

President Tim Sands: New decade offers great opportunity for Virginia Tech

Welcome to a new semester and a new decade!

I hope you enjoyed the winter break and are ready for an eventful year. Our campuses continue to grow and evolve. It will be exciting to watch the Creativity and Innovation District continue to take shape in Blacksburg. The Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at VTC will open its new building in Roanoke, and the first phase of its research partnership with Children’s National Medical Center will launch in Washington, D.C.

Luiz DaSilva will join us as executive director of the Commonwealth Cyber Initiative, leading a network of higher education and industry experts to build an ecosystem of cyber-related research, education, and engagement. In Alexandria, we expect to announce an inaugural leader for the innovation campus and welcome the first class of students in our new masters of engineering degree in computer science. Virginia Tech is poised to make a difference in 2020, in the lives of our students, in our communities of discovery, across the commonwealth, and beyond.

We will strengthen our engagement with partners and the regions where they are located, both urban and rural. This is the same design principle behind our Cooperative Extension offices in every county and city and our Agricultural Research and Extension Centers strategically located in 11 communities across the commonwealth.

As we grow our research and academic facilities in Blacksburg, explore health science and technology in Roanoke, focus on national security in Arlington, advance automotive performance in southern Virginia, and develop technology and innovation partnerships in the greater Washington, D.C., area, it is important to remember that we are one university, one interconnected network of campuses, with a mission to serve our communities, the commonwealth, the nation, and the world.

In 2020, we need to ensure that our geographic distribution is an asset, with every student, staff member, faculty member, and partner experiencing Virginia Tech as one university, regardless of their location. Connecting our communities of discovery can become a signature strength in attracting and retaining talent and strategic partners.

We must also ensure that every member of our community receives the same university experience

regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, and veteran status. Inclusion must be part of our university’s identity as our institutional and individual commitment to *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve).

This year, each one of us will have an opportunity to make a difference in some way. I encourage our alumni and friends to be part of Virginia Tech’s mission in 2020. We are looking for mentors, internships, and volunteers as well as donors. Boundless Impact: The Campaign for Virginia Tech seeks to engage 100,000 alumni and raise \$1.5 billion to advance excellence across our programs and strategic priorities, and to make a difference in the university’s future for generations to come.

Welcome to a new year and a great new decade for Virginia Tech. Go Hokies!

A message from President Tim Sands in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day To the Virginia Tech community,

Today we honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and begin a celebration week in his honor called “The Fierce Urgency of Now.” The title is a quote from Dr. King’s iconic speech at the 1963 March on Washington. He repeated the phrase at the conclusion of his 1967 speech about the war in Vietnam, and while his message was focused on the challenges of that day, his words continue to ring true for us.

“We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today,” Dr. King said. “We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history there is such a thing as being too late. Procrastination is still the thief of time.”

The pace of change in higher education is accelerating rapidly, and at Virginia Tech it often feels like “tomorrow is today.” It has never been more important for us to advance InclusiveVT as our institutional and individual commitment to *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve) in the spirit of community, diversity, and excellence.

I want to thank the MLK Committee for developing this year’s celebration. Information about our events is available through our Cultural and Community Centers at ccc.vt.edu. I urge each of you to take time this week to participate and honor Dr. King’s legacy.

Invitation to voluntarily self-identify disability, ethnicity/race, and veteran status

Virginia Tech is subject to certain nondiscrimination and affirmative action recordkeeping and reporting requirements. As such, the university is required to invite employees to voluntarily self-identify demographic information, including whether or not they have a disability, race and ethnicity, and veteran status.

Employees' voluntarily self-identifying this demographic information helps the university fulfill our strategic priority to Elevate the *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve) Difference and reinforces our core value of Diverse and Inclusive Communities.

To update demographic information, employees can log into Hokie Spa (<https://hokiespa.vt.edu>) and select the Hokie Team tab then select the following links:

- Update disability information>Update Voluntary Self-Identification of Disability Information
- Update ethnicity/race>Update Ethnicity and Race
- Update veterans status> Veterans Classification

Providing this demographic information is **voluntary**; however, we encourage employees to review their information and update it if needed. Any demographic information reported in university systems will be kept completely **confidential** and may only be used in accordance with the provisions of applicable federal laws, executive orders, and regulations, including those that require the demographic information to be summarized and reported to the federal government for civil rights enforcement purposes.

We appreciate our employees' help toward ensuring Virginia Tech fulfills its commitment to *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve).

Virginia Tech does not discriminate against employees, students, or applicants on the basis of age, color, disability, sex (including pregnancy), gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status, or otherwise discriminate against employees or applicants who inquire about, discuss, or disclose their compensation or the compensation of other employees or applicants, or on any other basis protected by law.

Discrimination or harassment on any of these bases is prohibited by Policy 1025, "Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy."

If you have questions, please contact the Office for Equity and Accessibility at equityandaccessibility@vt.edu or 540-231-2010.

Electronic W2 and/or 1042S for 2019 Available NOW!

The 2019 electronic W-2 and/or 1042S form is now available and can be accessed by using the Hokie SPA link available under the Faculty & Staff Resources page available from the Virginia Tech homepage.

Directions to access the electronic form: Select Hokie Team - Tax Forms - W-2 Year End Earnings Statement and click SUBMIT, select the Year (the most recent year will default) and click display.

Retrieval of the electronic version acknowledges consent to electronic receipt and a paper version will not be provided. The printed electronic form is an IRS acceptable version of the Form W-2 and 1042S. Access to this information is secured with your PID and password with dual authentication requiring entry of the PID and password a second time to access the Printable W-2 which displays all required information.

A link to the Notice to Employee for an explanation of the boxes and codes on the W-2 and the 1042S Explanation of Codes can be accessed from the online forms or in the forms section of the Payroll webpage from the Controller's site at www.controller.vt.edu/resources/payroll.html.

Please note - only some individuals in a non-resident tax status for 2019 will receive a 1042S.

Hokie Wellness offering program on building resiliency

Hokie Wellness offers a resiliency program on Tuesday, Feb. 4, from 12-1:30 p.m., at the North End Center in room 2410.

"Resiliency in the Workplace: Pressing Pause and Reacting Rationally" will help participants learn about common ineffective thought patterns and how to "press pause," consider patterns of thought, and react to workplace stressors effectively.

Registration is required at https://virginiatech.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b3Y0gdje7U2OuWh. For more information, email hokiewellness@vt.edu or call 540-231-8878.