

NEWS & INFORMATION

Wednesday, Sept. 16, 2015 -- Volume 12, Number 8



Test of VT Alerts scheduled for Sept. 23 at all locations

Virginia Tech will conduct a full-scale test of its VT Alerts system Wednesday, September 23, on the Blacksburg campus as well as university facilities located in six regions across Virginia.

The test will occur between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. If you registered anyone other than yourself to receive these alert notifications via phone, text message, or email, please inform that person of the upcoming test.

If you do not receive a VT Phone Alerts message during the test, and you are subscribed to this service, visit www.alerts.vt.edu and click on the "Manage Your Account" link to verify that your record is correct. If the information is correct, but you did not receive the message, you are urged to contact 4Help at 540-231-HELP (4357).

Because VT Phone Alerts is intended to communicate urgent information to students, faculty, and staff on campus during an emergency, it is important that each subscriber carefully consider his points of contact. To review your account, visit www.alerts.vt.edu and click on the "Manage Your Account" link.

In the event of an actual emergency, individuals must be aware of their surroundings and take immediate responsibility for their personal safety and security. Initial VT Alerts messages will provide basic information on what to do; further instructions and updates will be provided by subsequent VT Alerts messages or first responders. In-depth information, when available, will be posted to the university homepage.

The university will use multiple information delivery methods, including outdoor sirens, to reach students, faculty, and staff because, at any given time, one form of communication might be better than another.

Virginia Tech recognized for hiring more veterans than any state agency

Virginia Tech has been awarded a statewide Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Governor's Award for hiring more veterans than any other state agency in the Commonwealth of Virginia. There are 65 state agencies, including 39 colleges and universities.

During the 2014-15 fiscal year, the university hired 104 veterans in a variety of full and part-time staff, professional, teaching, research, and wage positions in various locations across the state.

"There's no question that veterans have many of the skills we are looking for in our employees at Virginia Tech," said Hal Irvin, associate vice president of Human Resources. "In addition to being incredibly talented in a variety of areas, they are loyal, committed, and mission focused."

As the military begins to downsize, the number of service members leaving the military is increasing. Virginia Tech has expanded its efforts to help veterans find employment at the university. In addition to attending dozens of job fairs across

the country and spending time working with unemployed veterans locally, the university's human resources professionals work closely with the Virginia Employment Commission offices in Radford, Roanoke, and Wytheville to identify veterans seeking post service employment opportunities.

The hiring initiative is one of many initiatives Virginia Tech has implemented to focus on the needs of veterans.

-- Last month, employees came together to form the university's first veterans caucus to network and advocate for student and employee veterans.

-- In April 2015, the U.S. Small Business Administration selected Virginia Tech to host a one-day Boots to Business entrepreneurial workshop for past and present service members and their dependents.

-- In 2013, Virginia Tech became the first public university in the state to become certified as a Virginia Values Veterans employer.

-- In 2010, students formed the university's first student veterans organization.

-- In 2010, the Department of Human Resources established the Vet-to-Vet program to assist veterans looking for job opportunities at Virginia Tech.

-- The university has consistently been recognized as a Military Friendly School.

Register for a Safe Zone training

The Safe Zone program exists to educate participants on topics related to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) communities. Safe Zones are members of the program who are committed to providing a more inclusive and accepting environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer communities and their allies.

To be Safe Zone certified, participants must first complete Safe Zone 101 and one additional session. The 2015-16 sessions will include: Transgender 101; Race, Gender, & Sexuality; Religion and Spirituality; LGBTQ+ Mental Health; Dating & Relationships; New River Valley Resources; Non-monosexualities; Legal & Compliance; and Global LGBTQ+ Issues.

Registration is now open on Intercultural Engagement Center's GobblerConnect page, with sessions being added on a rolling basis. Links to register and the Safe Zone schedule can be found at www.mps.vt.edu/lgbtq/safezone/index.html.

If you are an individual with a disability and desire an accommodation, please contact Natasha Cox at 540-231-8584 or nacox@vt.edu during regular business hours at least 10 business days prior to the event.

For more information, contact Natasha Cox at 540-231-8584.

Students, employees invited to discuss inclusion issues at lunch event

Virginia Tech students and employees are invited to participate in an informal discussion about "How we are seen" during a brown-bag lunch on September 18 in the multipurpose

room of Newman Library, from 12 to 1 p.m.

Drinks and dessert are provided. Participants should bring their lunch.

The "Conversations Salon" event is held on the eighteenth of every month during the academic year, or on the first work day following the eighteenth when it occurs on a weekend or university holiday.

The goal of the informal dialog session is to help create understanding and community through better conversations. Conversation Salons are hosted by the Diversity Development Institute, which is part of University Professional and Organizational Development in the Department of Human Resources.

Participants are also encouraged to submit topic ideas for the 2015-16 events by contacting Alicia Cohen at 540-231-1822.

For more information contact University Professional and Organizational Development at 540-231-6727.

Employees celebrate diversity with involvement in caucuses

There are many ways for Virginia Tech employees to get involved in the university community and make sure their voices are heard.

These groups provide a supportive network for employees, promote recruitment and retention, sponsor educational and social events, and advocate for their communities.

In an effort to maintain an inclusive and diverse community, employees are encouraged to get involved in any of the following groups:

- American Indian Faculty and Staff Caucus
- Asian/Asian American Faculty and Staff Caucus
- Black Faculty and Staff Caucus
- Disability Alliance and Caucus
- Hispanic and Latino Faculty Staff Caucus
- International Faculty Staff Caucus
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Caucus
- Veterans Caucus

Employees who are interested in joining any of the caucus listed above are encouraged to fill out the online form at www.virginiatech.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4HjLOUFRNLK4cPr

Want to quit smoking?

Want to quit smoking? Let us help. Adults needed for experimental treatment study. If you qualify, up to \$446 in compensation and treatment will be provided at no cost.

For more information, email the Addiction Recovery Research Center at ARRC@vtc.vt.edu or call 540-315-0205.

Join online recovery support community

To help us find out, join our online recovery support community established by the International Quit & Recovery Registry.

This is a confidential study involving social media to advance our understanding of addiction. This study involves 16 weeks of participation for people who are in recovery from an addiction and compensation is up to \$280 based on extent of participation. Enroll at quitandrecovery.org.

For more information, contact Jessica Washington at 540-526-2112.

Interim Title IX officials named

Senior Associate Vice President for Student Affairs Frank Shushok (540-231-8064) has been named interim Title IX coordinator. Andrew Tevington (540-231-2010), director of compliance in the Department of Human Resources has been named interim deputy Title IX coordinator.

More information about Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), including a list of student and employee resources, is available at www.hr.vt.edu/oea/title_ix/index.html.

Town-Gown meetings strengthen union between university, town officials

From bus service, to housing to fraternities and sororities, town-gown meetings shine the light on issues involving Virginia Tech students, the university, and relations with the Town of Blacksburg and surrounding communities.

Six times a year, the town-gown team holds an open forum to take on topics that generate conversation across campus and across Blacksburg.

Ross and Senior Associate Vice President for Student Affairs Frank Shushok co-chair the meetings.

"The interaction between students, town officials, community members and Virginia Tech administrators is something to be celebrated," said Shushok. "It's what makes this group quite special."

Members of the Virginia Tech Student Life Council are active participants in the process. Council chair Taylor Liverman describes the meetings as educational, thought-provoking and important to maintaining good relations.

This year's schedule of meetings includes a wide range of topics, with a focus on university enrollment growth. All Town-Gown meetings are held at 6 p.m. in the Great Room of Ambler Johnston Hall on the Virginia Tech campus. Students, faculty, staff and town residents are invited to attend.

-- Thursday, Sept. 17: Is there a market for new downtown housing? Matt Hanratty, housing and neighborhood services manager for the town of Blacksburg will lead a discussion on the recently released Downtown Housing Study.

-- Thursday, Oct. 15: What is community well-being and why does it matter? Patty Perillo, vice president for student affairs, will lead a discussion on the recently released results of the Gallup/Virginia Tech Well-being Study and what it might reveal about the importance of town-gown efforts.

-- Thursday, Dec. 3: What challenges face Virginia Tech as enrollment grows? Ken Smith, vice provost for resource management and institutional effectiveness, will lead a discussion about Virginia Tech's plans to grow enrollment and the potential implications for both the town and the university.

-- Thursday, Feb. 18, 2016: What is the proposed Northwest Precinct at Virginia Tech? Jason Soileau, assistant vice president for university planning, will introduce participants to the proposed Northwest Precinct with plans for a new business school, six residential colleges, and a university commons building.

-- Thursday, March 17, 2016: What do you want to ask the president, provost, or mayor about town-gown relations? President Timothy D. Sands, Provost Thanassis Rikakis, and Mayor Ron Rordam will be on hand to facilitate a conversation about town-gown issues, concerns, dreams, and possibilities

-- Thursday, April 21, 2016: Why is art and culture important to Virginia Tech and the Town of Blacksburg? Engage a panel discussion with those thinking about the past, present, and future of arts and culture in Blacksburg.

Virginia Tech News is published weekly during fall and spring semester and bimonthly during the summer sessions, by the Department of Human Resources and the Office of University Relations as a service to university employees who do not have computer access on campus. For more information, or to discuss submission of items call 540-231-7643.