

NEWS & INFORMATION

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President's Inclusion and Diversity Executive Council posts 86 InclusiveVT initiatives

The 86 InclusiveVT initiatives proposed by senior leadership at Virginia Tech are now available for the university community to review.

InclusiveVT is the new university-wide effort to advance inclusion and diversity initiatives on campus. President Timothy Sands accepted the new model following unanimous recommendations by the Task Force on Inclusive Excellence.

As part of the new approach, the university's deans, vice presidents, and other senior leaders were asked to identify at least three initiatives designed to advance inclusion and diversity within their scope of responsibility. Leaders submitted the ideas to the President's Inclusion and Diversity Executive Council in late November and had two weeks to read through all of the submissions and make revisions.

Themes among the initiatives include pipeline and student access programs; mentoring opportunities for students, staff, and faculty; improved classroom environments; raising awareness of unconscious bias; and inclusive scholarship and pedagogy.

The initiatives were strongly influenced by the suggestions offered at the information forum held in September.

The executive council and inclusion coordinators will be reaching out to invite individuals and groups to participate in an Advisory Community Web. The web is in formation and will be comprised of individuals and groups both within and outside of the Virginia Tech community to bring unique perspectives to InclusiveVT. It will provide feedback to the executive council and university leadership on initiatives and other inclusion and diversity efforts.

Opportunities for additional input from students, staff, and faculty, similar to the recent "InclusiveVT: Let's Talk" forum held on Dec. 10, will be provided throughout the year.

For more information, visit www.inclusive.vt.edu.

Faculty and staff: Power down before winter break

Winter break begins Dec. 24 and ends Jan. 5. The Office of Energy and Sustainability asks faculty and staff who will be leaving their offices for an extended period of time to help conserve energy by powering down.

Follow these easy tips while preparing to leave campus for the holiday:

- Turn off all lights including those in break rooms and bathrooms. These are commonly forgotten.
- Unplug space heaters before leaving. These items are some of the most intensive energy users in an office space.
- Unplug all computers, monitors, printers, microfridges, and other electronics and appliances in offices and common spaces. These will all draw energy even when they are powered down.
- Make sure all faucets are turned off and not leaking. A single leaky faucet can waste almost a full gallon of water each

day.

-- Close and lock all windows to keep the furnaces from working extra hard when you're gone.

Last year, we found that many Virginia Tech employees were willing to take these steps to decrease their energy use over winter break. Will you?

For more information about the Office of Energy and Sustainability or other sustainability initiatives at Virginia Tech, visit www.facilities.vt.edu/sustainability or contact Emily Schosid at 540-231-7358.

Be informed before traveling overseas during winter break

University employees and students who are planning to travel overseas during winter break should check with the U.S. State Department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for possible travel alerts and warnings.

President Timothy D. Sands recently issued Presidential Policy Memorandum No. 288, which prohibits employees and students on university business from traveling to countries where the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued Warning Level 3 Travel Warnings.

In addition, under current Commonwealth of Virginia policy, anyone who travels to a country with a CDC Warning Level 3 will be required to follow Virginia Department of Health protocols upon their return to the Commonwealth.

For more information about Policy Memorandum No. 288, contact the Global Education Office at 540-231-4266 or 540-231-7220.

Two hotels, one festive holiday season

Decking the halls with traditions of the season, holiday delights at The Inn at Virginia Tech and Skelton Conference Center and The Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center feature the inn's Graham Central Station, Hotel Roanoke's near life-sized gingerbread house, Santa Claus, carolers, a New Year's Eve charity ball, and more.

Fashions for Evergreens, the annual competitive decorated-tree display, returns to both hotels this year, including a full-size Christmas tree inside a two-story gingerbread house at Hotel Roanoke. The inn displays its trademark gingerbread house which includes a castle made of sugar and the chugging of a toy train.

Here are details of holiday events.

The Inn at Virginia Tech and Skelton Conference Center
For reservations call 540-231-0120.

-- *Fashions for Evergreens*

A must-see display of 14 professionally designed trees, in the lobby through Jan. 1, present captivating decorating concepts and ideas, and anyone who stops by for a look can vote for a favorite.

-- *The inn's Graham Central Station*

The inn's culinary team brought back the traditional gingerbread house creating a village complete with an ice castle and a model toy train set to delight guests young and old

all season.

– *Christmas Eve and Christmas Day*

A four-course dinner priced at \$34 on Dec. 24 at Preston's runs from 5 to 9 p.m., while the Dec. 25 champagne brunch is served from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the ballroom; cost is \$26.95 for adults, \$13.95 for children.

– *New Year's Eve*

For those not inclined to stay up past midnight, a four-course dinner at Preston's on Dec. 31 runs from 5 to 9 p.m. The \$45 dinner includes entertainment and a champagne toast.

The Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center

– *Fashions for Evergreens*

Now in its fifth year raising money for United Way of Roanoke Valley, Fashions for Evergreens creates a festive atmosphere with more than 30 professionally designed trees on display. One of the most talked about displays is a tree that stands inside a two-story, completely furnished gingerbread house that includes upstairs bedrooms, a living room with fireplace, a full kitchen, a car, front porch swing, and even a backyard hot tub. The display runs through Jan. 1 and is free and open to the public.

– *Holiday luncheon buffets*

Throughout December, the hotel's Regency Room buffet, on weekdays and Saturdays, will include holiday extras such as mulled apple cider, drink specials, and a build-your-own-dessert bread pudding station. Cost is \$18 per person, \$12 for children between 6 and 12.

– *Christmas Eve and Christmas Day*

Dinner buffets are \$42 for adults and \$18 for children ages 3 to 12. For reservations call 540-985-5900.

– *New Year's Eve Charity Ball*

The hotel hosts the annual charity ball for the Preceptor Omicron Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi, an international women's friendship network, with proceeds going to local charities, including the Salvation Army, Habitat for Humanity, and programs that support pediatric AIDS patients and wheelchairs for children. Cost is \$185 per couple and includes a strolling buffet dinner for two, ballroom seating, live music, dancing, a champagne toast, and a balloon drop at midnight. Purchase tickets on the Web or call 540-342-5089.

– *Regency Room New Year's Eve*

Ring in the new year with an International New Year's Celebration in the Regency Room complete with dinner, dancing, and party favors. After dinner, head to the Pine Room Pub to count down the new year or take the elevator to one of the hotel's deluxe suites or guest rooms. Cost is \$75 per person. For more information, call 540-985-5900.

– *Win a two-night stay including dinner and breakfast for two*

Share your holiday memories with the hotel on social media by tagging the hotel, using #hrholidays14 or #hotelroanoke and you'll be automatically entered to win one of several prizes.

Have too much leave built up? Use it or lose it by Jan. 10

Employees who have more leave than is allowed to be carried over into the new year must use it before Jan. 10, 2015 or it will be forfeited.

On Jan. 10, 2015, the beginning of the new leave year, all annual leave in excess of the maximum carryover will be lost, and family sick, family and personal, personal sick, and community service leave balances will be replenished. The chart below details how much leave employees can carryover.

As a reminder, employees must use annual or other appropriate leave balances to cover the **three** winter closing days from December 29 - December 31. These days are **NOT** holidays -

employees must use leave to cover these days. More information about winter break is available online.

Under exceptional and extenuating circumstances, the Department of Human Resources may approve the carryover of extra annual leave. According to the State's *Annual Leave Policy 4.10*, the exception is warranted only when an employee is unable to use the additional hours before the end of the year due to the agency's demands over a substantial period of time. Requests for exceptions should be submitted by email to Claudia Cornwell at ccorwel@vt.edu or mailed to her attention at mail code 0318. If an exception is approved, the employee will *not* be eligible to be paid for excess balances upon separation from state service.

Additional information is available at www.hr.vt.edu/benefits/leave/manual/chptr01/.

For more information contact the Department of Human Resources at 540-231-9331.

Book drive to benefit local children literacy program

Here's a New Year resolution you can accomplish over winter break: Clean off your bookshelves and give back to the community. From Jan. 19-Feb. 2, VT Engage will collect books to support Smart Beginnings NRV Reading Hour, a local early childhood literacy and mentoring program.

Books will be collected in Squires Student Center atrium, the VT Engage office at 113 Burruss Hall, and at Bookholders on Main Street.

Each week, the Reading Hour matches volunteers with children to read one-on-one in childcare facilities. The initiative aims to increase children's enthusiasm for success in school and in life through reading experiences with caring adults.

Any donated books outside of the designated age range will be offered to other organizations that may be able to use the books, such as assisted living communities and other local nonprofits.

VT Engage's book drive is in conjunction with the Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebrations that will take place from Jan. 19-30. The Dean of Students office, Alpha Phi Alpha, and VT Engage will host a multitude of events honoring the theme, "What Happened to the Dream?" focusing on socio-economic inequality.

For more information regarding the book drive, contact VT Engage at 540-231-6964.

Study needs adults who have thought about quitting smoking

Adults are needed for a five-session confidential study involving decision-making tasks, purchasing tasks, nicotine use questionnaires, and tasks involving your future dreams and goals.

If you qualify, compensation ranges from \$20 to \$295, based on extent of participation.

Travel compensation to Roanoke may be provided.

This is not a treatment study.

For more information, call 540-315-0205 or email ARRC@vtc.vt.edu.

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