



# **VIRGINIA TECH CORPS OF CADETS STRATEGIC PLAN**

**Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Strategic Plan  
2020 to 2025**

## Introduction

This plan is an update to the previous strategic plan for the years 2015-2025. This new version incorporates elements of the previous plan but is structured to provide a framework for ongoing reviews, revisions, and action planning. It is extended over a 5-year period to correspond to the requested strategic planning horizon of the university of 3-6 years.

As the Corps benefits immensely from its relationship with its alumni, we have collaborated with the leadership of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Alumni, Inc. (VTCCA) and the leadership of the Highty-Tighty Alumni, Inc.

This plan is also updated to remain synchronized with the Virginia Tech Strategic Plan - The Virginia Tech Difference: Advancing Beyond Boundaries.

The Corps is the first and largest learning community at Virginia Tech with requirements unlike those normally associated with conventional undergraduate housing and student administration. Many cadets, those in the Military-Leader Track, are preparing for challenging and vitally important roles as commissioned officers of the nation's Armed Forces. A significant number of cadets, members of the VPI Battalion (Citizen-Leader Track), will be leaders in the public, private, and social sectors of our society.

To prepare, cadets are challenged each day, all day, by experiential learning in the practical applications of leadership theory, and encouraged by frequent evaluation in positions of ever-increasing responsibility. Membership in the Corps has been and remains a way of life.

Since the inception of Virginia Tech, the Corps of Cadets has been the guardian of, and the standard bearer for, *Ut Prosim*. The purpose of this plan is to ensure we never waiver from that role.



## **DEDICATION and ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Strategic Plan remains indebted to Henry J. Dekker, past Rector of the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors and Chairman Emeritus of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Alumni, Inc. Mr. Dekker was instrumental in charting the direction of the Corps with his wisdom and insights captured in the first strategic plan for the Corps in 1997 and sustained throughout his life. Mr. Dekker passed away on June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011. He will always be remembered.

We also acknowledge the work and the vision of past commandants of cadets. Their work and earlier strategic plans served as a forceful example of the power of ideas to harness the energy of many.

The Corps will succeed in its mission by constantly updating and implementing this plan to direct the collaborative efforts of many diverse parties. There have been and will continue to be many contributors and participants focusing their own goals, objectives, and actions to support this plan and achieve tangible, physical results. The professional contributions of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Alumni, Inc. and the Highty-Tighty Alumni, Inc. are especially noteworthy because of exemplary alumni commitment to make the Corps of Cadets the nation's premier leader development program.

**//Signed//**  
**Randal D. Fullhart**  
**Major General, USAF (Ret)**  
**Commandant of Cadets**

**//Signed//**  
**J. Pearson**  
**Chairman, VTCCA, Inc.**

**//Signed//**  
**Charles Rowell**  
**President, HTA, Inc.**

# **The Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Mission Statement and Vision,**

## **Mission**

The mission of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets is to graduate leaders of exemplary character who are instilled with the values and skills essential for leadership success in service to the nation.

## **Vision**

The vision of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets is:

Global, Ethical Leaders  
Now...More than Ever

Global...expressing the diverse nature of the make up our Corps...and the global nature of our graduates' work.

Ethical...encompassing moral, legal, honor, ethics, and respect for all...doing the right thing...always.

Now...More than Ever: A sense of urgency and a sense of quantity because the challenges (and opportunities) are numerous, demand our immediate attention, and drive the demand for such leaders.

## **An Assessment of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Recent Revitalization Efforts**

### **Historical Background: Transition from the 20<sup>th</sup> Century to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Since its founding in 1872, the Corps of Cadets has strived to be a superb institution for leader development. The Corps has produced over 100 generals and admirals plus seven Medal of Honor recipients, and thousands of successful business, public service, and community leaders. Past selection for the Governor's statewide award for volunteerism and community service is but one of several examples where the Corps epitomizes the university motto "*Ut Prosim, That I May Serve*".

In the 1960s, when the policy of mandatory membership in the Corps of Cadets ended, the challenge began to sustain a vibrant program. By the late 1980s, the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets struggled for its very existence and viability. Enrollment, academic rigor, and prestige of the university had risen but the focus and commitment for the Corps' leader development program was on the wane. Nonetheless, the Department of the Navy recognized the potential of Virginia Tech as a federally-designated Senior Military College and as a source of able Navy and Marine officers. An agreement was made in 1983 to place a Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps unit on campus. Even with the expanding opportunities offered with Naval ROTC, a nadir was reached in 1993 when an entering freshman class of 137 resulted in a regiment of about 400 cadets. Very few of those entering freshman cadets were ROTC scholarship recipients because the university had no incentive program to attract them and no focused recruitment program. For a period, the Department of the Air Force placed the Virginia Tech Air Force ROTC on probation because it had been unable to commission the minimum expected number of officers (15) for several consecutive years. The Army and Navy ROTC programs were perilously close to the same fate - - and all three ROTC service headquarters (Army, Navy, and Air Force) had expressed serious concerns about the relevance and quality of the Corps leader development program. Despite the formation of an alumni group to revitalize the Corps, and creative initiatives by the Commandant and his staff, there existed within the

university community a perception that the demise of the Corps was irreversible.

## **Growth of the Corps**

The achievements and challenges since the Corps implemented the first strategic plan in 1997 can be viewed through a prism informed by a historical baseline. The Corps has now grown to nearly 1,200 cadets by the fall of 2020, resulting in the largest regiment in over half a century.

The Army, Navy, and Air Force ROTCs are among the top officer production programs in the nation - - both qualitatively and quantitatively. A substantial number of the most recent entering first-year cadet classes have been recipients of ROTC scholarships, due to the growth of the service ROTC programs recognizing the quality of the graduates of our programs.

The Corps' leader development program has attracted attention and emulation from a number of other colleges and universities. Since 1999, when it became the first land grant university to award the academic minor in leadership studies in a military- structured program, the Corps and the Pamplin College of Business have partnered to sponsor the largest academic minor at Virginia Tech, with over 1,000 minors conferred to graduating cadets.

Supported by a two-million-dollar endowment, the MGen W. Thomas Rice Center for Leader Development offers a challenging theoretical and experiential curriculum, sponsors an active distinguished lecture series for the campus and community, and administers the minor in leadership. Beginning in fall 2003, the Corps leadership laboratory earned academic credit for the first time, providing cadets the opportunity to earn eight credit hours during their four-year cadet career.

In the spring of 2012, the Citizen-Leader Track laboratory earned academic credit as an A-F 2-hour course, giving these cadets the opportunity to earn eight additional credit hours over four years and bringing them more in line with their ROTC peers. Internships are on the rise and nearly 90 percent of the May graduating Citizen-Leader

track cadets in 2020 had already secured employment or follow-on graduate program acceptance and over 98% by early June. The first-year cadet system has been realigned with the current practices of military training focusing on a professional environment for cadets to succeed academically, physically, and ethically while providing clear guidance to upper-class cadets implementing values-based training. The structure and a progression of achievement in what we term as the “Red, White, and Blue Training System” has proven an effective framework to accomplish the learning objectives for first-year cadets.

During spring 2000, the Corps became a leader among the Senior Military Colleges by launching a progressive program of practical study aimed at formally preparing each rising cadet class for the leadership positions they will occupy for the coming year. Our curriculum educates each cadet in rudimentary leadership principles, leadership traits to use in evaluations, and cadet leader position responsibilities. The Corps utilized a series of realistic leadership scenarios to stimulate thought on responsibly meeting the challenges cadets experience related to peer loyalty, compliance with standards and regulations, and mission accomplishment.

Commencing in fall 2000, the Corps moved to a semester leadership rotation model, rather than the previously used annual model. This change doubled the number of leadership positions and opportunities available to upper-class cadets. In fall 2007, a deputy commandant was added to the staff to direct the efforts of the leader development program to add rigor to nurturing future leaders through formal instruction, directed readings, topical speakers, facilitated seminars, writing assignments, professional skills for Citizen-Leader Track cadets, an aviation ground school, and a capstone course for cadets in senior class standing. Lt Col Don Russell became the first Deputy Commandant for VPI Battalion, three Senior Enlisted Advisors were added...each assigned to a different line battalion.

The net impact of all of these improvements in the leader development program is a continuing positive change in the culture and leadership climate within the Corps and clarity in the value of the Corps experience for each cadet. Cadets during this period attained remarkable accomplishments such as University Man of the Year in 1999, 2000,



2004, 2006, and 2011; University Undergraduate Leader of the Year for seven consecutive years (2004 through 2010) and in 2012; the Virginia Tech Undergraduate Woman in Leadership Award for 2012. The average GPA for the Corps has been over a 3.0 for the last seven-plus years.

The Emerging Leader Scholarship (ELS) program continues as a factor in attracting prospective Virginia Tech students in investigating and ultimately joining the Corps, but in light of rising costs of tuition and room & board and the recovery of the economy from the low in 2008, the ELS needs an increased infusion in order to continue to be a deciding factor for incoming cadets and their parents. The ELS strategy of awarding financial assistance not only to national ROTC scholarship recipients but also to a broader spectrum of ROTC and Citizen-Leader track candidates attracted more applicants during the economic downturn, and can continue to be a factor if funded to the extent that it can be offered to every incoming cadet at a level that equates to at least the meal plan. Our goal is to have it grow to the point it can be provided to a Corps of up to 1,400 cadets. Along with the ELS, informal surveys of entering cadet classes continue to indicate another important motivator for their application to the Corps is the fee-waived university application. Finally, the \$1,000 Highty-Tighties scholarship for first-year cadets continues to help with recruitment of band members.

We have worked closely with University Admissions to maximize the number of students admitted to the university who have expressed an interest in joining the Corps and who are also recipients of national ROTC scholarships.

Changes in the admissions process have also highlighted cadet candidates who have demonstrated strengths in leadership and service-oriented accomplishments.

One of the significant features of previous strategic plans called for a major effort to advertise and market the Corps throughout Virginia, regionally, and nationally. This effort included the purchase of national lists of candidates, and subsequent contact via conventional and electronic mailing to eligible prospective students (and their parents/guardians). Over 200,000 high school students were contacted in

2016-2020 to inform them of the virtues of joining the VTCC Class of 2020. As a result, over 1,000 prospective cadets participated in virtual or in-person Spend the Night Program events. This is a program where potential cadets come and spend a night in the residence halls, accompany cadets to classes, and generally get an appreciation for what cadet life is like, or attend a Zoom session with a Corps session, cadet panels, and ROTC breakout rooms.

Dedicated efforts continue to update all forms of media to better reach underrepresented prospective students, as well as current cadets promoting the Corps by returning to their hometown high schools over school breaks.

State funding for the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets has historically been problematic. Some years ago, the state legislature created an appropriations line, Unique Military Activity (UMA) for both Virginia Military Institute (VMI) and the VTCC. Back in 2009-2010, the legislature appropriated \$1,569,824 for our Corps – the same as for 2008-2009. However, the economic conditions of the Commonwealth and university resulted in a 15% decrement in that allocation. The appropriation had remained at \$1.3M for the last several years. In the 2012-2013 budget, the university asked the governor to bring the per-cadet UMA funding level to the same comparable level to that of VMI or approximately \$2.2M total. This funding request was not supported. We then turned to the State Legislature where a bill was introduced to raise VTCC funding by \$300K of the \$800K+ shortfall. In the end, only a \$150K was appropriated. This did allow the Corps to hire back one of the positions that were lost in the reduction back in 2008...but was not enough to address shortfalls in other staff positions, uniforms, equipment, and operating costs. The shortfall was ultimately addressed in 2011 with an increase of \$600K. This additional funded critical staffing in the form of three Senior Enlisted Advisors, an Administrative Assistant, and an Enrollment Officer. However, the gap between VMI and Virginia Tech has once again emerged and state-promoted pay raises plus rising healthcare and retirement plan costs have eroded the monies available for program enhancement. This critical need must be addressed in future budget submissions especially as it related to the planned growth in the Corps.

In the university's last comprehensive fund-raising campaign, the Corps had an original goal of \$30 million. The goal was established to guarantee an enduring Corps of Cadets with \$25 million directed toward the Emerging Leader Scholarship endowment; \$2 million to enhance the Rice Center for Leader Development; and \$3 million or more for Lane Hall renovation and

additions. This goal was later revised upward to \$35M, and through the hard work and support of the staff and alumni, this goal was achieved.

At the national level, Congress continued to support contracted ROTC cadets with a monthly stipend ranging from \$250 to \$500 depending on the number of years a cadet has been enrolled. In 2008 the Department of Defense Uniform Commutation Fee, which reimburses ROTC cadets at Virginia Tech for uniform costs, was reduced. This coupled with a growing Corps size and lack of state funding required us to increase annual uniform and maintenance fee required for each cadet, to \$1,083 for a male cadet.

In the ensuing years, the Corps and university have worked hard to establish a more sustainable funding stream from the Commonwealth with incremental increases each year in the range of \$173,000 to cover mandatory increases in employee benefits and rising operating costs. However, that funding request was not supported by the legislature in the 2019-2020 budget. With the new plan to now grow the Corps to 1,400 cadets, the funding model will have to be revisited as additional staffing and operating costs must be considered.

Finally, in addition to the newly stated university goal of growing the Corps to 1,400, comes approval by the Board of Visitors to proceed with the construction of the Corps Leadership & Military Science Building and a third residence hall with a capacity for 299 beds.

## **A Vision for the Future**

### **The Bottom Line Up Front**

The following provides the broad outline of our focus areas for the coming six years:

- Maintain a diverse and inclusive Corps between 1,350 and 1,400 cadets to ensure full occupancy of our new residence halls.
- Work with University Admissions to match or exceed the diversity goals set for the overall university undergraduate population.
- Ensure an environment that is nurturing and respectful to all allowing for each person being able to grow and perform at their maximum potential.
- Complete the Corps Leadership & Military Science Building.
- Complete the third residence hall designated for the Corps, on the Upper Quad.
- Grow our scholarship endowments to provide an ELS scholarship to all eligible cadets at the current level. Long-term, seek the ability to provide scholarships for citizen-leader track cadets that are on par with ROTC scholarships.
- Work with University Advancement to increase annual campaign participation rate to a minimum of 50% for classes graduating in the most recent 20 years.
- Work with University Advancement to increase endowments supporting the Rice Center for Leader Development...adding an additional faculty member and increased programmatic support.
- Work with University Advancement with an objective of continuing to host reunions that are attractive to the loyal alumni base of Corps graduates.
- Work with University Advancement to establish endowments to support the Corps Museum to include curator salary and programmatic support.
- Work to help 90% of each year's graduates of the Citizen-Leader track to achieve career starts or graduate education starts within six months of graduation.

- Increase the number of participants in our Global Scholars Program as part of an independent study program for graduation credit.
- Enhance and deepen cadets' understanding and commitment to honor and ethics.
- Maintain and financially support a musically well-balanced marching band capable of fielding 144 pieces at home football games and sufficient additional members to cover a variety of venues to include jazz band, string ensemble, and brass quintet.
- Grow and cultivate a professional staff to carry out the mission of the Corps.
- Work with University Budget, Programming, and Government Affairs staffs to ensure appropriate and sufficient funding for the Corps to meet the university's stated goals of growth to 1,400 cadets.

## **Recruiting and Retention**

The Corps surpassed the 1,000 cadet mark with the incoming 2012 class and has remained above 1,000 ever since. In the past, the 1,000-cadet mark was hailed as a goal. This was due to analysis, which indicated this as a minimally optimum range for providing right-sized organizations for cadets to develop their leading skills.

First, we will continue to take steps to steadily grow a diverse enrollment stabilized between 1,350 and 1,400 cadets through balanced actions of both recruiting and retention by the time the new residence hall is completed. More importantly though, our primary focus is on continuous improvement of the quality of our programs and the Corps experience that can positively affect both.

All three federal military departments report positive recognition of the Corps' leader development program and its contribution in preparing junior officers for productive service with exemplary professional and character values. We must ensure that our actions continue to earn and retain this reputation.

At the same time, recognizing that the military services may contract due to a combination of budget concerns and changes in national security strategy, we must and are taking steps to increase the attractiveness of our leader development programs for students who may not be planning to pursue a military career following graduation.

The combination of Emerging Leader Scholarships and vigorous efforts by the recruiting staff, bolstered with support from our alumni, is resulting in a reasonable number of freshmen entering the ranks each year. We cannot assume that such numbers will appear without increased efforts in all areas...in particular the growth of our Emerging Leader Scholarships to cover all students.

## **Emerging Leader Scholarships and Annual Campaign Priority Funding**

The Emerging Leader Scholarship (ELS) Program has been credited with helping to drive Corps growth, both quantitatively and qualitatively, since the program's inception in 1995. The Commandant's Priority funds, sourced primarily through the university's annual campaign, provides needed funds to make up for any shortfalls in commonwealth funding, to address emergent needs, and to launch new initiatives.

In recent years, we have added additional Annual Campaign categories that are encouraging increased philanthropy. The areas now offered are: Commandant's Priorities; Scholarships; Museum Support; Global Scholars Support; Highty-Tighties Support.

As we engage in the university's current major campaign, amidst the rising costs of education, we will need to embark on a sustained and substantial expansion of donor support for the ELS program as well as sustained support through our Annual Campaign options. With regard to ELS scholarships, this will likely be a combination of endowed funds as well as pursuing grants from philanthropic organizations, and partnerships with industry.

The logical first step is to maintain the ability to offer an ELS to every incoming cadet. Long-term, we wish to seek the ability to provide scholarships for citizen-leader track cadets that are on par with ROTC scholarships.

Given the changing demographics of our alumni base, it will be important to focus on legacy gifts, as well as ongoing support to help ensure that all cadets are offered the opportunity for an ELS scholarship

Statistics would suggest that there is significant room for growth in annual giving, in particular from recently graduating classes whose rate of participation is around 15%. Given a substantially smaller alumni base in the coming years, it is imperative that steps are taken to more

fully engage and enable recent graduates to develop the habit of giving back to the Corps.

To promote this relationship with Corps alumni, it is increasingly important that we work with University Advancement to ensure that future alumni programs, in particular reunions, offer programs that are attractive to Corps graduates. There is a concern that with reduced number of Corps class sizes, that emphasis will be removed from that segment of alumni which has proven to be the most loyal to the university as a whole.

## **Facilities**

The original home of the Corps of Cadets is centered on the Upper Quad. Our desire is that it remain so and to enhance the area in honor of the Corps' history and for the benefit of all cadets, past, present, and future.

### **Residence Halls**

Construction has been completed on two, beautiful and functional new residence halls. With the goal of growing to 1,400 cadets, a third residence hall, housing up to 300 cadets, has been approved for construction and is expected to start in 2021.

### **Lane Hall**

In 2011, the Corps had not occupied Lane Hall for around three decades.

As part of the arrangements for new residence halls, Lane Hall has been added to the list of historic buildings on both the Commonwealth of Virginia and the National registry. Our intent is that Lane Hall will remain the centerpiece of the Upper Quad and will receive such updates as necessary to preserve the structure.

The Commandant's staff is currently occupying two of the five bays and will do so until such time as the new Corps Leadership & Military Science Building is complete. Long-term, the university's plan suggests that the entire building will come back to the Corps and initial concepts include heritage rooms for each company and maintain access for



equipment as instruments and music for the Highty-Tighties and a potential Regimental Arms Room.

With the recent approval to proceed to construction of the Corps Leadership & Military Science Building we are anticipating this effort to also begin in 2021.

The Corps Leadership & Military Science Building will include the Commandant's Staff, the ROTCs, classrooms, two Cyber-Lab classrooms, Museum, and Rice Center for Leader Development library.

### **War Memorial Gym**

There are two, on-campus facilities that support cadet student physical fitness programs: McComas Hall and War Memorial Gym. The War Memorial Gym is much closer, geographically, and has the unique large capacity gymnasiums that are used for large formation physical training of the Corps and ROTC programs.

The War Memorial Gym will be renovated starting in 2021 and we look forward to improved capabilities and capacity when it reopens in approximately a year and a half.

### **Obstacle Course**

The Obstacle Course is a key and essential training area for the Corps of Cadets and the ROTCs. The training, physical fitness, and team building that takes place here is vitally important and prepares cadets for similar courses they will experience that have an impact on their selection for commissioning.

A much-needed upgrade was carried out over the summer of 2014 and provides for improved equipment and long-term sustainability. We continue to make necessary investments in its long-term viability and to ensure that the training there remains relevant to our program.

## **Rappelling Tower**

The Rappelling Tower is another important asset for cadet training as well as for other constituencies on and off campus. A refresh of the tower to include power washing and painting was conducted in 2015. This will need to be factored into future budgets of the Corps to ensure that the facility is maintained to standards.

## **The Future**

Given the goal of growing the Corps to 1,400, adding a third residence hall, and constructing the Corps Leadership & Military Science Building, we are on the cusp of an exciting new era for the Corps and the university.

The ELS was originally established to offset the cost of room and board fees. Over time however, with the growth of the Corps and certainly with the new residence halls, the current ELS fails to cover all cadets and falls well short of covering room and board expenses. Thus, our first step in ELS / grant growth is to establish enough funding to cover all eligible cadets with an ELS scholarship and move toward a goal of 50% coverage for room fees.

- **Maintain a diverse and inclusive Corps between 1,350 and 1,400 cadets to ensure full occupancy of our new residence halls.**
- **Work with University Admissions to match or exceed the diversity goals set for the overall university undergraduate population.**
- **Ensure an environment that is nurturing and respectful to all allowing for each person being able to grow and perform at their maximum potential.**
- **Complete the Corps Leadership & Military Science Building**
- **Complete the third residence hall for the Corps, on the Upper Quad.**
- **Grow our scholarship endowments to provide an ELS scholarship to all eligible cadets at the current level. Long-**

- term, seek the ability to provide scholarships for citizen-leader track cadets that are on par with ROTC scholarships.**
- **Work with University Advancement to increase annual campaign participation rate to a minimum of 50% for classes graduating in the most recent 20 years.**
  - **Work with University Advancement to increase endowments supporting the Rice Center for Leader Development...adding an additional faculty member and increased programmatic support.**
  - **Work with University Advancement with an objective of continuing to host reunions that are attractive to the loyal alumni base of Corps graduates.**

## **Continued Development of the Corps' Curriculum and Experiential Programs**

Leadership is both a science and an art. Leadership can be studied and learned, but must also be practiced in order to fully comprehend and embrace its power and potential for good.

The leader development program of the Corps of Cadets is a four-year, progressive program based upon a positive, servant-leader model whose foundations are selflessness steeped in respect for others. Cadets are challenged and encouraged by practical application and frequent evaluation in positions of ever-increasing responsibility within a culturally diverse and mixed-gender leadership environment.

### **Servant-Leadership**

The Corps Leadership Program, in combination with academic requirements met through ROTC classes and in the various colleges of Virginia Tech, provides every cadet the opportunity to earn a minor in leadership studies awarded by the Major General W. Thomas Rice Center for Leader Development.

The Servant-Leader focus begins with developing active followership skills in our incoming freshmen. Elements include, self-development, self-understanding, college success strategies, and intro to leadership.

Sophomores are expected to assume the role of frontline leaders at the beginning of the White Phase of training. With the focus on small unit leadership, essential skills developed during this period include mentorship, one-on-one and one-on-few training and development of their subordinates. There is a continued focus on team building as a class as they are incorporated into new units also occurs during this period.

The focus for Juniors is on organizational leadership. During this year they are fully engaged in the day-to-day operations of the Corps and see to the functioning of their organizations as well as overseeing the growth and development of the sophomore class.

Seniors are at a transition point in their leader development with their focus at the strategic level. First, they are seeing to the strategic direction of their organizations and then setting specific goals that inform the actions of all other members of the Corps. They are also at the stage where they are preparing to transition to their post-Corps professions and thus should be putting the final touches on their own development.

### **Self-Management and Learning Skills**

The transition from high school to a collegiate pace of life and academic rigor is often a significant change for first-year students/cadets. The focus in the first year is developing personal productivity and learning skills that will sustain them for a lifetime.

The Corps' programs for achieving academic success have produced significant, positive results.

### **Critical Thinking Skills**

Critical thinking skills are an inherent capability great leaders must have. The ability to evaluate situations, understand desired outcomes, uncovering and challenging assumptions, and discerning required actions while being mindful of and mitigating unintended consequences is essential.

Acknowledging that leading change and managing change in a rapidly evolving environment will be the norm, the senior year introduces methods on how to accomplish both of these functions at the strategic level of an organization.

### **Physical Fitness**

Superior physical fitness is an inherent requirement for military service. More broadly, it is essential regardless of a chosen profession so that a person's full potential can be brought to bear. Consequently, we will continue to pursue means to achieve high physical fitness but in new ways that also reduce if not eliminate injuries in the near-term and prevent problems that will surface decades from now. Given the wide-

variety of food options that Virginia Tech offers rather than institutional meal planning, it becomes very important to educate cadets so they can make informed decisions regarding their nutritional choices.

### **Celebration of Corps History and Its Lessons for Leaders**

The Corps of Cadets is the history of this university. We have significant and growing holdings that can be of value to current and future generations. With the addition of a Curator, and the prospect of the new Corps Museum in the Corps Leadership & Military Science Building, we are in a promising position to leverage our collection as part of our leader development program.

As part of our strategic plan we will want to solidify this effort through endowments that will underwrite the position of Curator and help preserve and grow the collection.

### **Financial Management and Preparedness**

Today's students can graduate with significant amounts of debt and will pursue their professions in one of the most evolving economic environments in recent history. Thus, it is incumbent on the Corps to provide education and training on how to start their careers with a solid understanding of basic financial and investment skills.

In an age where workers deal with knowledge and information more than hard physical labor, the ability to communicate...in written as well as spoken word...becomes more critical than ever. The Corps will seek ways to encourage experience in formal writing and public speaking for all our members.

## **Career Choices and Management**

Corps members who are pursuing military careers will enter a structure where career planning is firmly institutionalized. This needs to be the case for our members of VPI Battalion...the Citizen-Leader track as well. Our goal will be to maximize internships for our Citizen-Leader track cadets desiring that opportunity between both the sophomore and junior years, and the junior and senior years. We will partner with business and institutional leaders, alumni and university Career Services to achieve this goal.

## **Development of Global Perspectives**

In order to achieve our vision of Global, Ethical Leaders, it is incumbent that we provide experiences that include exposures to other cultures and parts of the world. Some of this can be achieved by taking advantage of university programs and the international components of faculty, staff, students and offered programs/events.

Another key ingredient is the opportunity to study abroad. While continuing to avail ourselves of the existing programs, such as DoD's Global Officer program and summer training experiences, and the Olmstead Foundation scholarship, the Corps has embarked on a Global Scholars program that offers for-credit classes that include subsidized travel to sites around the world to study the leadership lessons surround historic events.

## **Honor and Ethics**

A deep understanding and commitment to honor and ethics underpin everything a leader does and everything a leader is.

We recognize that honor and ethics are learned concepts that become part of a person's character, over time, based on what they think, say, and do. Our program will take steps to further inculcate these values through an ongoing dialogue utilizing real-world case studies throughout all four years of the Corps of experience.

## **Regimental Band**

The Highty-Tighties are an integral part of the history and life of both the university and the Corps of Cadets. Just as the size of the Corps has waxed and waned over time, the Highty-Tighties today are sustaining a higher number of members but is not something that can be taken for granted.

Over the coming decade, the intent is to cement recent gains and maintain a highly qualified and properly resourced regimental band capable of performing with 144 members at football games along with various ensembles and groups on and off campus.

The Highty-Tighties will continue to be ambassadors of our institution and thus support for annual trips, scholarship/stipends, music, and equipment will continue to be reasons for strong financial support from the commonwealth and alumni.

## **Adding an Additional Faculty Member to the Rice Center for Leader Development**

With the growth of the Corps and the further development of our academic programs, it is important that the Rice Center have sufficient staffing to develop and execute our academic programs. To that end, we desire to seek an additional, new endowment to fund a faculty position and further support to the program.

In summary, the Corps is a structured military-style environment designed to develop the whole person: mentally, physically and morally while instilling in each cadet the essential attributes and competencies for successful leadership.

- **Work to help 90% of each year's graduates of the Citizen-Leader track to achieve career starts or graduate education starts within six months of graduation.**
- **Increase the number of participants in our Global Scholars Program as part of an independent study program for graduation credit.**



- **Work with University Advancement to establish endowments to support the Corps Museum to include curator salary and programmatic support.**
- **Maintain and financially support a musically well-balanced marching band capable of fielding 144 pieces at home football games and sufficient additional members to cover a variety of venues to include jazz band, string ensemble, and brass quintet.**
- **Enhance and deepen cadets' understanding and commitment to honor and ethics.**

## **Components of a Successful Leader Development Program**

### **Budget**

The Unique Military Activity (UMA) account was established by the Commonwealth to provide for functions, programs, and personnel that were needed for the military programs at both VMI and Virginia Tech. It was anticipated a roughly equal distribution of funds based on the number of cadets at each institution.

The reality is that our costs should be judged on their own merits and that budgets should reflect the real needs of the program the institution desires and deserves.

### **Uniform Costs**

As part of the long-term goals for full cost of education, we will continue to look for ways to acquire high-quality uniforms at economic rates.

### **People**

There is no question that it is people...their quality and their quantity, that can make or break a program, and it is people that make the most of whatever facilities or funding is provided.

The quality of the servant-leaders who have and continue to make up the Commandant's staff is superb. The ability to properly and appropriately grow, compensate, and develop the staff is key.

With regard to continued development of our current staff, we continue to make this a priority within available funding, and commensurate with university policies. Areas for growth include diversity and global competencies while continuing to enhance the inclusive nature of our program.

- **Work with University Budget, Programming, and Government Affairs staffs to ensure appropriate and sufficient funding for the Corps to meet the university's stated goals of growth to 1,400 cadets.**
- **Grow and cultivate a professional staff to carry out the mission of the Corps.**

## **In Closing – In the Spirit of Ut Prosim**

Any plan, but especially a strategic plan, acknowledges a starting point and offers an ending point. While these portend exciting changes, what is unwavering as we look to the future is the commitment to the mission of the Corps and the principles and values that have sustained it over a century and half.

Given the ever-changing circumstances and context that we operate in, a plan can and must also provide a degree of flexibility in how one arrives at the desired end-state...or in our case...another milestone in the history of the Corps. Thus, we will consider this plan to always be in a state of “beta”...affording the opportunity to take advantage of new circumstances and opportunities.

We also know that we are not an island unto ourselves. Our work takes place within the context of a larger university, supported by dedicated and energized alumni, and public and private sector organizations that appreciate what we do and the young men and women who participate and graduate from our program.

Looking ahead we are only limited by our vision, and our willingness to pursue all that is necessary to make that vision a reality.

Always, always, in the Spirit of Ut Prosim.

*That I May Serve.*