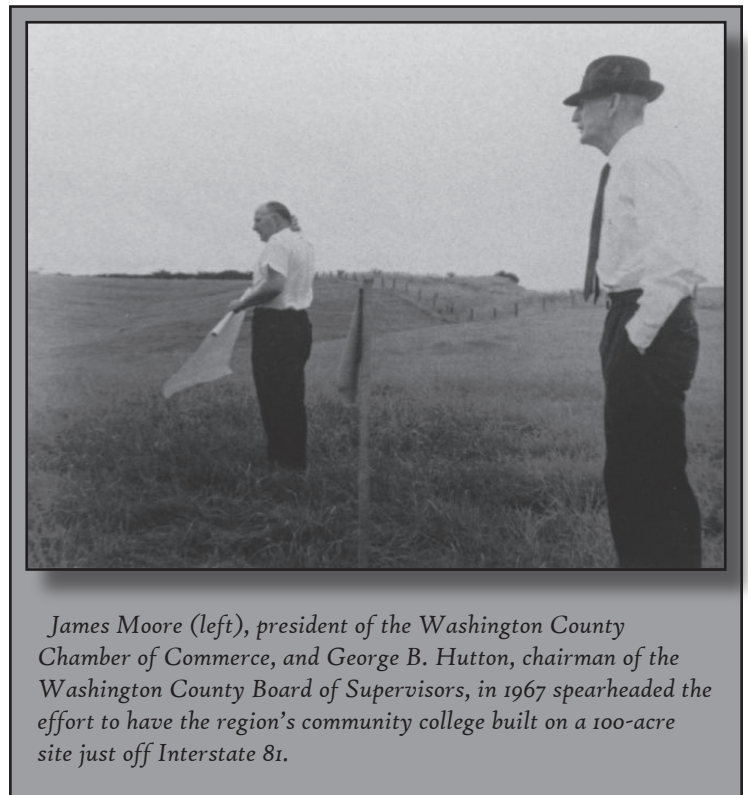
On November 30, 1967, the State Board for Community Colleges created the concept of a two-year college in the region to serve Washington County, the western portion of Smyth County and the city of Bristol, Virginia. Moore and Hutton convinced the site-selection committee to survey the property they had chosen and, although knee-deep snow blanketed the region on the day they arrived, committee members agreed it was the perfect location for a community college.

So, having been officially established and having a permanent site, the initial College Board (See Appendix B) was “appointed and had its first meeting on June 26, 1968,” as recorded in J. Allen Neal's *Bicentennial History of Washington County, Virginia, 1776-1976*.

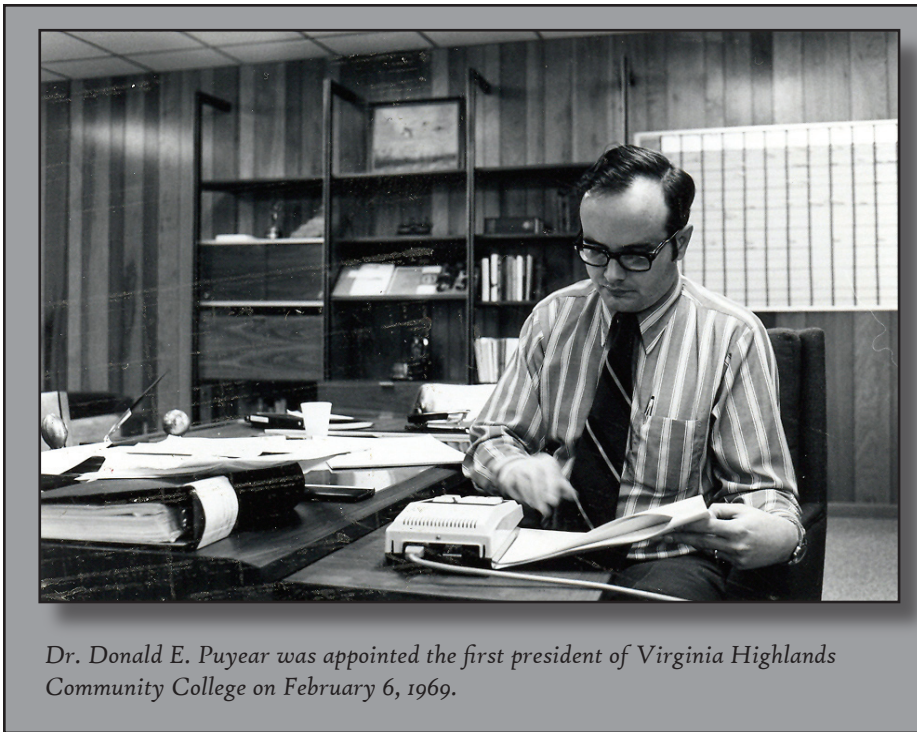
During most of this time, the newly formed two-year school was simply “the college.” Then at the second meeting of the College Board on October 9, 1968, several names were proposed, including Mountain Empire Community College, John S. Mosby Community College and Virginia Highlands Community College. This choice was so important to the entire region that two area newspapers, the *Smyth County News* and the *Roanoke Times*, both announced that the State Board of Community Colleges approved the name Virginia Highlands in November 1968.

After that step, the College's first president, Dr. Donald E. Puyear, was appointed on February 6, 1969 (see Appendix C for a list of College Presidents). The College's first administrative body then began its work in temporary offices located in Abingdon's famous Martha Washington Inn. The following step was to begin to put together the actual working components of the new school.

Many of the Technical School's programs had been transferred to the jurisdiction of the State Board for Community Colleges in July 1966, so it was decided that these programs would be the basis of the College's new curriculum. Jake Lowe, former state supervisor of technical programs and former principal of the Technical School, remembers that the more technical



James Moore (left), president of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce, and George B. Hutton, chairman of the Washington County Board of Supervisors, in 1967 spearheaded the effort to have the region's community college built on a 100-acre site just off Interstate 81.



Dr. Donald E. Puyear was appointed the first president of Virginia Highlands Community College on February 6, 1969.

programs, such as electronics, were placed at VHCC while the more “manual programs” (as he referred to them), such as brick laying, remained at the Technical School. The choice of programs to be moved was made at the state level. Douglas Sparks, current principal of the William N. Neff Center for Science and Technology (a part of the Washington County Public Schools), added that, after World War II, many of the vocational/technical programs became geared more toward returning veterans, and he feels that these adult programs were predominantly the programs chosen to become the start of the community college program.

According to the first official VHCC catalog, in “the 1969-70 academic year the occupational-technical programs, formerly operated by the Washington County Vocational-Technical School, were taken over by the college and were offered at night at the Technical School’s facilities.” Classes continued there with limited class space rented from the Washington

County Public Schools until work on the future campus could be completed.

A major milestone was set in place on September 24, 1969, with the first new-student orientation. The first Annual Report (1969-70) created by the new college states that, with the rather unique problems existing with only night classes being offered and with no established campus, “the decision was made . . . to postpone the organization of a formal student government association until . . . 1970-71 when a broader student representation and a more usual operational calendar would be possible.”

In that first academic year, the 1969-70 Annual Report also shows that a “total of 232 students were enrolled in some eleven post-high school programs.” Of those, 210 were full-time students, with only 22 attending on a part-time basis. Again, from the same annual report, “209 FTE [full-time equivalent students] were generated despite small classes and a preponderance of shop-practice classes.”

While the 1969-70 college classes remained at the technical school and were predominantly a continuation of the vocational classes, the faculty were mostly those who had previously taught those same classes for the public school system. School records show that these classes continued to be offered as the administration became involved with preparing for the more comprehensive academic programs that would be offered in the Fall of 1970.

College deans, the Coordinator of Library Services and a division chair had been part of the initial planning group, again according to the 1969-70 Annual Report. In mid-July 1970, the second division chair, the head of the Learning Laboratory, the head of Admissions and Records and the counselors were hired. The community college known as Virginia Highlands was beginning to take shape.

Personnel was not the only thing beginning to take shape. According to the same 1969-70 Annual Report, “during this year, the college . . . building has been completed, the new faculty recruited, and the first full freshman class largely admitted.” At its request for provisional approval, the college was visited by members of the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia on May 25-26, 1970. Provisional approval was granted on July 23, 1970. Later in the report is evidence that on “June 30, 1970, the college was in the process of moving into its new facilities. . . . There are five buildings consisting of. . . The Administrative Unit, The Mechanical Unit, Instructional Units (2), The Commons Unit” (which included the Library). During the summer session of 1970, the College offered its first comprehensive community college program and occupied the current campus for the first time. The process of creating the new College was completed on October 24, 1970, when then-Governor Mills E. Godwin, Jr., gave the address at the formal dedication of Virginia Highlands Community College.



Virginia Gov. Mills E. Goodwin, Jr. (left) and Dr. Dana B. Hamel, Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System, attended the dedication ceremony of the 100-acre campus on Oct. 24, 1970.

“This community college and others like it across Virginia represent the pursuit of an ideal, an American ideal for the betterment of mankind that was first proclaimed by the prophets of a century ago, the idea that in this country, every child was entitled to an education commensurate with his talents and not with the state of his parentage or the state of his purse.”

Gov. Mills Godwin, Jr.
VHCC Campus Dedication
Oct. 24, 1970

A Time of Beginnings

The 1970s were a time of firsts for Virginia Highlands Community College. 1970-71 was its first academic year of operation as a comprehensive college; the first year that associate degree programs in such college-level courses as Liberal Arts, Business Administration, Pre-Teacher Education, Science, and Pre-Engineering were offered; the first year on its new campus; and the first year that continuing education courses were available. Previously, students enrolling at the College were only able to gain a diploma or a certificate in technical classes. So all of these firsts had the same purpose – to offer area students an opportunity that had not been available to them in the past.

Numeric data taken from the initial annual report make some interesting statements about the make-up and educational background of these early students in the Fall of 1970. Of 335 new applications, the male/female distribution was 229/106, and the Caucasian/Minority distribution was 326/9. Seventy-one percent of these students had never attended any college, while 7 percent were returning to VHCC for a second year. Interestingly enough, a further 22 percent had previously attended another college but had decided to enroll at VHCC to complete their educations.

From these students came the 38 graduates at the first formal Commencement Exercises which were held at Virginia Highlands Community College at 8:00 p.m. on June 12, 1970.

Throughout the 70s, the concept of putting students first continued to be a primary part of the College objective. Evidence of this can be found in the 1970-71 catalog in which counseling was the first item listed under “Student Services.” VHCC personnel had early adopted a non-traditional counseling structure in which counseling is administered through the individual academic divisions rather than through the more usual campus-wide counseling center. The College initially determined that this structure more nearly served the needs of its students. While some services, such as Admissions, Records, Financial Aid and Veterans Affairs, have their separate functions, counseling has always been closely tied to curricular activities.

The College also established itself as a valuable member of the community in 1970 when the Olin Mathieson Chemical Corp. in Saltville closed its doors. The College quickly established the Job Preparedness Center at Saltville to provide essential training for idled workers and assisted more than 350 people — about 200 of them former Olin employees — during the first year. The “can do” precedent was successfully established!

Student activities also began to take shape during those early years. The 1973 Handbook of Student Activities, under the direction of then-Dean Klell Napps, emphasized that the College was serious about providing “extracurricular and co-curricular activities to engage students and enrich their academic and social lives.” One of the early activities was the establishment of the campus newspaper and literary magazine, *The Hilltopper*. The Student Senate was also organized and became an active group for engaging students in the daily life of the school (see Appendix D). As the College continued to grow and enrollment increased, a need for more evening classes became evident. The 1976-77 academic year saw the hiring of a full-time Coordinator of Evening Services to better accommodate the growing number of students needing night classes to fit around their work schedules. In 1977-78, the initial chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, the national junior and community college honor society, was organized on campus to encourage and showcase the achievements of VHCC students.

The comparisons found in the annual report of 1978-79 offer further evidence of the increase in student-related activities at the College:

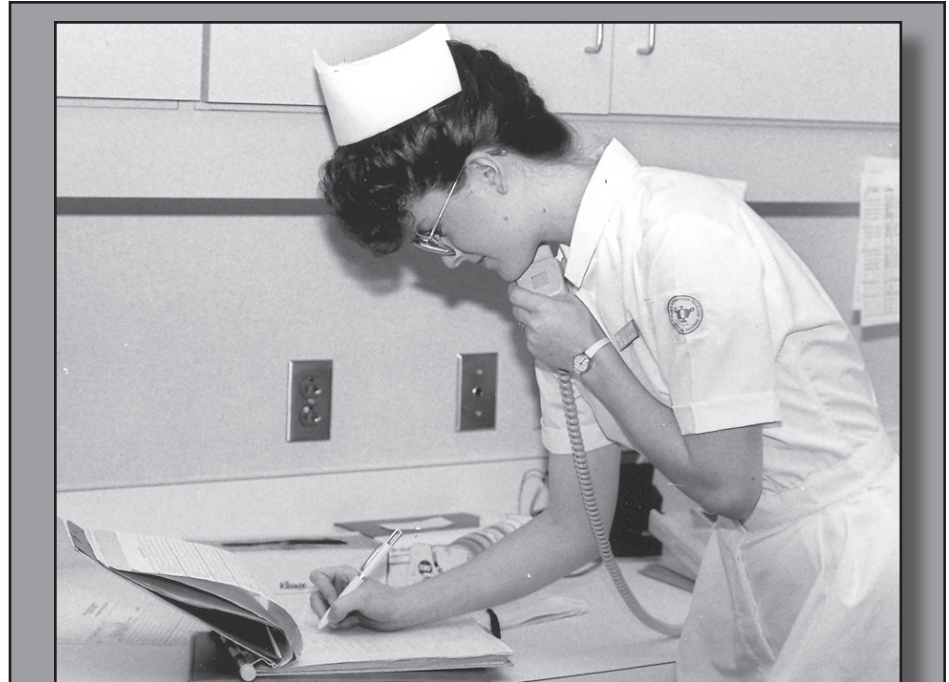
Fall 1969 — 232 students enrolled
 Fall 1978 — 1445 students enrolled

1969 — 11 programs of study
 1978 — 26 programs of study

Spring 1969 — 38 students graduated
 Spring 1978 — 211 students graduated

By the Spring of 1977, the graduation ceremonies saw over 200 awards conferred on graduates. Growth is evident: students were being served in greater and greater numbers as the College continued to provide an educational opportunity heretofore lacking in the service area. Virginia Highlands’ commitment to its students had become part of the fabric of the school.

Serving these students meant that an expanded curriculum was a necessary component of growth. The 1970-71 catalog stated that “full comprehensive community college [programs] . . . were offered for the first time during the 1970-71 academic year.” Begun under the then-current quarter system, tuition was 60 dollars a quarter. Not only was post-high school education available to students in the service region, but that same high-quality education was affordable for most. Those students electing to attend were able to choose from an increasingly diverse selection of courses. Expanding from six initial offerings in 1969, the 1970 curriculum consisted of associate degrees in seven academic areas as well as increased certificate and diploma programs. All of these were chosen to provide students with choices beyond the vocational training available before the College was established. With the addition of the sophomore year in all degree programs in 1972, the College was firmly set to provide the one- or two-year education needed by many students in the service region. After completing academic work at VHCC, students were encouraged to continue their education by gaining work or further academic experience. Courses designed to allow students to transfer to four-year institutions were a large part of this expansion. Then, in the 1972-73 academic year, a greatly needed degree program was added with the start of an Associate in Applied Science Degree in Nursing. This program was jointly operated by Virginia Highlands and Southwest Virginia Community Colleges. By 1975, the nursing program was accredited by the Virginia State Board of Nursing. But a change was in the works. The Fall of 1976 saw the beginning of the Virginia Appalachian Tricollege Nursing Program (VATNP) which continues into the present. It was formed by a consortium of Virginia Highlands, Southwest Virginia and Mountain Empire Community Colleges.

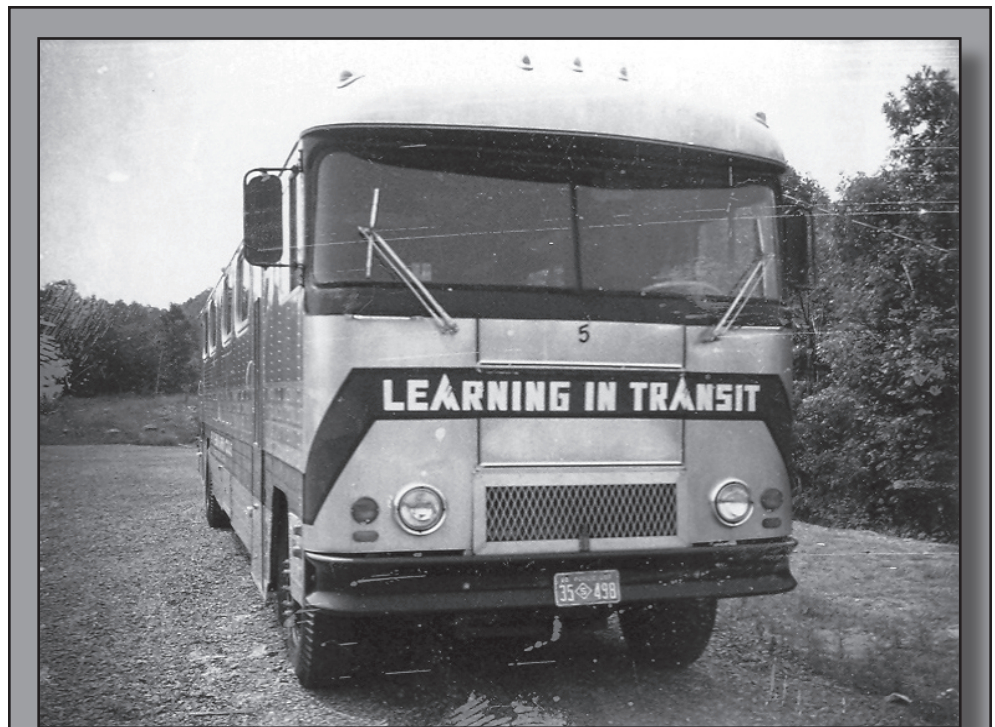


In cooperation with Southwest Virginia Community College, VHCC in 1972 began offering an Associate in Applied Science Degree in Nursing. Mountain Empire Community College joined the consortium in 1976, officially creating the Virginia Appalachian Tricollege Nursing Program.

Underlying all of the expansion at the College was a firm base of community confidence in the education that was being provided to students of the area. This confidence was bolstered by three major accreditations. According to the annual report of 1972-73, the College received its preliminary accreditation in December of 1972 from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), a nationally recognized body of educators whose duty is to determine if educational objectives are being met. This validation was only the first of its kind. During the 1974-75 academic year, an Institutional Self-Study was conducted throughout the campus. Each division — indeed each entity within the College — examined its purpose and how well that purpose was being fulfilled. This study was then presented to SACS. Virginia Highlands met those objectives and was given a 10-year reaffirmation of accreditation in 1976. In addition, a separate self-study was conducted by the Nursing Program for the National League for Nursing. The program was accredited in that same year. The students of the College were being well served academically.

A major component of this academic success was the faculty and staff who had been hired during those early years. Clark Fleming, one of the early faculty members and later Dean of the Division of Science and Engineering Technologies, remembers that his “teaching day started at 8:30 a.m. and ended at 9:15 p.m. on a couple of days, but I was young and energetic and didn’t mind.” Faculty energy during this period was a factor in creating the Faculty Senate, a body initially made up of both teaching and administrative faculty (see Appendix E), later restricting itself to teaching faculty only. Dr. Jim Geiger, another early faculty member who later held several College administrative positions prior to his retirement and who is currently College Board chair, remembers faculty “cohesiveness” and “being awed by some of the faculty” who were on campus in those days. He continued: “One thing that continually amazed me in all my years at VHCC was how deeply committed . . . faculty and staff . . . were to the institution.” He further characterized the staff by saying that “this group remained the most constant group over time.” One of the first staff members to be hired by the new college was Joyce Crusenberry, who remains a valued member of the current College Library personnel. In her words: “I received a phone call one day from a friend who called to tell me about something new that was just getting started, ‘a community college.’ I came home the next weekend, processed an application . . . and ‘the rest is history.’” These comments are borne out in the SACS reports and are a large factor in the quality of the education being offered to these early students.

Another plus for early students was the work that was done to create a strong academic Library. “By the end of the 1970-71 year . . . [a]lmost 12,000 volumes were on hand” (Annual Report 70-71). Quite an achievement for a brand-new school. The 73-74 Report states that the Library holdings had increased to “some 17,818 volumes.” The Library continued to grow during that first decade as its staff worked to make the Library an integral part of the education of the students. Within the scope of the Library were other entities such as the now-famous “mobile education unit” or “Blue Goose.” This unit consisted of a large bus designed to provide “learning in transit.” Retrofitted with desks and audio equipment, the bus provided transportation for students in outlying areas and enabled them to study while being driven to campus. As an experiment, its days were numbered; but while it functioned, the bus became a part of VHCC history.



Students from outlying areas were given an opportunity to use travel time to study aboard VHCC’s mobile classroom. The bus was retrofitted with desks and audio equipment.

An additional achievement by the school's personnel during this decade was the understanding, even early on, that computers were the next wave of instructional delivery systems. From the very first, the school began to plan for computerization. Little knowing the explosion that lay ahead, the first Annual Report (69-70) stated that "a classroom for a future computer is also included" in the plans for the instructional building then under construction. By March 1975, the school realized that knowledge of the new technology was a pressing need and created a computer maintenance course; students also formed a computer club that same year. By 1978, not only were courses being delivered by television, but the College began offering computer-assisted instruction in the form of packaged course materials that students could access, on their own schedules, by using computers found in the Learning Lab. According to Dr. Edwin Hardison (retired), an early faculty member and later Vice President of Instruction and Student Services, "this lab is one of the biggest accomplishments of the 70s at VHCC. As an open-door school, we felt it was imperative to remedy the educational short-comings of many students through these self-taught courses . . ." The lab area was to continue to grow and would eventually become a separate section under the aegis of the Library.

Additional moves toward making computers a part of student education were made in 1978-79 when the electronics department received a donated computer for the use of students who needed hands-on experience with the then-new hardware. That same year, the Computer Guidance Information System was added to the college placement program. Also in the late 70s, there was evidence of community-wide desire for training on the new equipment. The College subsequently added a data processing program to the curriculum to meet this need.

As the growth continued and enrollment increased, there was a need for more space in all areas. Dr. Klell Napps, former Dean, now retired, wrote: "I have fond memories of the sharing of space we had to do when the buildings were a bit smaller . . . Somehow, this seemed to bring us all together." But faculty and staff as well as students were beginning to feel the need for more room. Two of the most urgent requirements during this time were for separate space for the Nursing Program and for the Library and instructional facilities. A master site plan was developed during 1973-74 which put into motion the subsequent construction of a Nursing Education Building, with the Learning Resources Center containing the Library and instructional facilities to follow. Ground was broken on the Nursing Building in July of 1976 with "occupation anticipated in September of 1977" (Annual Report 76-77).

During all of this decade of beginnings, the College's administrative responsibilities were changing. Some of the major changes occurred as positions were created and others were merged. Greater responsibilities were given to Division Chairs as their areas enlarged due to additional courses being needed by students. A new position of Coordinator of Student Activities was created, and the Dean of Instruction and the Dean of Student Services positions were combined into the Dean of the College in the fall of 1971. Another major shift was made when a position of Dean of Administration was added. A significant change also occurred when the College's first president, Dr. Puyear, was succeeded by Dr. E. Jean Walker in 1974. All of these adjustments reflected a continuing need for strong leadership in a school that was making changes, growing constantly and always working toward better serving the needs of students in the communities served by the College.

"An important part of the community college philosophy centers around the concept of serving the community. . . . The College considers community service programs an integral part of its function" (VHCC Catalog 1970-71). This sense of the "Community" part of the College name is evidenced in the early programs offered in response to various groups in the service region. Some of these early offerings were: Linesman Training for Appalachian Power Company, pre-employment training for Westinghouse and Camac, a Head-Start training program for teacher aides, and a special training session for Columbus-McKinnon employees. Another VHCC development that blended education and community during this time was the Talent Search program. Designed to encourage public school students to complete their high school educations and then continue on to college, the program had the added benefit of encouraging many in the service region to enroll at VHCC. The



Dr. E. Jean Walker succeeded Dr. Puyear as president in 1974.

program continues to date and has enabled many area students to reach their educational goals. The community took note of what Virginia Highlands was doing with these programs. In an article published on February 28, 1971, the *Bristol Herald Courier* headlined the story with “Virginia Highlands College Makes Impact on Area.” The story went on to discuss the number of students enrolled, the courses offered, plans for the future and – last of all – the benefits of this college within the general community. Involvement in the service area continued during the decade with the establishment of the Office of Continuing Education in 1972. That initial offering to the community had increased by 1973-74 when Continuing Education showed a doubling of the number of individuals using the service. Gradually, more area industries saw the importance of this service as the College used surveys, newsletters and on-site visits to showcase what was available for them through that office.

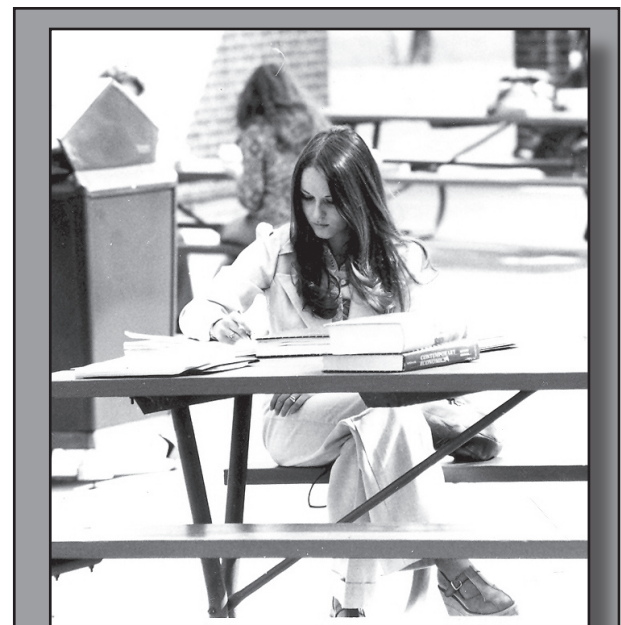
What started off as a year of beginnings became a decade of growth and provided the foundation for many of the concepts and practices that the College would carry forward into its future. The basic principle of putting students first in everything began here. The focus on delivering a quality, strongly academic education was an early priority. The objective of hiring strong faculty and committed staff was a philosophy that would continue into the following decades. An Administration willing to make changes as the need arose began early and was to continue as growth made such shifts and mergers necessary to the continued strength of the College. And the emphasis on community involvement was a conscious decision to make sure that Virginia Highlands Community College lived up to its full name.

Settling In

The decade of the eighties was a time of maturing as the school settled into its role as one of the region’s academic centers. 1986 was the twentieth anniversary of the school, and the catalog for that year contained the statement that the purpose of the College was to prepare students “for employment, for advanced collegiate education, or for improved citizenship.” According to Dr. Hardison, this decade was an “era of good times and bad times” as the College “expanded its footprint, enrollment grew, the economy was good, and the curriculum expanded with computer classes, business night courses and a human services degree . . .” To assure that the College continued to fulfill all of these objectives, the Virginia Highlands Community College Educational Foundation, Inc. was established during the 1980-81 year. Its mission was to “foster and promote the growth, progress, and general welfare of the college . . .” To achieve these goals, the Foundation looked to encourage private funding for VHCC programs and activities, to create better community awareness of the school and its beneficial impact on the area, and to act as a means for using the gifts, grants and bequests provided to the College. A further indication that the school was continuing to mature as an educational entity came with the reaffirmation of accreditation by SACS during 1987.

All of these developments were aimed toward one end — to make the College a better institution for the benefit of those students who were enrolled in the various programs offered by Virginia Highlands. Achievements directly impacting the students could be seen in various areas around the campus. 1981-82 saw the beginnings of the Alumni Association. Its purpose was to maintain contact with the school’s graduates and also to track the changing educational needs of former students throughout the service region. By 1982, the “bad times” were evident in all areas of the state’s economy, but they surfaced on the campus in the form of financial aid cuts. The College’s commitment to its students is evident in the College Board minutes for January 14, 1982, when then-head of Admissions, Al Colley, talked to the Board about the number of students who might be affected by these cuts. The result was a community awareness program designed to alert citizens in the service region to the lower cost of attending a community college as well as to assist students in finding all possible ways of financing their educations.

By the Fall of 1984, the “good times” were beginning to re-assert



Enrollment continued to grow throughout the 1980s, prompting VHCC to expand its footprint and its course offerings.

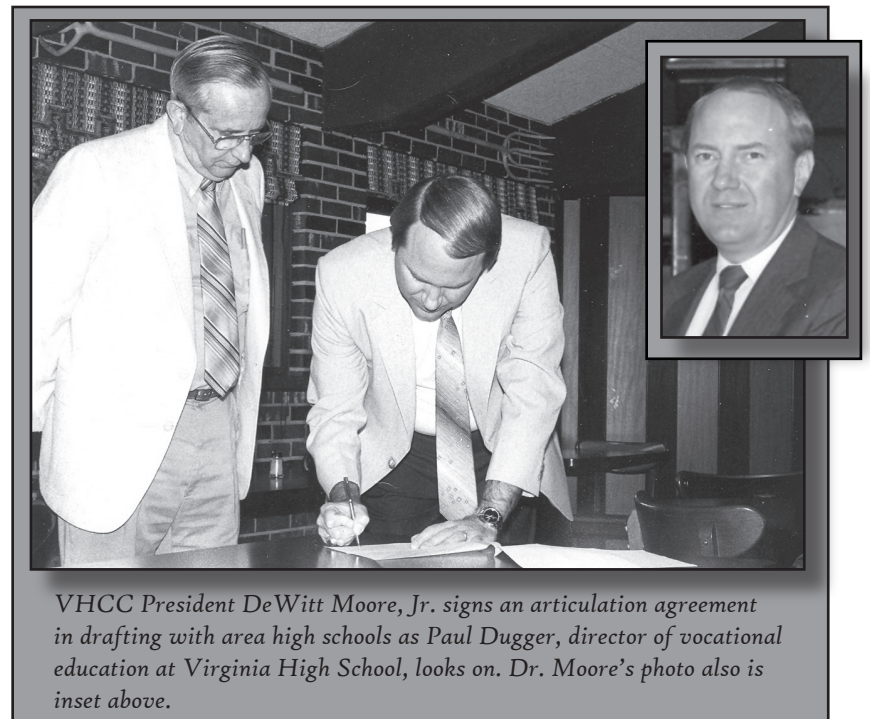
themselves as certificate, diploma, degree and continuing education programs saw 1,595 students enrolled. The College was obviously doing something right. A part of that success was the result of more and more articulation agreements between Virginia Highlands and the high schools in the service region. These agreements allowed students to move easily from high school to college-level classes, particularly in the area of vocational studies. Toward the middle of the decade, Cooperative Education Programs began, giving students the ability to gain work experience and training in paid positions directly related to their areas of study. These developments helped to fuel the growth in enrollment as shown by these figures from the SACS self-study of 1987:

Fall Quarter	Student Headcount	Full Time Equivalent	Full-time Faculty
1975	1333	1019	45
1985	1701	1050	55

Another factor in student success at VHCC was a federally funded program, Special Services for Disadvantaged Students (later titled Project Excel), which had actually begun in 1979. This program is primarily designed to be a retention program for low-income, first generation or physically handicapped students. It continues to provide individualized attention in the form of tutoring, mentoring and other student support services. Like the Talent Search program begun in the 70s, Project Excel has benefited a large portion of the College’s students. According to Dr. Hardison, the school’s reputation during this time was “growing, and an ever-larger percentage of area students were starting their education at Virginia Highlands.”

With the growth in the student body came a need for growth in the curriculum. The school continued many of the basic courses that had been brought in from the Vocational/Technical public school arena early in VHCC’s history. These included such programs as drafting, electronics, electricity, heating and air conditioning, and machine shop. Clark Fleming (Dean) remembered that “our electronics program was exemplary and its students were heavily recruited.” His memories were echoed by Dr. Hardison who said that “major electronics companies in the U.S. rated the electronics program . . . as one of the best in the southeast during this period.” Other areas gaining a solid reputation were the Human Services and Police Science programs. These were added to the overall curriculum in direct response to the occupational trends of the times and the resulting needs of students. The SACS self-study conducted by the College in 1987 confirmed the ever-present concern for student needs in spite of budget constraints by stating that funds “designated for ‘instruction’. . .remained constant” during this decade.

Two other student-centered developments occurred late in the period. The initial one consisted of the first of many computer-related changes to the then-laborious registration process. Charlene Eastridge, VHCC Registrar, who has been involved with the continuing evolution of this process at the College, said that there were slow but productive developments in on-line registration at each stage. So, rather than continue the keypunch card system used previously, the College started an on-line enrollment process in the winter quarter of 1985. However, according to Ms. Eastridge, the initial use of computerized registration still required that the Admissions Office staff enter all classes for students, resulting in long lines continuing to be part of the process. Still, the first steps in a series of steps had been taken. The next student-centered development came about when the Virginia Community College System decided that, in order to work more efficiently with transfer colleges, it was necessary for the community colleges to switch from the then-current quarter system to the more accepted semester system. That change-over was made at VHCC with the beginning of the 1988 summer term. This was such a major move that the information was placed in all the newspapers in the area, including the *Saltville News* for May 1988.



VHCC President DeWitt Moore, Jr. signs an articulation agreement in drafting with area high schools as Paul Dugger, director of vocational education at Virginia High School, looks on. Dr. Moore’s photo also is inset above.

Much of the work of making these changes fell onto the desks of the support staff. From the earliest days of the College, the staff had been an integral part of the school's mission. So, an interesting aspect of Virginia Highlands' earlier success in educating its students was the appearance on campus, during the 80s, of the returning student, not as an enrollee – but as an employee. During this decade, several former students began to work at the College as both adjunct faculty and staff. This number has continued to rise as students find the school not just a good place for an education but also as a good place to put that education to work.

Continued growth in student numbers and in classes offered meant a need for more space for students to study and more room for academic materials. The Library doubled its floor space during this decade, and the Learning Lab was positioned adjoining the Library for better service to the students. One of the major factors in the Library's need for space was the increasing use of computers in learning. According to Dr. Geiger, personal computers were rare, even computers on campus were limited, but students knew they could find them in the Library. This factor made the Library a

natural center for study as more and more faculty incorporated some type of computer-assisted learning into their class work. The 1987 self-study stated that “35% of the faculty reported ‘occasional’ and 20% of the faculty reported ‘extensive’ use of computers as a primary or secondary resource in their classes.” But the Library/Learning Lab was not the only place on campus that computers were in heavy use. In fact, the position of Coordinator of Computer Systems and Services had been created in 1983 to help to manage the growth of computer usage around the campus. The counseling offices began to use computer programs during the decade as did much of the staff. Admissions and Records adopted a computerized records and registration system (SIS) during the 1984-85 school year. In the Science and Engineering Technologies division, a computer-controlled milling machine was added during 1984-85 as the demand for graduates with a knowledge



Computers were in heavy use across campus by the mid 1980s.

of computer-controlled equipment grew. Computer-aided drafting courses saw a large enrollment increase during this time as well. In fact, both divisions saw an increase in computer-related courses, including a whole new curriculum of computer science courses. So much growth occurred in this area that the Board minutes for March 19, 1985, state that “enrollment [in computer-related courses] is very good” and that there is a “need for more full-time instructors” in the program areas. The College had embraced the computer age.

Again, space was at a premium with growth continuing throughout the decade. The 1986-87 school catalog stated: “In the fall of 1986 the college will open a new 40,000-square-foot Learning Resources Center/Business Technologies building which will add dramatically to the educational services available to the region.” That building, the LRC, was dedicated on October 30, 1986. According to an article in the *Washington County News* concerning those events, the LRC contained the Library, Learning Lab, an audio-visual center, an auditorium, faculty and staff offices and classrooms. Much needed space was now available. Two years later, with growth continuing to increase, the catalog revealed that “recently, plans for a new occupational/technical education center of more than 22,000 square feet have been submitted to the state for approval.” On October 18, 1989, ground-breaking ceremonies for the new building were held. The “foot-print” was definitely expanding.

In the Administration Building, officers of the College and their staff were relatively consistent during this period except for a change in the President's Office. Dr. Jean Walker was succeeded, in 1984, by Dr. N. DeWitt Moore, Jr. There were a few other shifts in personnel, but the mission of the College continued to remain on a sure and positive path.

The community, the service region, continued to be a major focus of the College during the decade. In addition to Continuing Education's offerings to those in the community, other developments occurred during this time. In 1987, the *Bristol Herald Courier* carried a story about the new Fitness/Nature Trail that had opened on the campus offering walking, hiking and running opportunities. The article stressed that the trail was not just for the College but was designed to be used by area citizens, also. Another positive community addition was the establishment of the Small Business Development Center. A jointly funded project involving James Madison University, the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Center for Innovative Technology, the Center was designed to provide "entrepreneurial counseling, assistance and resource information to area businesses, industries and entrepreneurs" (College Board minutes for September 10, 1987). The Center opened its doors on October 6, 1987. In addition, the campus was host to such things as business teleconferences, state police teleconferences, supervisory training courses for construction contractors, offerings such as licensure courses for state examinations for insurance personnel, agribusiness courses in horse management and horse genetics. Other community-centered classes during this time were for emergency medical technicians, preparatory classes for real estate exams, motorcycle safety classes and SAT preparation classes for high school students. The College was making the Community part of its name a priority.

During the last few years of the 80s, with an eye toward the next decade and into the future, planning started toward what would become the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center. This early stage envisioned the Center as a place where students from VHCC and neighboring community colleges could continue their educations following the completion of their two-year degrees. The foresight of area planners would later result in one of the great educational achievements of the entire region.

An article in the *Washington County News* in 1989 sums up this period in the growth of Virginia Highlands Community College. It states that "VHCC continues to offer both credit and non-credit . . . classes for students and, through Continuing Education, the community." So while the school enlarged itself both by a continued increase in enrollment and a visible growth in its bricks-and-mortar structures, the concern for students and the surrounding community continued without change.



The 40,000-square-foot Learning Resources Center was dedicated on October 30, 1986. The building includes the campus Library, Learning Lab, Theatre, and classroom and office space.

Making Strides

For Virginia Highlands, the 90s were a time of developing and refining the progress made in the 70s and 80s. During the early part of the decade, from 1990 through 1993, a campus-wide study was undertaken to update the College's Master Plan. While this had been done incrementally in the past, the time had come to take a major look both backward and ahead in order to make sure that the mission of the College was "on track." When the study was completed in 1993, the time had come to celebrate with the College's Twenty-fifth, or Silver, Anniversary. VHCC had come a long way from those rented quarters in 1969 and was making strides to prepare itself for the twenty-first century. These preparations were to be validated in 1997 when SACS reaffirmed the College's efforts by granting another ten years of accreditation.

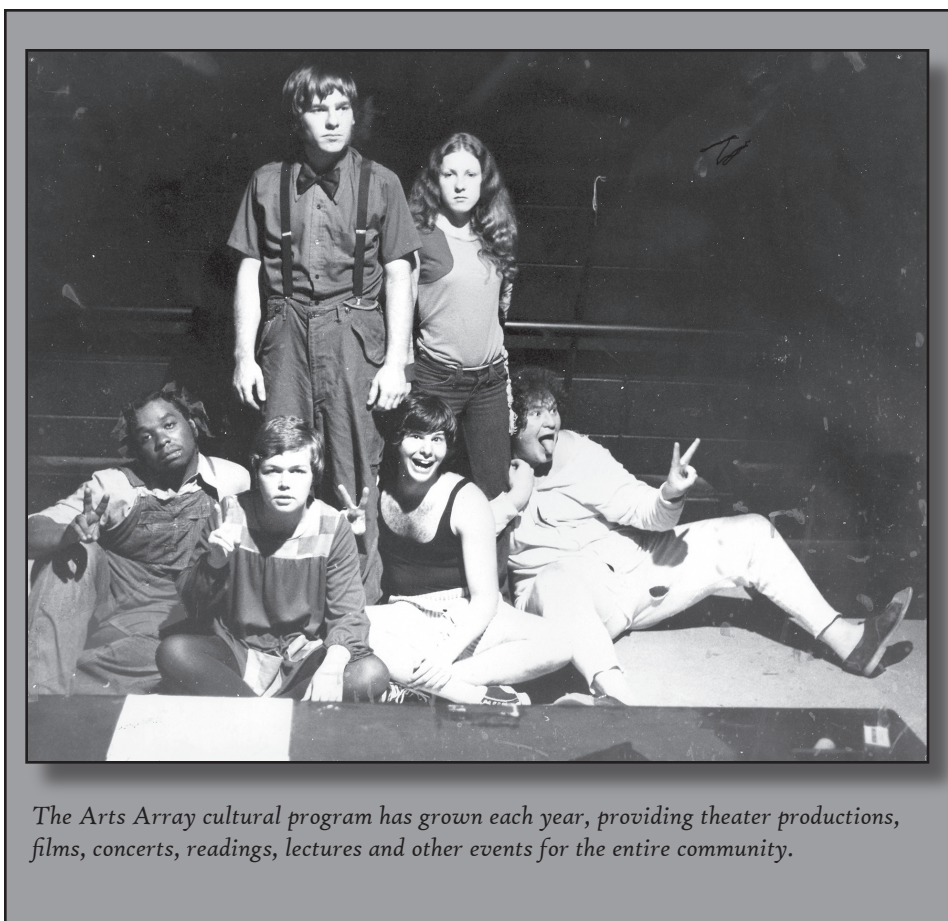
For students, the 90s were a time of change and growth, in student enrollment, in courses offered and in on-campus options. According to the 1991-92 catalog, the fall of 1990 saw "nearly 2,300 students . . . enrolled." In the 1992-93 year, VHCC students received more than 2.1 million dollars in financial aid, according to the Annual Report for that year. The growth since the beginning of the school is obvious in those figures.

Early in the decade, in 1993, the Arts Array Series, under Associate Professor Ben Jennings, began to provide the College with more, and more varied, cultural choices for both students and community residents in the form of exceptional films from both U.S. and foreign groups, plays from both on-campus theater students and professional actors, readings and lectures, and other varied enrichment events. Arts Array continues to expand and has, over the years, become a major part of the community's arts scene.

Toward the middle of the decade, the Nursing Division developed an LPN-RN bridge course to help graduates of licensed practical nursing programs move into the second year of the nursing courses offered by the Virginia Appalachian Tricollege Nursing Program. This has enabled area LPNs to accelerate their graduation as registered nurses.

By 1994-95, Virginia Highlands had over 5,000 graduates of diploma, certificate and/or Associate degree programs, and by 1997-98 had served over 5,800 students in credit and non-credit courses. This growth was to continue with the next innovative addition to the College's varied and student-oriented offerings, dual enrollment. While the option of taking certain college-level courses while still a high school student had been available in a limited way for some years, the dual enrollment program took on the form of a major educational component in the mid- to late 90s, and, according to Dr. Geiger, "it is still a work in progress." The original concept was approved at the state level in 1989, but was not really implemented until the 1995-96 academic year when newly appointed college president, Dr. F. David Wilkin, recognized the need. The first courses were offered during the spring semester of 1997 at Holston High School, taught by public school faculty who had been identified earlier as having the needed credentials for such classes. It was not until the Fall of 1999 that dual enrollment was available at all high schools in the service region as well as one high school in a neighboring county in Tennessee. Jim Johnson, who has led the dual enrollment program since its beginning in 1996, looked back at the progress that he has seen:

"Since the inception of dual enrollment here at VHCC, our on-campus enrollment has not decreased, as many



The Arts Array cultural program has grown each year, providing theater productions, films, concerts, readings, lectures and other events for the entire community.

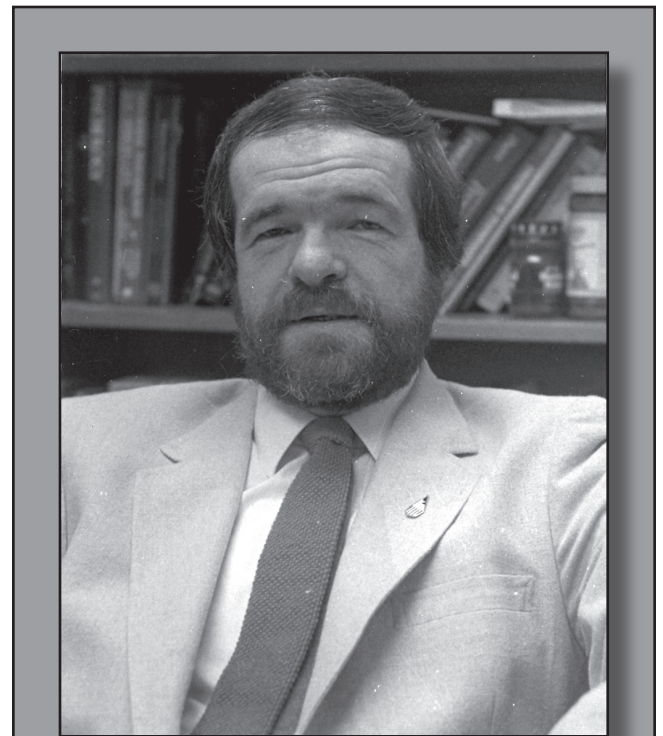
expected, but has increased We're reaching out to a large number of students . . . [and] the program is enhancing the course offerings at each high school[We're] also getting a lot of past dual enrollment students [at VHCC]."

Mr. Johnson feels that becoming involved in the dual enrollment course work in high school "increases [students'] chances of being successful during their freshman yearI've had so many, many students tell me this, so I know it's a good thing." He continued to say that the program is now branching out to offer more courses in the "career and technology fields." Dr. Debbi Clear, Vice President of Instruction and Student Services, agrees that dual enrollment is one of the most successful programs to be implemented on the VHCC campus. The dramatic growth in the program can be seen in figures included in the 1998-99 Annual Report that show that the "Dual Enrollment program increased by 200% in 1998-99." According to Dr. Hardison, the program is a success not only in terms of the number of area high school students who have begun their college educations with this program, but also because of the benefits to College/community relations. Dr. Hardison stated that "the uneasy truce between the public schools and campus, left over from the moving of technical programs from the high schools to the College, was being mitigated by the development of dual enrollment. The program helped to heal the breach as cooperation occurred."

Another development, one that students didn't notice but which was to have a major impact on the future of education at VHCC, was the increased emphasis on the assessment of student progress that was taking place in the late 90s. Assessment had always been a part of the over-all College objective, but the process had been handled differently in various areas of the school. With the renewed emphasis on monitoring the academic progress of each student, as well as looking at such items as VHCC graduation rates and achievements of graduates at the university levels, a coordinator was needed to oversee the total program. An administrative position, Director of Institutional Advancement, was created for that purpose. Two directors, Dr. Geiger (now retired) and Dr. Mimi Hull, have made possible the evaluation of student progress, both individually and as groups. This "tracking" has allowed the College to make more informed decisions on how best to serve the students in order to enable them to become even more successful than before. The assessment process is one more step in Virginia Highlands' commitment to putting students first.

It would be difficult to talk about the College's commitment to its students and their success without mentioning the school's debt to its part-time faculty. As enrollment continued to increase throughout the 90s, these faculty members became more and more critical to the mission of VHCC. As a division chair, Dr. Geiger relied on adjunct faculty to teach needed courses on short notice when enrollment grew too large for regularly scheduled classes. He remarked that "adjunct faculty members are an integral part of the faculty." That group of dedicated teachers continues to be a major factor in the College's success at delivering quality education.

One component of that quality education, a component that became more vital in the 90s than ever before, was the explosive growth in distance learning. At VHCC, distance learning had started as a necessary part of VATNP (the three-college nursing consortium) in order that students on each of the campuses had access to courses being taught at adjacent schools. As the use of computers grew, distance learning began to include the other two divisions. According to Dr. Hardison, "distance learning transformed the College. The perception of VHCC as a rural technical school changed as it became seen as a high-tech college." The era of computerization had additional impacts on the school. In the 1990-91 school year, Computer Information Systems was added to the curriculum. Then during the 1993-94 academic year, a large grant enabled the College to begin a study to create a computer-assisted English writing laboratory. This writing lab, along with subsequent computer-assisted courses, was a big plus for VHCC students, contributing to better writing and research skills as well as more computer literacy. Dr.



As Chairman of the Division of Business, Humanities and Social Sciences, Dr. Jim E. Geiger said he relied heavily on adjunct instructors.

Geiger remembers that such courses “were developed primarily to meet the needs of occupational-technical students with limited time for their core classes. These types of computer-assisted classes were later put in place for transfer classes as well.” Again, the needs of students were being met.

Computers were not only being utilized in the classroom. One area where students and faculty realized the benefits of computers happened in the early 1990s when the College took another major step toward computerizing registration. According to Charlene Eastridge (VHCC Registrar), the change occurred as faculty advisors, rather than the Admissions Office staff, started entering class enrollment data for students as part of the total advising process. This move not only shortened registration’s infamous long lines but also strengthened the student/advisor relationship. Then, during the 1994-95 school year, the Virginia Highlands Library became the first in the Virginia Community College System to put into place a computerized catalog search system, known as NOTIS. This system, which replaced the old-fashioned card catalog, enabled students to access not only materials in the VHCC Library but also in other area colleges and universities. As well, students had access within the Library and adjacent Learning Lab to such Library-funded resources as the internet and paid data bases for a wide-ranging selection of on-line books and magazines as well as specialized search engines.

Add to all of this the information in the 1996-97 Annual Report that, as part of the VCCS technology initiative, “a two-year, two million dollar plan for upgraded computers, networks and over-all technology advances” was being implemented. All areas of the campus were now linked in a computer network that enabled students and faculty to use computers to educational advantage on campus, and also to access materials from their home computers. Distance learning, computerized Library services and computer-related coursework were now the rule rather than the exception.

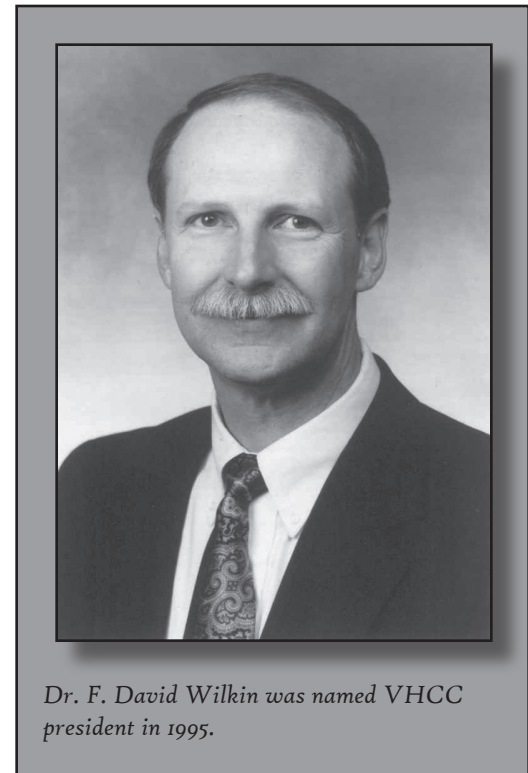
While the enrollment was growing, so was the campus. With expanding technological innovations, the various courses in science and engineering were in need of more space for labs and classrooms. Part of the earlier Master Plan had called for just such space. The addition of that building was exciting enough to gain a section in the 1995-96 college catalog: “In the summer of 1994, students, faculty, staff and administration began using a new 22,000-square-foot Occupational/Technical Educational Center building. There are labs for air conditioning, heating, general engineering technology and police science curricula . . .” The space also included offices and conference rooms. The campus was spreading well beyond its original buildings as the community sent its students to take advantage of all that VHCC was offering.

Nowhere is VHCC’s commitment to the community more in evidence than in the following programs. During the 1991-92 academic session, the College and area high schools entered into yet another joint effort. A Tech-Prep Consortium was created to “help students of the service region bridge the gap between certain public school vocational programs and college courses in the areas of business, nursing and allied health, and engineering technologies” [Annual Report 1991-92].

Another innovative move was made in 1995-96 when the Center for Business and Industry was created. The Center was created to support economic development throughout the service region by delivering specialized workforce training. Based on campus, the objective was to provide support services for area companies, large and small, by having a centralized source for information and expertise. A newsletter, CBI NEWS, and a training guide were developed to meet the needs of area businesses. CBI continues to be a major asset to both the College and the surrounding area.

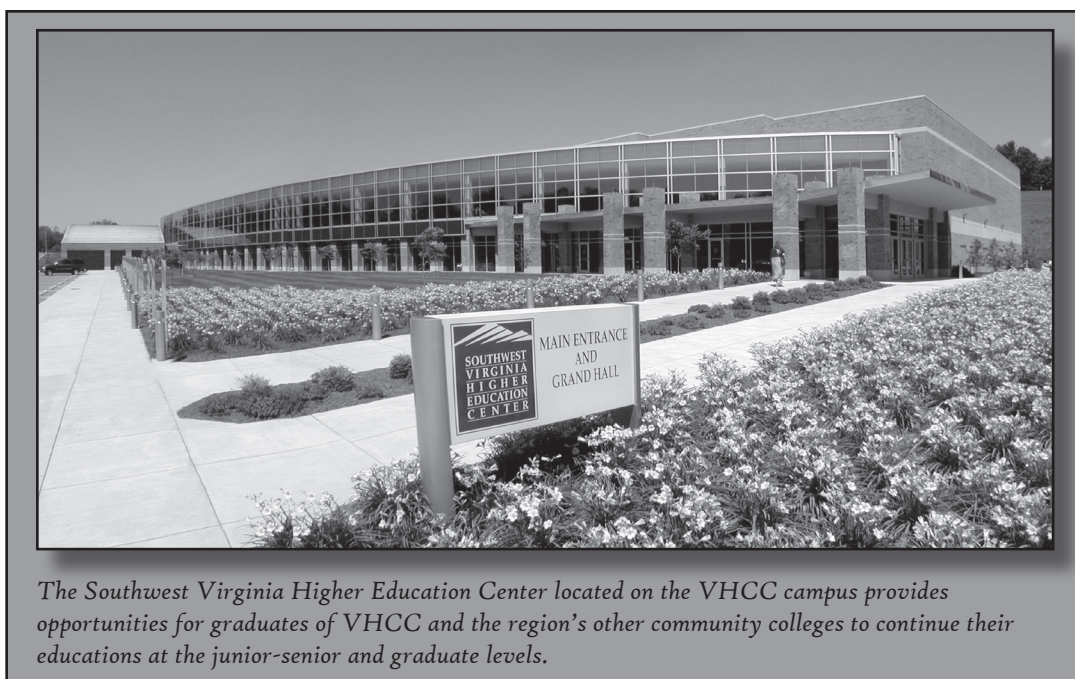
Next, in September of 1999, a nationally recognized program known as Upward Bound came to the campus. The third of the TRIO programs, the others being Talent Search and Project Excel, the program is designed to assist at-risk public school students with such activities as tutoring as well as academic and career counseling to help them to continue their educations. Five area high schools were targeted as the program began. Once again, the College and the area public schools were committed to the benefit of the students being served.

One of the biggest impacts on the service region was the realization of a concept that had begun in the earlier part



Dr. F. David Wilkin was named VHCC president in 1995.

of the decade. A 1993 bond issue was passed to create a center that would allow students to continue their education past the two-year Associate Degree while remaining in the area. Much planning and work by elected officials, college administrations and university boards went into the creation of the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center. The HEC, as it is called, opened to students from all over Southwest Virginia in January of 1998. The College catalog states that the Center, “a separate organization located on the VHCC campus . . . [will] bring baccalaureate and graduate programs to the area . . .” Made up of classrooms, seminar rooms, a large auditorium and a larger all-purpose hall, the Center would offer almost fifty undergraduate and graduate degree programs from Virginia’s senior colleges and universities as well as space for conferences, community activities, and major area meetings. Community as well as educational needs were being met.



The 90s, then, were a combination of proven programs and new initiatives that would ensure the continuation of quality education well into the future. This mixture of stability and change made the 90s a powerful decade for those who took one course, for those who came for a certificate or licensure, and for those who earned an Associates Degree in one of the many fields offered. To paraphrase Lewis Carroll’s Alice, the College ran very hard to stay in place and, in so doing, made large innovative changes that took it striding into the twenty-first century.

Looking Toward the Future

While the decade of the 2000s has yet to be completed, Virginia Highlands Community College has taken this period to focus not only on the present needs of its students and the community, but also to think about the future. With growth occurring at all levels, VHCC is working to meet the needs of its current students and plan for the ones to come. The Annual Report for 2002-2003 showed that enrollment climbed to 3,632, with more than one-third of students enrolled on a full-time basis. That growth underscores the necessity for continued planning. One only has to look at the earlier 1977-1987 Facilities Master Plan to see this vision in action. That plan contained many ideas that, due to budgetary constraints and needs patterns of the 1990s, have only been completed in recent years. Some of these (to be discussed in greater detail later) are: the completion of the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, a much-needed facilities building, a greenhouse complex, the completed paving and needed lighting of several more parking lots, and the roadway through campus giving access from the main entrance into the new Stone Mill Business and Technology Park to the east of campus (possibly to connect later with a town street creating a second entrance).

While the current Campus Master Site Plan contains projects needed for the bricks-and-mortar campus, the Strategic Plan formulates ideas for the academic campus. In 2001, the College began a lengthy process to develop the Strategic Plan which involved faculty, staff and administration. Positives and weaknesses were equally examined, and a plan to “create a vision for the future was developed” (Annual Report 2001-2002) . This collective vision was directed toward such goals as “enhancing the education of each student, recognizing employee potential, increasing public awareness of VHCC, maximizing the financial strength of the college, and enhancing the college environment to provide for student learning and community involvement.”

As the number of students hit a record high in 2001, data confirmed that over 60 percent of those who enrolled were high school graduates from the service region. The 2000-2001 Annual Report confirmed these figures and also the fact that VHCC was now ranked #1 in the entire Virginia Community College System in student retention. The College was definitely doing something right for the students. A later annual report (2004-2005) confirmed the earlier data: “80% of 3,209 students enrolled in credit courses came from the service region. About one-third of the students were enrolled on a full-time basis and more than half — 56 percent — were female.”

As Joyce Crusenberry, mentioned earlier as one of the first employees hired by the College and still an active member of the Library staff, stated in an interview: “Our students are hard workers. They want to succeed . . . They want to learn . . .” These impressions are underscored by the fact that VHCC students do succeed in so many ways. Dr. Hardison observed that, during his tenure, dual enrollment numbers continued to grow as the College worked with the public schools to benefit students, resulting in greater enrollment at the college by those same high school graduates. Students working hard made possible the receipt of over 4.2 million dollars in financial aid in the academic year 2000-2001, and that number has continued to increase. Those same hard-working recipients were the source of many of the student-oriented changes that have occurred during the previous few years.

One such change was the establishment of a weekends-and-evenings program for nursing students to help to alleviate the region’s nursing shortage. A 2002 survey showed the need for such non-traditional scheduling. Many students working in health-care related fields wished to upgrade their credentials and gain licensure as LPNs or RNs. This program was begun to address that need. Other students needed a little help with their studies, and VHCC worked to fill that need as well. For instance, the campus Tutoring Center, a part of Project EXCEL, could no longer provide assistance for all the students especially during evenings and weekends. So space was found in the College’s Library. The new Center not only provides additional space, but also allows the Center to add the additional hours to meet student needs. Mary Sullivan, current associate professor of Information Systems Technology (IST) and one of VHCC’s newer faculty, commented: “Weekend college . . . on-line, distance learning and evening courses . . . help students . . . It’s obvious why VHCC has selected the motto ‘Success starts here.’”

While responding to student needs, VHCC also realized that part of a student’s education came from involvement in his or her community. Thus, the College began a move during the 1997-98 school year toward including a Service Learning component to many classes. At present, more and more faculty are adding this component to their programs. Service learning is exactly what it is called: learning through service. Students take on a commitment outside the classroom, which usually involves some connection to the academic classwork. From the school’s Service Learning Handbook comes this Mission Statement:

“The Community Service and Service Learning program at Virginia Highlands Community College was created to further develop the relationship between the college and the community it serves, provide activities for students to learn about the needs of the community and how to address those needs; and offer opportunities for students and faculty alike to engage in learning outside the classroom.”

For instance, a student in the education curriculum may work in an elementary school for a certain period of time; a heating and air conditioning student may provide free service to an area senior citizen’s home. Volunteers have provided services for area churches, day care facilities, schools, adult



The Tutoring Center operated by Project EXCEL moved to a more spacious location within the VHCC Library in 2006 and extended its operating hours to include weekends and evenings.

health care centers, state parks and other non-profit agencies. This concept has continued to grow throughout the campus as faculty and students see the rewards of the program. By 2000, 143 students had volunteered a total of 1237 hours, and the total continues to grow.

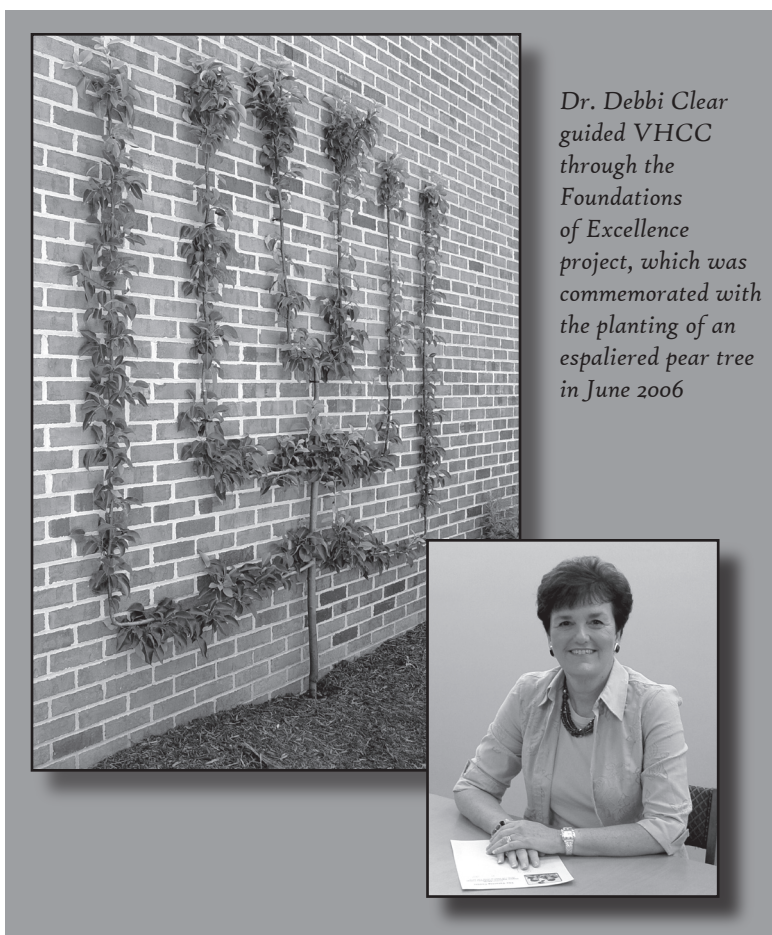
Another student-centered innovation on campus has been the creation of the Career Center. The Center opened its doors to students in 2005. The purpose of the program is to help students plan for workforce or career training. The staff help students with making career choices, preparing resumes and creating cover letters as they move out into the job market. The Center also offers training in doing job searches and teaches the fundamentals of interview techniques. Several times each semester, special programs are provided free for interested students on work-related topics.

Other changes have directly benefited students. With the inclusion of an activity fee, begun in 1997, almost all campus-sanctioned activities, such as movies, lectures and concerts, are now free with a VHCC student ID card. This free admission includes all of the activities sponsored by the campus Arts Array program. This popular program has undergone tremendous growth in the past few years, as other area colleges have joined the cultural arts series. The series director, Ben Jennings, has made it possible for students to experience live theater, foreign films, lectures by visiting poets and writers, as well as symphony concerts and other activities that had previously been available only by visiting larger schools and cities. On a lighter note, the College listened to student input and opened a game room near the Student Center and also developed several student lounges in other buildings. While not exactly academic, these amenities offer students a place to relax and socialize, a difficult task on a commuter campus.

While the focus on students certainly needs to include enrichment activities such as the Arts Array, and student comfort with items like lounges, there are major long-term goals that need consideration as well. According to Dr. Clear, while the Campus Master Site Plan goals were and are important, and the Strategic Plan goals are necessary to ensure the strong academic future of the College, she sees the primary goal of both plans as providing “strengthened support for students.” One of the major efforts to supply this “strengthened support” has been realized in Virginia Highland’s receipt of a grant to become part of the Foundations of Excellence program. The College is one of only ten community colleges in the nation to be chosen to participate in the pilot program. According to Dr. Clear, the Foundations of Excellence concept “focuses on educational quality. [It is a] comprehensive, guided self-study and improvement process for the first year that enhances an institution’s ability to realize its goals for student learning.” A major goal is to improve a student’s first year experience on the campus. This will begin by identifying at-risk students prior to their enrollment, involving students in the total academic process, increasing student and faculty buy-in to the program, and increasing opportunities for students to participate in activities and study opportunities. One of the primary objectives is to provide needed intervention to all students with a GPA (grade-point average) of 2.0 or lower. Faculty will be involved, according to Dr. Clear, to “reflect, review and evaluate” student needs and then respond to those needs. “Data will be collected and used to boost student retention and evaluate institutional behavior rather than student behavior,” continued Dr. Clear.

She summed up the College’s participation in the Foundations of Excellence program by making this statement about the Virginia Highlands Community College philosophy: “At VHCC, we believe that every first year student can succeed! We will provide a welcoming, engaging, and supportive environment where learning can occur in class and out of class.”

President Wilkin feels that the combination of the Institutional Effectiveness Initiative, begun in the 90s, and the Foundations of Excellence program will have an even greater impact by being on the campus simultaneously. To mark the



Dr. Debbi Clear guided VHCC through the Foundations of Excellence project, which was commemorated with the planting of an espaliered pear tree in June 2006

culmination of the first year of the Foundations project, an espaliered pear tree was planted in the Spring of 2006 as a symbol of the College's participation in Foundations of Excellence and as a promise that, at VHCC, "students always come first."

So far in this decade, the College has made many changes and has plans for many more. All of these changes and plans have one thing in common: they are made with the students as the center of them all. The Campus Campaign 2006, designed to raise money for student scholarships, used the theme of "Students First – You Can Count on Us!" Even the College's Mission Statement was revised in May of 2006 (see Appendix A) to focus more on its audience of students and potential students rather than on college personnel as the previous ones had done.

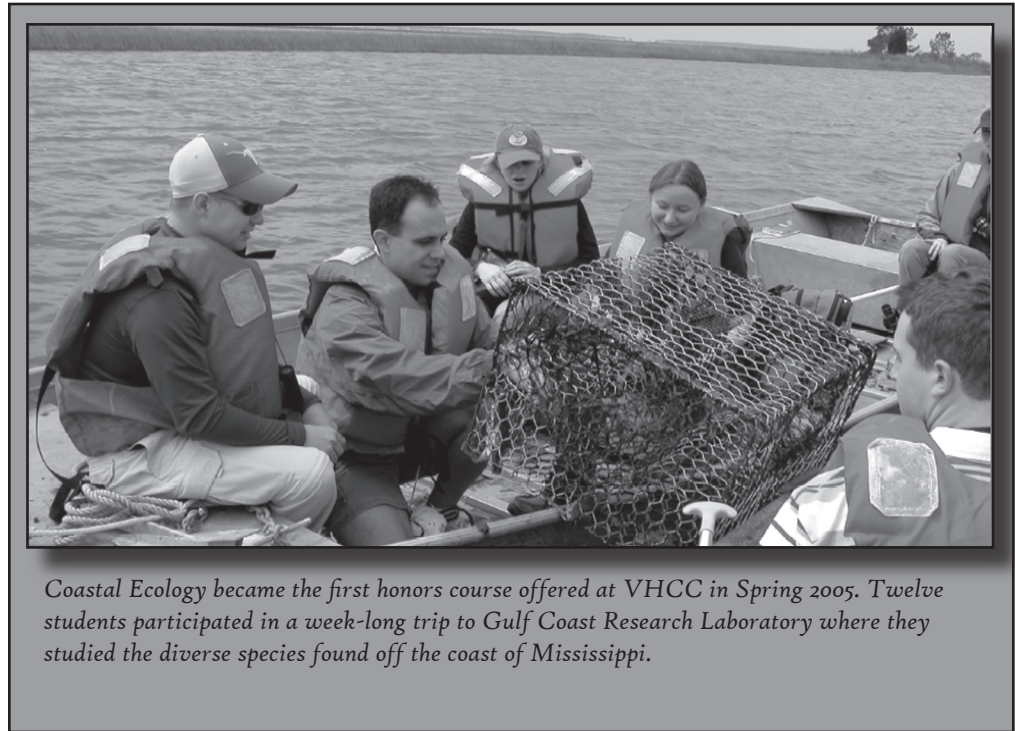
Putting students first also means that the courses offered by the College have to meet the needs of those students. VHCC has continued to expand options for its students. Encouraged in 1999 by the concepts of Dr. Geiger, then Director of the Center for Academic Excellence, the College began to formulate plans for an Honors Program as an option for students interested in academic excellence. Initially, the College offered "honors components" within several regular courses. Then, in 2004, Dr. Wilkin appointed a faculty member, Ms. Sara Combs, to serve as Honors Program Coordinator. According to Ms. Combs, the first honors-only course was offered in the Spring of 2005 and was a Coastal Ecology course. Both types of courses have recently been offered. An Honors Symposium was held in May of 2006 when five VHCC students presented honors projects.

The purpose of the program is five-fold: to allow intellectually motivated students to engage in special coursework that offers an in-depth understanding of topics in the

humanities, social sciences, business, and natural sciences; to give students an opportunity to distinguish themselves by doing higher quality academic work; to give students the opportunity to work closely with faculty and to associate with students of similar ability and motivation; and to provide recognition for distinguished work that may improve student potential for earning scholarships or obtaining employment. (Sara Combs)

The College also has worked to increase students' exposure to and involvement in the arts on campus. One way for students to participate in the arts was developed with the cooperation of the William King Regional Arts Center (WKRAC) located in Abingdon. This program is known as "Art on Campus" and places student and local art in various buildings throughout the College. Another option chosen by many students is to take one of several art classes offered in conjunction with WKRAC, both on campus and at the WKRAC's facilities. When these classes are combined with the art classes regularly scheduled, the music classes being taught in the newly renovated and enlarged music studio and the offerings of the Arts Array, students have access to the arts in many forms. The visual component of the arts at VHCC was further increased in May of 2000 by the wall-sized mural to be found in the Student Center. Created by local artist, D. R. Mullins, the mural presents his vision of Southwest Virginia and gives students an artistic representation of life in the area, both past and present. To ensure that the College meets its obligation to provide students with access to the arts, the Citizens Arts Advisory Committee was also formed. The Committee, made up of representatives from the service region, offers advice on decisions related to the arts.

Another curricular change that was created to meet student concerns was brought about by the area's shift from a tobacco-based economy to one of mixed agricultural patterns. An earlier study conducted in the region had indicated a need



Coastal Ecology became the first honors course offered at VHCC in Spring 2005. Twelve students participated in a week-long trip to Gulf Coast Research Laboratory where they studied the diverse species found off the coast of Mississippi.

for trained, qualified employees in what is being called the “green industries.” Seeing the educational needs created by this shift, the College made requests to the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) for approval of three new horticulture degree programs. The request was approved for the 2002-2003 academic year. The actions of the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Committee (VTICRC) had a major impact at this point. The Committee’s primary role was to disperse funds accrued from tobacco litigation to areas impacted by the economic shift. Using these monies, the VTICRC funded the start-up of the horticulture program and continues to provide significant financial aid for members of tobacco growing families who attend college. These new programs involve both classroom work and practical experience gained in greenhouse classes. Students from these programs are also directly involved in campus projects that allow for hands-on learning. In combination with the horticulture program, VHCC has created a Master Landscape Plan to outline the direction and development of the site through these projects. Thus the campus is being used as a laboratory with defined landscaping projects such as attracting wildlife by putting up birdhouses and creating the Heritage Apple Orchard, featuring antique apple trees, near the campus entrance. In this way, the Master Plan has become a blueprint for both learning and beautification.

While arts and horticulture took the major attention on campus, the “computer revolution” was quietly continuing. Computer literacy was being stressed by various educational groups around the state and nation as well as businesses and industries in the service region. VHCC responded by encouraging all students to become adept at computer use by graduation. Distance learning classes were being offered in greater numbers and in most disciplines as students realized that these non-scheduled classes offered greater flexibility to meet their employment and family needs. New software was constantly being installed to make these classes easier for students to access, to make e-mail more user-friendly for student/teacher interaction, and to make computers a major tool for faculty in terms of record keeping and use within the classroom. Both students and faculty quickly saw the benefits of the next campus change in computer usage. During the Fall semester of 2003, according to Charlene Eastridge (Registrar), “we converted to our on-line . . . Student



Virginia Delegate Joseph P. Johnson, Jr. (pictured above with Horticulture Instructor Joel Keebler) and Sen. William Wampler, Jr. (pictured at right with horticulture student Smanatha Osborne) served on the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization committee that provided majority funding for the greenhouse and attended the dedication ceremony of the facility on May 4, 2006.

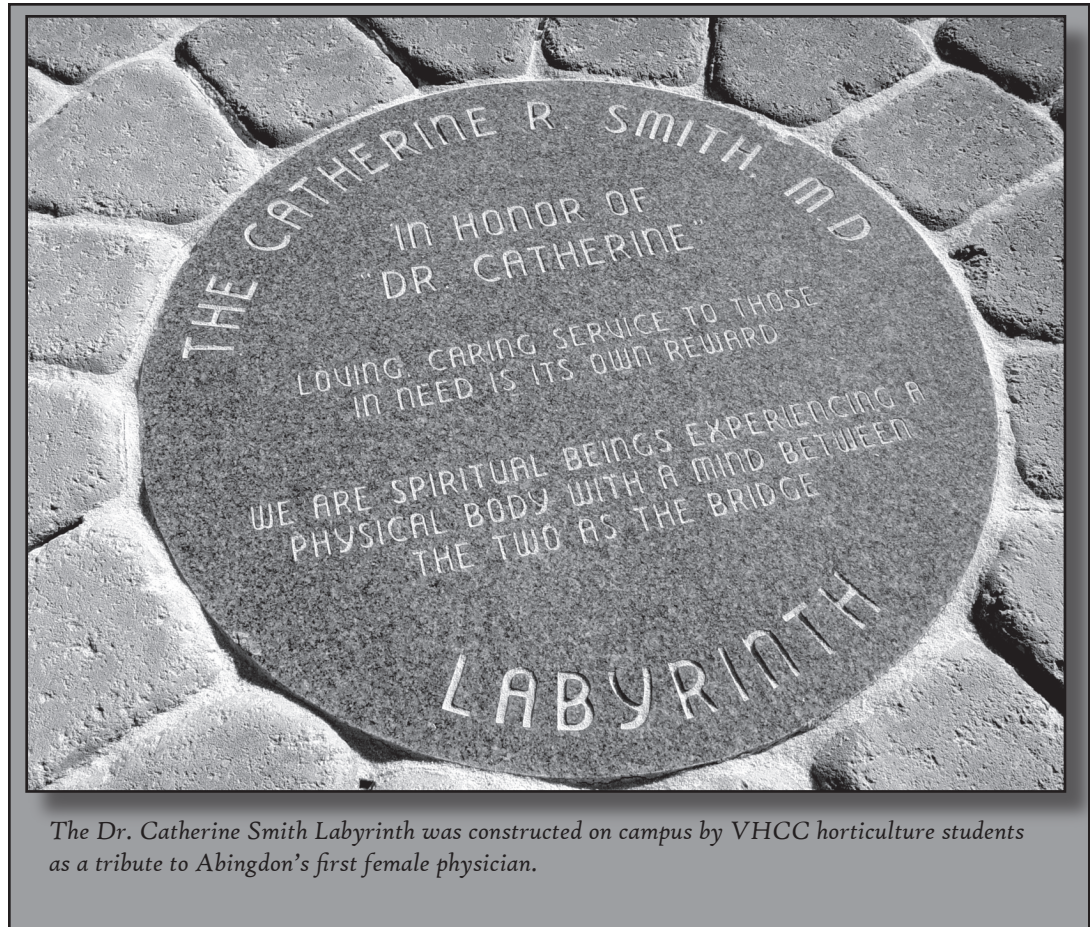
Information System (SIS). With this system everything is on the internet. Students can apply for admission, enroll in classes, pay tuition, view grades, request official transcripts and view their degree progress report Over the years that I've been here, we have always been trying new approaches to enrolling students I think the main thing is that we have always tried to put the student first."

2005 next saw Virginia Highlands become connected to the internet in such a way as to become what is termed "a wireless campus," and by 2006, most classrooms on campus were connected to the internet and many had teacher work stations for in-class use. According to IST professor, Mary Sullivan, "VHCC is 'the bomb' when it comes to technology [The College] is technologically unique The computer labs are better equipped than any four-year institution I've visited in the area." The computer, in most classrooms, has become as much a part of everyday learning as books and calculators.

But shifts in curriculum also mean shifts in classroom needs. Nowhere is this more evident than in the adoption of the expanded horticulture program. While classroom space could be found within the existing buildings, there was a definite need for greenhouse space. Plans were made, contracts were let, and on May 4, 2006, the formal dedication and ribbon cutting for the greenhouse was held. The greenhouse contains approximately 3,000 feet of space that will be used for instructional purposes. Located nearby is another structure that was also part of the earlier Master Plan, the facilities building. This structure provides a much-needed location for the maintenance of college vehicles as well as storage for equipment. The new facility will also allow for the conversion of the previous building into a long-awaited carpentry shop. On a more aesthetic note, in the Fall of 2006, construction was begun on a Chartres labyrinth designed after one built near Paris more than 800 years ago. When it is finished, it will be dedicated as a tribute to Dr. Catherine Smith, a College Foundation benefactor and the first female physician in Abingdon. The labyrinth was conceived and designed to be an area for self-reflection and meditation, which will closely follow Dr. Smith's holistic approach as a physician. All of these physical changes to the campus reflect the academic changes as the entire College moves into the new millennium.

Not all physical changes are the result of new construction. As the original campus buildings are now over thirty-five years old, several major projects have been under way recently to maintain these structures. 2005 saw the completion of work to replace the original heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) followed by re-roofing projects on the four older buildings (Administration, Mechanical, Instructional and Learning Resources). The College is also taking part in a 15-year energy management plan to decrease energy consumption and ensure environmental conservation.

Such major changes in curriculum and structures have been echoed by changes in the Administrative structure. In 2003, in a move to align the College's administrative titles more nearly with those of other academic bodies, the following re-classifications were made: the title of dean was changed to vice president (Vice President of Instruction and Student Services, Vice President of Financial and Administrative Services); the division chair title was changed to dean



The Dr. Catherine Smith Labyrinth was constructed on campus by VHCC horticulture students as a tribute to Abingdon's first female physician.

(Dean of Business, Humanities and Social Studies, Dean of Science and Engineering Technologies). Later, the role of the Director of Nursing Programs was expanded to Dean of Nursing and Allied Health.

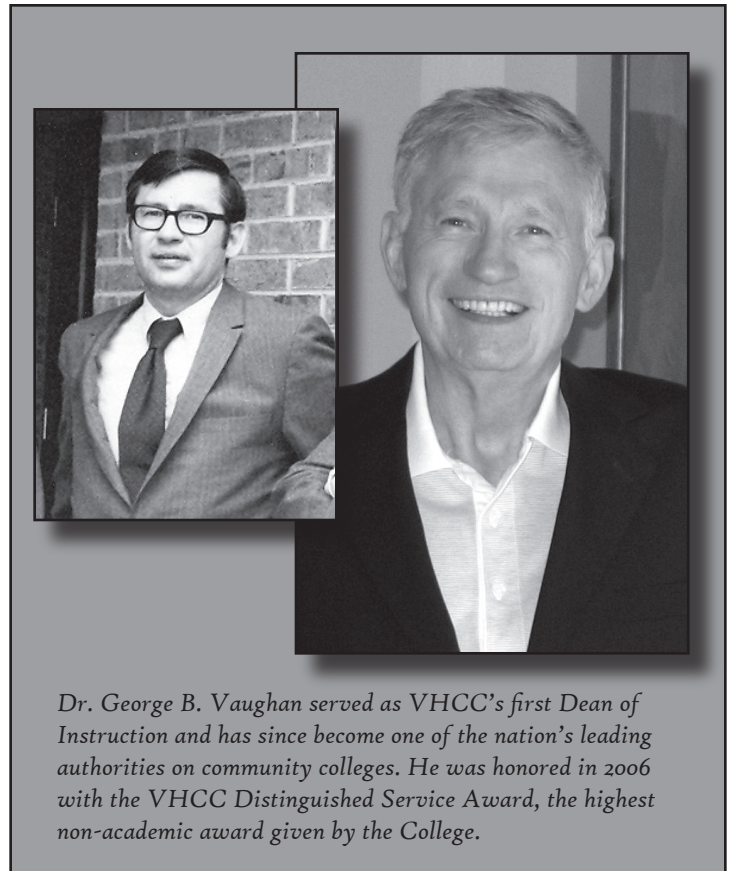
During this same time period, the College Board and the Foundation became more involved with the functions of the school. Dr. Geiger, currently chair of the Board, feels that the increased involvement has actually made Board members more active in pursuing ways to help VHCC become more successful than ever. The Foundation has been working hard during this time to create a more substantial economic base for the College. Scholarship fund drives and an endowment process have been the major focus of the last few years.

Another focus has been to do more to highlight exemplary work that was done by now-retired faculty and staff. Although the recognition of extraordinary contributions by faculty was begun in 1982, it was 2006 when the same recognition was begun for the classified staff. (See Appendix G-1 and G-2 for a complete listing of both faculty and staff so honored.) The Administration has also been focused on making the campus an even better place to learn and work. Strides have been made to have more, and more open, communication between faculty/staff and the administration. There is more active participation of personnel in the decision-making processes such as budget planning, curriculum needs, strategic and master plans and such.

A significant administrative achievement during the previous years of budgetary constraints was the ability to weather the crisis with no personnel layoffs. The fact that all personnel were kept informed of the budget during this time made for stronger ties across the entire campus. This open communication is facilitated by having almost all meeting minutes, announcements and major personnel information posted online using a campus-wide personnel distribution list. This openness, according to many interviewed, has made for better morale throughout the school. Better morale has resulted in better working relationships and that translates into better service for the students – the College’s first concern.

As always, what happens on the campus spills out into the community and, in like manner, what is going on in the service region affects the College directly. That is the nature of the community college design. The tangible connection between “town and gown” has long been a source of pride in the region. As far back as 1967, the College wanted to recognize those citizens who had contributed greatly to the success of VHCC. The resulting Distinguished Service Awards have been made, and will continue to be made, to those who have helped to build a strong reputation for the school (see Appendix H). With that reputation firmly established in the area, Virginia Highlands Community College has become the first choice for higher education for students in the region, according to Vice President Clear. But in addition to its base of educating the area’s students, as the College has grown, it has taken on other roles in the community as well. According to the 2003-2004 college catalog, “. . . the Arts Array program was expanded into a community-wide cultural program.” Arts Array now involves several other area colleges in addition to VHCC, with the College continuing to serve as the central coordinator for the series. In this way, not only Virginia Highlands but the entire service region is part of the greater arts community. In a totally different area, there is an inter-college relationship that developed as a result of computerization.

According to Dr. Hardison, as VHCC became more high-tech in the areas of computers and distance-learning, the four-year colleges in the state began to see the viability of using the Higher Education Center as a base for their own distance-learning programs. This move translated into more course offerings by four-year colleges and universities at the junior-senior and graduate levels, giving VHCC graduates more options as they continued their educations. But academics was not the only way in which the College met the needs of the community. According to Jim Tilley, project director of the Small Business Development Center, preparation was done from 1996 to 2004 by federal, state and local authorities to create the Small Business Incubator which formally opened in December 2004. Its purpose is to promote business development and



Dr. George B. Vaughan served as VHCC’s first Dean of Instruction and has since become one of the nation’s leading authorities on community colleges. He was honored in 2006 with the VHCC Distinguished Service Award, the highest non-academic award given by the College.

job creation in the region. The Incubator, a local government project that is located in the Stone Mill Business & Technology Park adjacent to campus, offers office and manufacturing space and allows start-up businesses to share equipment. The Small Business Development Center, a part of VHCC's Center for Business and Industry, was re-located to the Incubator in 2005. The SBDC assists small businesses through workshops, conferences and classes as well as providing some students with jobs as receptionists and clerical staff for tenant businesses. Crucial to the continued economic development of the area, these businesses can turn to the Incubator and Development Center for advice and help in building a solid foundation.

Another element crucial to the region is an educated, trained workforce. Much of the training needed is provided by the Center for Business and Industry. With a staff of highly trained instructors, the Center provides specialized instruction which is developed in conjunction with area businesses and industries to fit the specific needs of each employer at a given time. Training is offered both on campus and at work sites.

Again, VHCC is helping to make a stronger area workforce possible by providing space on campus for the Mount Rogers Regional Adult Education Program (MRRRAEP). Beginning in 2006, the two entities have worked together to provide area residents with their GED. Having space which is available to students both days and evenings is a major change for the Center. Also of importance, the students getting their high school equivalent diplomas are learning in a college environment that may well affect their attitudes toward continued education.

These GED students may, in turn, move on to a program being developed through the cooperation of two counties in the service region. An article in the Business Journal gives an overview of this new program:

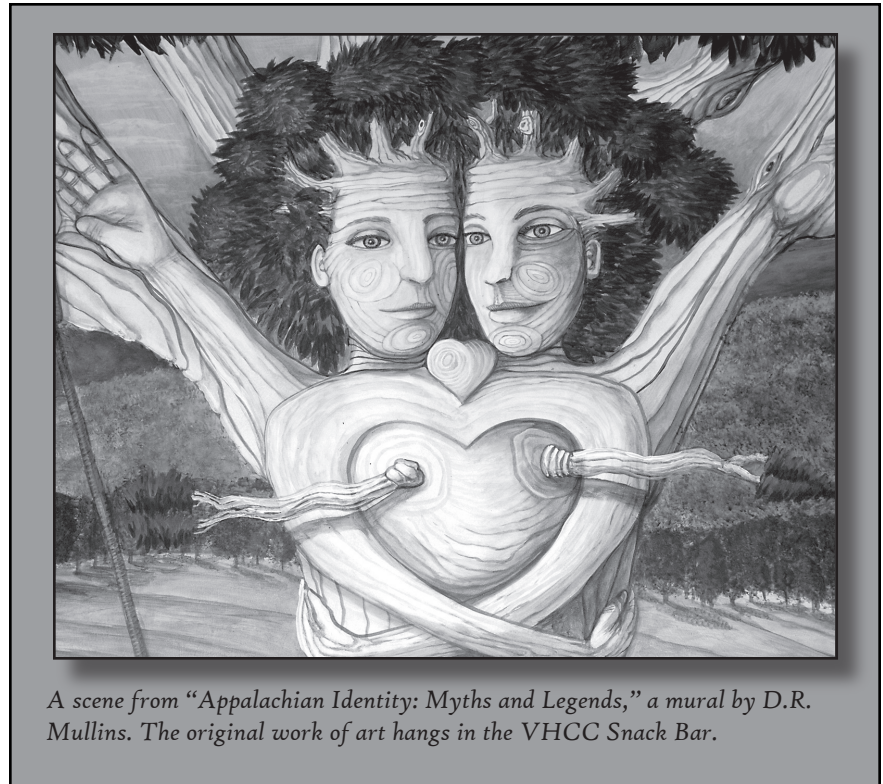
"Intent on reversing the growing shortage of skilled manufacturing workers in Southwest Virginia, the Smyth-Washington Regional Workforce Consortium kicked off the Dream It. Do It. campaign Wednesday [June 14, 2006] at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center. . . . [The] Consortium will . . . allow area residents to learn and train with the prospect of good jobs in the area."

The College's Center for Business and Industry has been involved in the process of creating this campaign, since helping to provide trained workers to the service region can only help the area's economy.

While the decade is far from over, much has been accomplished during the first part of the period. Growth, change and innovation are never far from the minds of each individual on campus, be they student, faculty, staff or administrator. From Arts Array to greenhouses, from computers to Appalachian murals, from business technology to choir concerts, the College continues to work to provide each citizen of the area with opportunities. Using the Foundations of Excellence and Institutional Effectiveness concepts as well as the 2007 report currently being prepared for SACS as the basis for continued improvement, Virginia Highlands has its campus eyes clearly set on making the College even better in the future.

Planning for the Future

In Roman mythology, portraits of the two-headed god Janus can be found with one head looking forward, the other looking back. Such a symbol could easily stand for Virginia Highlands Community College in 2006-07 as



A scene from "Appalachian Identity: Myths and Legends," a mural by D.R. Mullins. The original work of art hangs in the VHCC Snack Bar.

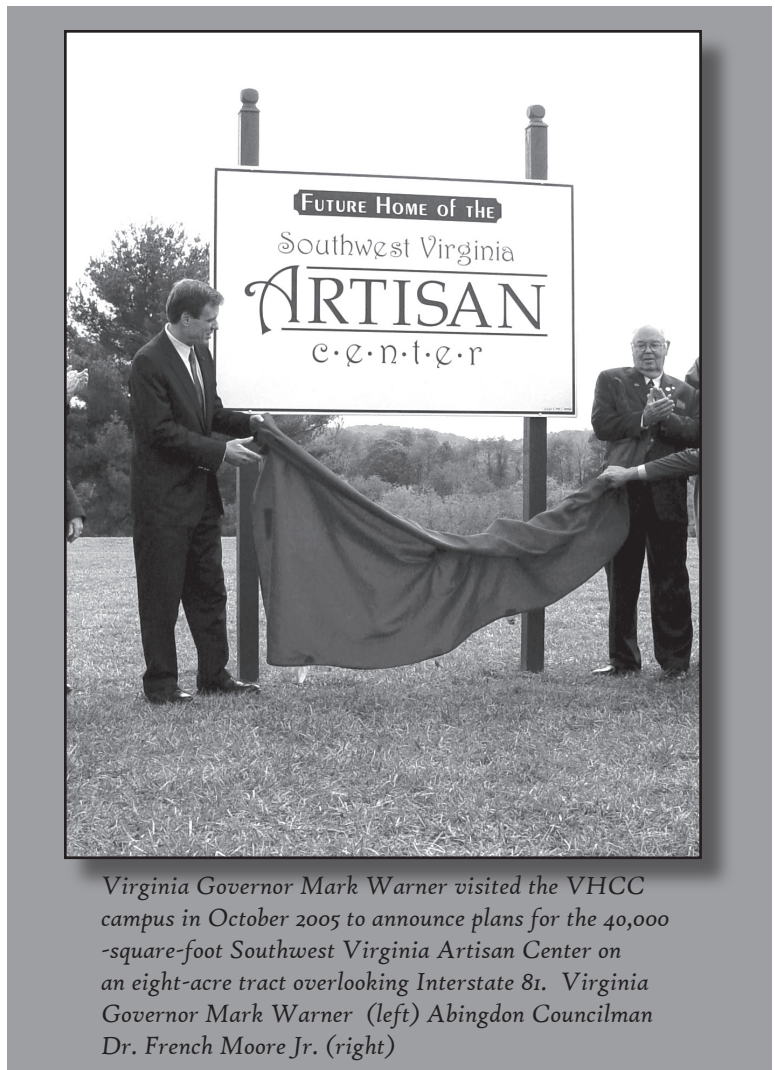
the College plans for the future. With almost forty years of past service to students and the larger community and with the future quickly becoming the present, Virginia Highlands Community College is working to combine the best of its past with the innovations needed for its future. In an interview with Dr. Clear, she was asked what she saw as the school's focus in preparing for the next decade. She replied that there were two areas that she felt were essential to the College's plans for the rest of this decade and beyond. Those were the development of new programs to meet the needs of the service region and the revitalization of older programs to adapt to the changing demands of business and academics. Some of these changes are obvious. One has only to compare a VHCC course catalog from the 1990s with the current 2006-07 one to see shifts in course emphasis and syllabi. These shifts will continue to occur as VHCC works to prepare its students for the future both academically and professionally.

Preparation to meet the academic and professional needs of these students will include an increased emphasis on the allied health field, a growing career path that includes not only the traditional field of nursing but also areas such as radiology and EMT training. VHCC is already looking ahead toward a need for expanded facilities to accommodate this growth.

Other changes are less easily seen. For instance, the Washington County Adult Skill Center and the College are slowly merging their forces to provide improved technical certification programs. Previously, when a student completed training at the WCASC, the student received certification recognized locally. With the Skill Center now collaborating with the College, more students will graduate with certification recognized nationally. Area businesses and industry know from previous experience that the College will stand behind the training of students who graduate with the College's imprint on that certification.

VHCC is also working to provide long-needed child care in the future for those parents taking classes on campus. Many area residents are restricted in the number and/or times that they can take classes because of child care concerns. The College is combining with People Inc., an area non-profit agency, in an attempt to find ways to provide safe and affordable child care for those students. The search for funding continues.

Yet another area where service to the students and the region is not as easily recognized is the "extended campus plan" involving several major additions to the campus. Contained in this plan are: the future Artisan Center (including conservatory features), the Stone Mill Business and Technology Park (now in progress), the Master Landscape Plan (currently being implemented by VHCC horticulture students) and an proposed interstate exit (Exit 15) which, combined with an improved Exit 14, will give better access to the campus. The Artisan Center, announced on October 27, 2005, will be located on an eight acre site on the VHCC campus. The 40,000-square-foot facility will have studio and retail space for Appalachian artists and craftspeople to both create and sell their creations as well as a regional tourism and food service area. Much of the work is expected to be completed in 2007. How does this project help the students and the community? Students, as well as regional residents, will be needed to staff positions within the Center, giving on-the-job training in a variety of positions as well as resume-building experience. As part of the College's Master Landscape Plan, the conservatory will offer opportunities for those trained in the College's greenhouses to put their education to use as they work to establish and maintain the planting. Visitors to the Center will also be likely to visit other sites while in the region, adding to the economic and business opportunities already in place. As Mary Sullivan, IST associate professor, put



Virginia Governor Mark Warner visited the VHCC campus in October 2005 to announce plans for the 40,000-square-foot Southwest Virginia Artisan Center on an eight-acre tract overlooking Interstate 81. Virginia Governor Mark Warner (left) Abingdon Councilman Dr. French Moore Jr. (right)

it: “The . . . center is going to be a big plus for the college and the community. The easy access from the Interstate and the views of the area that will be afforded by the location of the new center will draw a huge crowd.” The Stone Mill Business and Technology Park is expected to draw another kind of crowd. Located just east of the campus, the Park will be home to various types of businesses, anchored by the Small Business Incubator already located there. Finally, the additional campus access provided by the proposed Exit 15 and improved Exit 14 off of I-81 will make life easier for students at VHCC and the Higher Education Center as well as for those visiting the Stone Mill Business and Technology Park and the Artisan Center. Together, these changes will benefit the entire region.

While changes like those above are often viewed with some trepidation, events closely linked with the past while giving glimpses of the future can elicit a sense of anticipation. One such milestone for the College is fast approaching. This event is as indicative of the future as of the past. In May of 2007, VHCC is expecting to award its 10,000th credential. Thoughts of that first ceremony in 1970 when 38 students walked across the stage, memories of that long line of 9,923 subsequent graduates, and plans for that 10,000th credential will certainly go through the minds of many who will attend the ceremony that day. Who could have known that when the State Board created the College on November 30, 1967, and when the Washington County Board of Supervisors bought the 100 acres in that same year, that the College would not only continue to grow but would prosper into the future? From 232 students enrolled for the Fall of 1969 to 2299 enrolled in the Fall of 2004, the trend (see Appendix I) for the future is evident.

As for the future of Virginia Highlands Community College in all areas, things will continue much as they have done since 1969. The College will continue to make students a priority. The school will adapt to changing needs, change what can be made better, revise ways of thinking and doing to make sure that students are provided with the best and most affordable educations possible, and use innovative technology to give those same students those learning experiences that they can take with them into the future, be that business, industry or further education.

Sitting high on the hill is not just a physical position for VHCC. The school continues to aim high in all of its plans for the future. These plans include high hopes for its graduates, high expectations of its faculty, staff and administration, and – most of all – a high sense of the responsibility it owes now and in the future to the region that it serves.

Virginia Highlands - Where Students Always Come First!



Members of Virginia Highlands Community College's Class of 2006 celebrate their graduation.

Appendices

Appendix A

Virginia Highlands Community College Mission Statement

Virginia Highlands Community College promotes lifelong learning by providing quality, affordable higher education, including workforce training programs, that enable community members to succeed in today's world.

As a responsible and accountable member of the Virginia Community College System, VHCC offers an effective learning environment, especially for all who live and work within Washington County, the western portion of Smyth County, and the city of Bristol. The College fulfills its mission by:

- Meeting the needs of community members by providing a diverse array of instructional programs, including career-technical programs, college transfer education, general education, developmental education, dual enrollment with area high schools, service learning and honors initiatives, continuing education, cooperative education, and workforce development services.
- Cultivating responsible citizens by broadening student perspectives.
- Utilizing a variety of instructional methods and resources to accommodate the diverse backgrounds, interests, and ability levels of students.
- Providing comprehensive support services that enhance learning opportunities and enable all students to achieve their educational, personal, and career goals.
- Fostering meaningful, productive partnerships with neighboring educational institutions and community service organizations as a means for enriching learning opportunities and enhancing the quality of life in the region.
- Offering a comfortable, safe and welcoming environment for students and community members to explore the talents, programs and facilities available on campus.
- Creating high standards and effective measures of success for every program and service.

Approved by College Board – May 4, 2006
Reviewed and recommended to Board by
SACS Leadership Team,
Classified Support Staff Association,
Faculty Senate, and
President's Advisory Cabinet

Appendix B

Local College Advisory Board

The Virginia Community College System is governed by the State Board for Community Colleges, members of which are appointed by the Governor. The SBCC in turn selects a Chancellor to lead and oversee the twenty-three colleges in the system.

The Virginia Highlands Community College Local Advisory Board acts in an advisory capacity to the State Board for Community Colleges and performs duties with respect to the operation of the College as delegated to it by the State Board. The College Board consists of nine members serving at-large and appointed as follows: three members by the City Council of the City of Bristol, Virginia; two members by the Board of Supervisors of Smyth County, Virginia; and four members by the Board of Supervisors of Washington County, Virginia.

Each year the College Board selects a Chair, Vice Chair and a third member for the Executive Committee to provide Board leadership and service. In addition, the Board establishes committees to perform specific functions as deemed appropriate.

The College Board is charged with responsibility for assuring that VHCC is responsive to the needs existing within its service region. Board members ensure the development and evaluation of the program of education and assist in communications between the College and its constituencies. The Board meets six times annually. The history of Board membership is on the following page.

Appendix C

Virginia Highlands Community College Presidents

Dr. Donald E. Puyear	1969-1973
Dr. E. Jean Walker	1974-1984
Dr. N. DeWitt Moore, Jr.	1984-1994
Dr. F. David Wilkin	1995-present

Appendix D

SGA Presidents

Bill Byrant	1970-71
Sharon Morgan	1972-1973
Roger Duffield	1974-1975
Rick Shupe	1975-1976
Donna Casteel	1976-1977
Frank Tate	1977-1978
Jeff Willis	1978-1979
Immanuel Morenings	1979-1980
Mark Rose	1980-1981
David Hill	1981-1982
Terry Stroup	1982-1983
Scott Poore	1983-1984
Doug Broome	1984-1985
Linda Costello	1985-1986
Mark Anderson	1986-1987
Mark Anderson	1987-1988
Susan Dixon	1988-1989
Carol Minnick	1989-1990
Sharon Lewis	1990-1991
Kimberly Williams	1991-1992
Josh Sutherland	1992-1993
Tim Grinstead	1993-1994
Greg Woods	1994-1995
Charlotte Scalf	1995-1996
Helen Coe	1996-1997
Josh Lowe	1997-1998
Lorianne Davis	1998-1999
Tim Read	1999-2000
David Snowden	2001-2002
Ashley Roberts	2002-2003
Chase Sisk	2003-2004
Ashley Fleenor	2004-2005
Jonathan Pippin	2005-2006

Appendix E

Faculty Senate Presidents

John Zwick	1971-1972
John Zwick	1972-1973
Ed Hardison	1973-1974
Marty Greer	1974-1975
Charles Owens	1975-1976
Jim Geiger	1976-1977
Ann Richman	1977-1978
Jim Geiger	1978-1979
Bill Locke	1979-1980
Charles Owens	1980-1981
Richard Hutton	1981-1982
Doug Ogle	1982-1983
Bill Marotz	1983-1984
Neil Murphy	1984-1985
Larry Richman	1985-1986
David Collins	1986-1987
Ginny Alvis	1987-1988
David Smith	1988-1989
Brent Joyce	1989-1990
Alan Fairbanks	1990-1991
Debbi Clear	1991-1992
David Collins	1992-1993
Debbie Rasnick	1993-1994
Ben Jennings	1994-1995
Ray Williams	1995-1996
Bill Locke	1996-1997
Clark Fleming	1997-1998
David Collins	1998-1999
Brenda Legge	1999-2000
David Collins	2000-2001
Debbie Rasnick	2001-2002
David Collins	2002-2003
Susan Fleming	2003-2004
Julie Little	2004-2005
Julie Little	2005-2006

Appendix F

Classified Support Staff Association Presidents

Linda Carty	1984-1985
Susan Mason	1985-1986
Dave Richardson	1986-1987
Gary Thomas	1987-1988
Ginny McClure	1988-1989
Ginny McClure	1989-1990
Judy Sullins	1990-1991
Judy Sullins	1991-1992
Judy Plummer	1992-1993
Judy Plummer	1993-1994
David Matlock	1994-1995
David Matlock	1995-1996
Laura Bordwine	1996-1997
Laura Bordwine	1997-1998
Kathy Rhea	1998-1999
Kathy Rhea	1999-2000
Renee Doss	2000-2001
Renee Doss	2001-2002
Lillie DeLancy	2002-2003
Earnest Nunley	2003-2004
Earnest Nunley	2004-2005
Linda Davenport	2005-2006
Roger Spencer	2005-2006

Appendix G-1

Professors Emeriti

Charles E. Blevins - 1982
Mary W. Roten - 1986
Virginia G. Crumpler - 1988
Charles S. Herndon - 1989
John B. Roberts, Sr. - 1992
Marthelyn M. Greer - 1993
Larry K. Richman - 1999
Virginia A. Alvis - 2001
Bobby G. Necessary - 2002
Edward A. Colley - 2003
Jim E. Geiger - 2003
Charles H. Owens - 2003
Edwin T. Hardison - 2004
Charles W. Locke - 2004
Joe L. Kennedy - 2005
Lois S. Caldwell - 2006

Appendix G-2

Classified Staff Emeriti

Judy S. Plummer - 2006

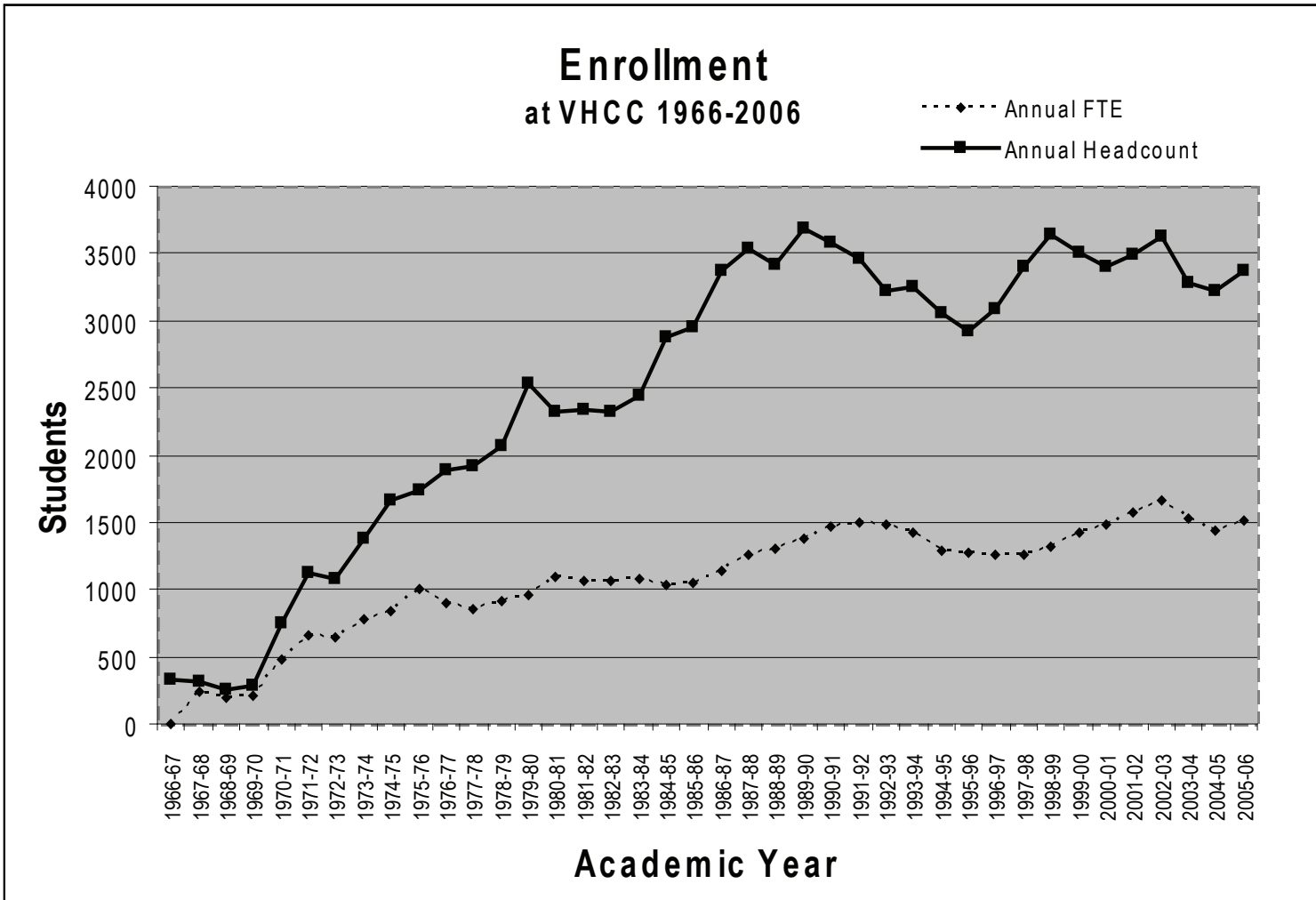
Appendix H
Distinguished Service Award Guidelines

1. The Distinguished Service Award is the highest non-academic award that this college can give to a person.
2. The recipient of this award must meet three specific requirements as outlined by College Board policy:
 - a. Service to VHCC in particular
 - b. Service to education in general
 - c. Service to the community that this college serves
3. The Distinguished Service Award may be given to one person annually.
4. This person is to be selected by the College Board from recommendation(s) of the Distinguished Service Award Committee.
5. Nominations must be accompanied by justification
6. Active Board members and members of the staff and faculty are not eligible
7. The award will normally be given at the Spring Graduation. (Plaque presented to recipient at graduation.)

Recipients of the Distinguished Service Award

Dr. Joseph B. Van Pelt - June 11, 1976
Dr. Everett Butler Stanley - June 11, 1976
Dr. J. Leonard Mauck - June 11, 1976
W.L. Lemmon - October 23, 1977
William C. Wampler - October 23, 1977
Mills E. Godwin, Jr. - October 23, 1977
James D. Moore - June 14, 1977
George B. Hutton - June 15, 1979
. Christine Miles - June 15, 1981
Mr. and Mrs. Lowry Bowman - June 15, 1982
Frederick (Rick) Boucher - June 15, 1983
Dr. E. Jean Walker - June 15, 1984
Dr. George J. Stevenson - June 13, 1986
C.B. Hale - June 12, 1987
Olin R. Prather - June 14, 1988
H.L. Littleton - May 12, 1989
W. Max Rhea - May 12, 1989
Charlotte S. Sutherland - May 12, 1989
E.B. Yates - May 11, 1990
Ford C. Quillen - May 11, 1990
James P. Jones - May 14, 1991
Westinghouse Corporation - May 14, 1991
G.C. Jennings - May 15, 1992
Joseph P. Johnson, Jr. - May 15, 1992
William C. Wampler, Jr. - May 15, 1992
Jane L. Sheffey - May 15, 1992
David N. Lee - May 14, 1993
Richard C. Leigh - May 14, 1993
Suzanne G. Lay - May 14, 1993
Ann V. Dix - May 13, 1994
Robert S. Dix - May 13, 1994
C.P. Curcio - May 12, 1995
Central Fidelity Bank - May 12, 1995
Dr. N. DeWitt Moore, Jr. - May 12, 1995
James M. Cole - May 10, 1996
Dale W. Gordon - May 9, 1997
Dr. Klell B. Napps - May 9, 1997
Russell U. Owens - May 9, 1997
C.F. "Con" Smith - May 8, 1997
Dr. Donald E. Puyear - May 15, 1998
James W. McGlothlin - May 15, 1998
Kurt J. Pomrenke - May 14, 1999
Ruth G. Sheffield - May 12, 2000
Jane B. Moore - May 11, 2001
Harriet A. DeBose - May 10, 2002
Kathi Lowe - May 9, 2003
R. David Crockett - May 14, 2004
John B. Roberts, Sr. - May 13, 2005
Dr. George B. Vaughan - May 12, 2006

Appendix I



Appendix J
Faculty and Staff 1966-2006

Dorothy Adams
Gary W. Aday
Ethel E. Adkins
William Akers, Jr.
Susan E. Alden
Debra M. Alley
Geneva Allison
Virginia A. Alvis
Velma C. Anderson
William T. Anderson
Eugene Arden
Rebecca M. Arnold
Hubert J. Ashe
Frances K. Bailey
Peggy H. Bailey
Carolyn A. Bales
Hunter B. Ball, Sr.
Janet W. Barr
Deborah O. Barrett
Timothy W. Bartley
John C. Basham
Barbara A. Bass
Connie M. Bateman
Judith L. Beasley
Michael L. Belcher
Clifton C. Bernard
Dianna Sue Berry
Lisa M. Biggs
Gordon H. Bingham
Tracy S. Blankenship
Melissa P. Bledsoe
Emily E. Blesi
Charles E. Blevins
Dianna Sue Blevins
Rita M. Blevins
Charles H. Boling
Linda J. Bolling
Laura E. Bordwine
Debbie M. Bordwine
Peggie K. Botts
Jimmy R. Bowman
Grace C. Boyce
Melissa R. Brabson
Elizabeth A. Brooks
Clifton R. Brown
Diane T. Brown
E. Jane Brown
Edith G. Brown

M. Janice Bryant
Tommy E. Bryant
Annie B. Buchanan
Lois S. Caldwell
Cathy C. Canody
Douglas W. Carmichael
John R. Carrico
James A. Carter, III
Timothy J. Carter
Linda M. Carty
Lonnie E. Caudill
Karen T. Cheers
James C. Chiang
Howard C. Chitwood
Carleen M. Clark
Deborah S. Clarkston
Deborah C. Clear
Jennifer Clifton
Donna H. Cluesman
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Edward A. Colley
David S. Collins
Samuel R. Collins
Schery L. Collins
Margaret H. Combs
Sara T. Combs
Paul W. Conco
John A. Cook
Brenda K. Cooper
Karen D. Copenhaver
James P. Corry
Sue C. Counts
Trevor C. Counts
Donna B. Cox
Sandra G. Cozzolino
Jackie T. Craft
Virginia G. Crumpler
Joyce C. Crusenberry
Charles P. Curcio
Caroline J. Daszewski
Judith A. Daugherty
Frances G. Davant
G. Jerry Davenport
Linda B. Davenport
Sandra L. Davis
Lillie M. DeLancy
Patricia C. Denton
John P. DePass

Elizabeth M. Dishner
Susan S. Divo
James H. Dixon
Lorraine M. Dodge
Betty L. Domjahn
Quintin S. Doromal, Jr.
Renee S. Doss
Allen J. Duff
K. Beth Duffield
Garnett O. Duncan
J. Stacy Duncan
Anne M. Dunham
Patsy M. Dunn
Daniel A. Dye
Charlene T. Eastridge
Samuel R. Edmondson
Linda V. Elmore
Charles S. Elton
Maribel S. Elton
Janet L. Estep
Alan E. Fairbanks
Charlotte L. Faris
Hazel M. Farley
Rita S. Farley
R.B. "Bucky" Farris
Stanley L. Ferrell
Michael G. Fillnow
Patricia L. Findell
M. Winona Fleenor
Ray Fleenor
Clark Fleming
Susan C. Fleming
Roger T. Flythe
Nancy I. Ford
Katherine O. Foreman
Rita S. Frye
Ronald E. Frye
Michael L. Fugate
Patricia R. Fullen
Ruby E. Fullen
Frances M. Gallaher
Kenneth H. Galliher
Jack R. Garland
Jimmy E. Geiger
Millie L. Gentry
Garland B. Gerberich
Barbara K. Gilbert
Teresa J. Gillespie

Johnny W. Gilley
J.C. Givens
Jerry E. Glover
Debra J. Gobble
Junior C. Gobble
Maurice W. Godbey
J. Elaine Goodwin
Margaret E. Gray
Henry E. Green
Marthalyn M. Greer
James E. Griffith
Elizabeth C. Grigsby
Deborah S. Hale
Charles H. Hall
Eddie S. Hall
J. Deresa Hall
Rebecca J. Hall
M. Kevin Hamed
Heather H. Hamm
Edwin T. Hardison
Dorothy B. Harris
Lola H. Harris
Barbara B. Harrison
Malcolm T. Haynes
V. Lorraine Heath
William C. Heath
Brenda K. Helton
Anne P. Hemmings
Maurice E. Henderson
Violet O. Henderson
William M. Hepburn
Tracey L. Herald
Charlie S. Herndon
Beula Y. Hess
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Cynthia J. Hicok
Richard L. Hill
Alfred R. Hoffmann
Warren P. Hogston, Jr.
E. Cecil Holmes
Johnathan S. Holmes
Edgar A. Howard
Edwin T. Howard
Morton Howard
Martha A. Hudson
Edna S. Hull
A.J. Humphreys, Jr.
Patricia A. Hunter
Patricia B. Hurley
Paul M. Hutchens
Catherine C. Hutton
Richard W. Hutton

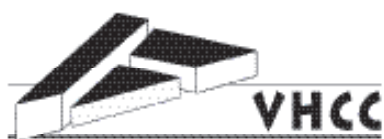
Mabel E. Jackson
Polly A. Jackson
Ben Hill Jennings
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James S. Johnson
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Donald R. Parsons
Stephanie F. Pennington
Mallie B. Penry
N. Charles Peterson, Jr.
Connie O. Phipps
Lois C. Phipps
Gary R. Pierce

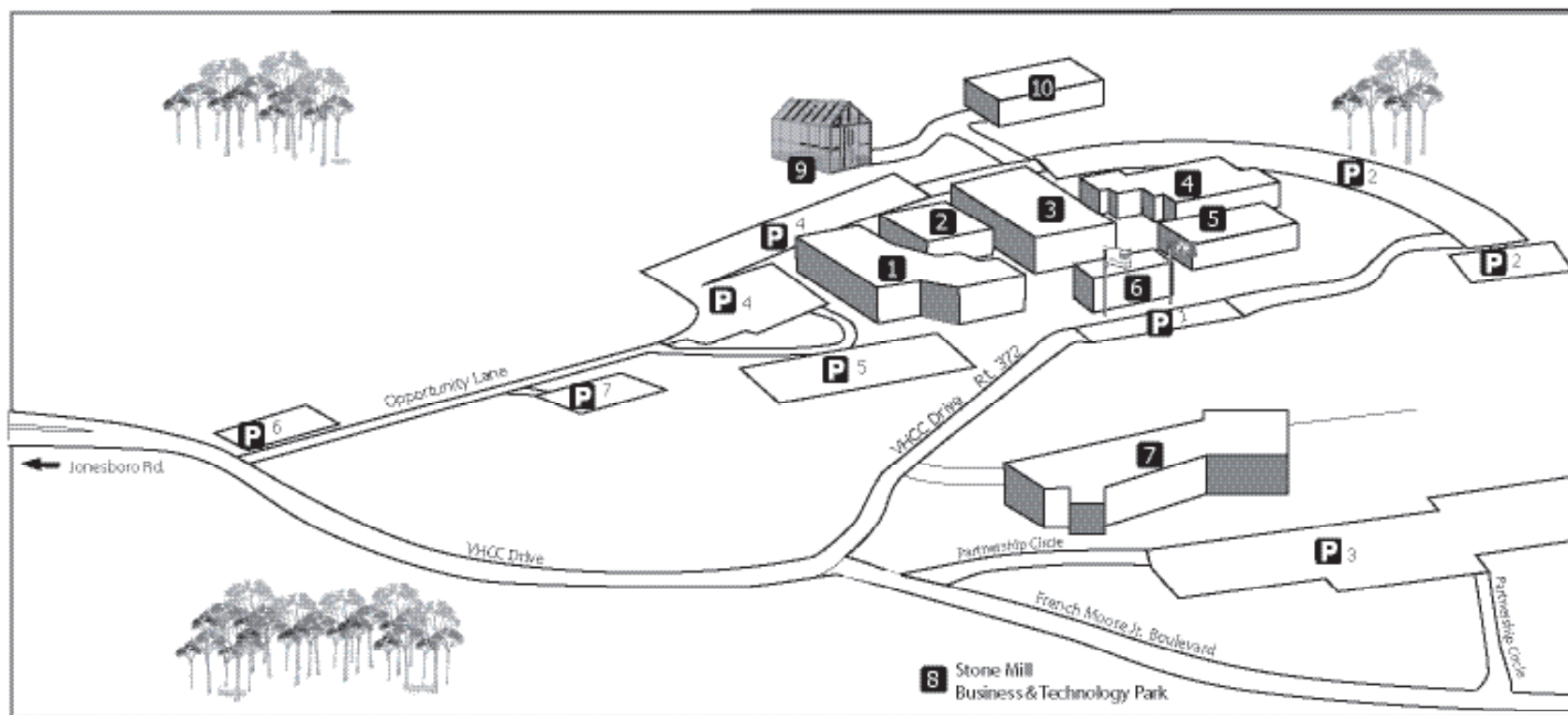
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Hadley A. Pobst
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Mary W. Roten
Alma Z. Rowland
Joel S. Rudy
Elsie V. Rudzinski
G. Michael Rush
Jeff D. Russell
Reva E. Russell
Richard L. Russell
Glen M. Rust
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Julie H. Sales
Linda F. Saunders
Patricia A. Sauve
Sandra E. Seay
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Connie P. Sherwood
Sandra J. Shortridge
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Roy L. Shutters
Jay R. Silverman
Rosa K. Slavik
David A. Smith
Elizabeth S. Smith
Harry F. Smith

Karen C. Smith
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Roger W. Spencer
Glenn G. Sproles
Lynn O. Stacey
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Gilda H. Stokes
Harvey K. Stoute
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Mary S. Sullivan
Sheila C. Sullivan
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Eva J. Turner
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Ruth A. Webber
Pamela S. White
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John A. Williams
Pamela M. Williams
Raymond K. Williams
Woodrow W. Williamson

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Donald L. Wise
Larry W. Wise
Raymond M. Witherspoon
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Freddie A. Wolfe
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John E. Woods
Deborah C. Wright
Elizabeth B. Wright
Marie T. Yuhr



Virginia Highlands Community College Campus Map



1. Learning Resource Center • LRC

110 Opportunity Lane
Rooms 600's 1st Floor - 700's 2nd Floor
Library
Learning Lab
Theatre
Tutoring Center

2. Nursing Education Building • NEB

120 Opportunity Lane
Rooms 800's 1st Floor - 900 2nd Floor

P Parking Lot

3. Instruction and Student Center • ISC

130 VHCC Drive
Rooms 201-416
Admissions
Financial Aid
Academic Counselors
Campus Police
Career Planning & Placement
Snack Bar/Game Room

4. Occupational/Technical Center • OTC

160 Opportunity Lane
Rooms 1100's 1st Floor - 1200's 2nd Floor
Mount Rogers Regional Adult Education Program

5. Mechanical Education Building • MEC

150 VHCC Drive
Small Business Development Center • SBDC
Rooms 501-517

6. Administration • ADM

100 VHCC Drive
Rooms 101-112
Center for Business & Industry • CBI
Business Office

7. Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center • HEC

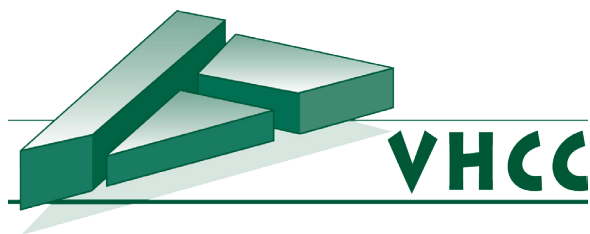
Bookstore

8. Stone Mill Business & Technology Park

Virginia Highlands Small Business Incubator • VHSBI

9. Greenhouse • GRN

10. Buildings and Grounds Facility • BGF



Virginia Highlands Community College

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