



**VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
ACADEMIC AND HEALTH AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**September 14, 2023
VCU School of Business
301 W. Main Street – Third Floor – Room B3187
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA**

MINUTES

DRAFT

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Dr. Tonya Parris-Wilkins, *Chair*
Dr. Dale Jones, *Vice Chair*
Ms. Rooz Dadabhoy
Mr. Steve DeLuca
Ambassador Carmen Lomellin
Mr. Keith Parker
Dr. Clifton Peay
Mr. P2 Sandhu

OTHERS PRESENT

Dr. Michael Rao, *President*
Dr. Fotis Sotiropoulos, *Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs*
Dr. Marlon Levy, *Interim Senior Vice President for Health Sciences and CEO of the VCUHS*
Dr. Aaron Hart, *Vice President for Student Affairs*
Dr. Hernan Bucheli, *Interim Vice President for Strategic Enrollment Management and Student Success*
Dr. Srirama Rao, *Vice President for Research and Innovation*
Ms. Jamie Stillman, *Director of Strategic Communications, Office of the Provost*
Members of the VCU Board of Visitors
Presidential Cabinet of VCU
VCU students, faculty and staff
Members of the media

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Tonya Parris-Wilkins, Chair of the Academic and Health Affairs Committee, called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. The public was able to view the open session of the meeting via livestream at <https://mssvideo.vcu.edu/BOV>.

ACTION ITEMS

Dr. Parris-Wilkins began by asking the committee to consider approving two items that were provided in advance for review: the May 11, 2023 committee meeting minutes and the revised charter of the Academic and Health Affairs Committee of the Board of Visitors. On a motion duly made and seconded, each of the two items were approved. The meeting minutes are posted at <https://bov.vcu.edu/meetings/minutes/>. A copy of the revised charter is attached hereto as *Attachment A* and is made a part hereof.

REPORTS

Dr. Fotis Sotiropoulos, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, provided updates on issues pertaining to the university's progress in enrollment, student success and engagement, and academic programs. Highlights included: first-year student enrollment is trending higher than last year; the One VCU Academic Repositioning Task Force, which consists of faculty, staff and deans from across the university, are working on recommendations for VCU's academic unit structure that will set the stage for the creation of new and engaging degree programs in emerging fields and create new career pathways for preparing students to succeed in a rapidly-changing world; and a continued increase in research funding last year across every single VCU academic unit.

Dr. Marlon Levy, interim senior vice president for health sciences and CEO, VCU Health, provided updates for each of the health sciences schools as well as the first report on the new School of Population Health. The School is in the process of developing an administrative structure and will soon begin onboarding staff in key roles. A copy of the presentation slides is attached hereto as *Attachment B* and is made a part hereof.

Dr. Srirama Rao, vice president for research and innovation, provided a brief update followed by a panel of senior faculty who gave a high-level overview of their research and then engaged in discussion with the members of the committee. The panelists included **Dr. Nibir Dhar** who discussed the Convergence Lab Initiative and its strategy for advanced research and development, education, workforce and growth, funded with \$27M over three years by the Department of Defense; **Dr. Kim McKnight** who discussed the RTR Teacher Residency Program, which has been awarded over \$35 million over the last 13 years to recruit, train, support, and retain teachers and school leaders in the Commonwealth; **Dr. Gerry Moeller** who discussed the recent funding of the Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) by the NIH for the next 7 years and the national recognition that comes with a CTSA grant; **Dr. Amy Salisbury** who discussed the School of Nursing's role in the NIH RECOVER Initiative, which is patient-centered and community-based and is the largest multi-site study in the U.S. focused on understanding, predicting, and treating post-acute sequelae from SARS-COV-2 infection (PASC) in people of all ages; and **Dr. Vanessa Sheppard** who highlighted the impact of her research program related to health inequities in Virginia. A copy of the presentation slides is attached hereto as *Attachment C* and is made a part hereof.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Dr. Parris-Wilkins adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.



Proposed revisions to Academic and Health Affairs Committee Charter and Meeting Planner

Background: As a public institution in the Commonwealth of Virginia, many actions affecting academic programs and the academic organizational structure require State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) approval. SCHEV requires Board of Visitors approval for only a small number of these actions. However, VCU has developed over the years multiple internal approval steps, including BOV approval, which SCHEV does not require for most SCHEV actions. These added steps have led to VCU being out of compliance with some of SCHEV's submission deadlines, requiring additional revisions by faculty and delays to implementation which can impact student success and revenue generation.

Proposed revision: Remove the requirement for the Board of Visitors, by recommendation of the Academic and Health Affairs Committee, to approve SCHEV proposals for which the state does not require BOV approval. Only items for which SCHEV requires institutional BOV approval, and items that university leadership deems necessary for BOV review, will be brought to the AHAC. The Office of the Provost will provide AHAC/BOV with a list of all other SCHEV actions as an information item at its meetings.

Impact of revision: VCU will be able to comply with SCHEV submission deadlines and will be quicker to market with academic program actions and organizational changes requiring SCHEV approval that do not require BOV approval.

Additional steps: The revision of the AHAC Charter and Meeting Planner is part of a comprehensive and streamlined process that includes:

- Implementing SCHEV proposal cohorts with start and end dates tied to SCHEV's published guidelines.
- Restructuring university-level curriculum committees to ensure thorough vetting of certificate and degree program proposals for shared governance.
- Amending University Council bylaws to eliminate review/approval of curriculum/SCHEV proposals, which is duplicative of the work managed under the purview of the faculty by the undergraduate and graduate curriculum committees.

Revisions

Academic and Health Affairs Committee Charter: [Section IV, Part B \(lines 74-83\)](#)

Academic and Health Affairs Committee Meeting Planner: [Section IV, Part B \(page 1\)](#)

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS

ACADEMIC AND HEALTH AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CHARTER

I. PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the Academic and Health Affairs Committee is to provide oversight and make recommendations to the Board on all policies and plans regarding strategic enrollment management; academic quality; student matters; faculty matters; athletics; inclusive excellence and research consistent with the stated goals and objectives of the University and with its academic health center, including its affiliation with the Virginia Commonwealth University Health System Authority. Areas of responsibility include:

- Strategic enrollment management
 - Admissions
 - Retention
- Academic quality
 - Quality
 - Degrees, programs and structure
 - Trends
 - Strategic priorities
 - Academic program review
 - Online education
 - SACS/accreditation
- Student matters
 - Academic Success
 - Rights and Responsibilities
 - Concerns
 - Safety, satisfaction and engagement
- Faculty matters
 - Employment, rights and responsibilities, and professional development
 - Salaries
 - Recruitment and retention
 - Benchmarks and best practices
- Athletics
 - Academic success of student athletes and compliance with NCAA guidelines
- Research
- Inclusive Excellence
- Coordination of academic activities of health sciences schools and affiliation with the VCU Health System Authority

In addition, the Academic and Health Affairs Committee provides oversight and counsel toward the achievement of the mission, vision and goals of the Virginia Commonwealth University strategic plan.

The function of the Academic and Health Affairs Committee is primarily oversight. University management, under the auspices of the President, the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences and CEO of the VCU Health System, is responsible for the development, implementation, and measurement of success regarding these areas of responsibility, as well as the policies and procedures for maintaining these programs and activities.

48

49 II. COMPOSITION AND INDEPENDENCE

50 The Academic and Health Affairs Committee will be comprised of three or more Visitors. Each member
51 must be free from any financial, family or other material personal relationship that, in the opinion of the
52 Board or Academic and Health Affairs Committee members, would impair their independence from
53 management and the University.
54

55 III. MEETINGS

56 The Academic and Health Affairs Committee will meet at least four times annually. Additional meetings may
57 occur more frequently as circumstances warrant. The Committee chair should communicate with the Provost
58 and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences and CEO
59 of the VCU Health System prior to each Committee meeting to finalize the meeting agenda and review the
60 matters to be discussed.
61

62 IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

63 In performing its oversight responsibilities, the Academic and Health Affairs Committee shall:

64 A. General

- 65 1. Adopt a formal written charter that specifies the Committee's scope of responsibility. The
66 charter should be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.
67 2. Maintain minutes of open session portions of meetings.
68 3. Report Committee actions to the Board of Visitors with such recommendations as the
69 Committee may deem appropriate.
70 4. Consistent with state law, the Committee may communicate in closed session (with or
71 without members of senior management present) with general counsel and/or the executive
72 director of assurance services present to discuss matters that the Committee or any of these
73 groups believe should be discussed privately.

74 B. Academic degrees, ~~programs~~ and structure

- 75 1. Review and approve ~~all proposed new domestic and international undergraduate, graduate,~~
76 ~~and professional educational programs, research programs and proposed new degrees,~~
77 ~~academic program proposals when required by the State Council of Higher Education for~~
78 ~~Virginia (SCHEV) policy,~~ and monitor existing programs.
79 2. Review and approve proposals for the organization of the University's academic health
80 center, including the affiliation between VCU and the Virginia Commonwealth University
81 Health System Authority.
82 3. Review ~~and approve~~ proposals for the organization of the academic structure of the
83 University ~~when required by SCHEV policy.~~

84 C. Coordination of academic activities of health sciences schools and affiliation with the VCU 85 Health System Authority

- 86 1. Receive reports on the relationship and affiliation between the University and the Virginia
87 Commonwealth University Health System Authority and other institutions, organizations,
88 laboratories, and clinics involved in the University's academic health center, including
89 reviewing program coordination between the Virginia Commonwealth University Health
90 System Authority and academic and research programs.
91

92 D. Academic research activities

- 93 1. Review and approve research policies deemed to require Board of Visitor action.
- 94 2. Receive reports on research advances of faculty, interdisciplinary groups, and VCU institutes
- 95 and centers.
- 96 3. Receive reports on the relationship of research activities to local, regional, national, and
- 97 international economic development.
- 98 4. Report annually on the state of the VCU research enterprise including the total research
- 99 awards, expenditures, trends, and outlook.

100 E. Faculty and staff employment, rights and responsibilities, and professional development

- 101 1. Review and approve policies governing the compensation, tenure, promotion, recruitment,
- 102 retention, rights and responsibilities, and development of the faculty.
- 103 2. Review and approve policies and programs on equal employment opportunity and affirmative
- 104 action.
- 105 3. Afford an opportunity for direct communication between Board members and members of the
- 106 faculty and staff.

107 F. Admissions and retention

- 108 1. Review and approve policies governing the admission and retention of undergraduate,
- 109 graduate and professional students to all divisions of the University.

110 G. Accreditation

- 111 1. Review and approve policies and reports related to departmental, school, and institutional
- 112 accreditation.

113 H. Academic Success of Students

- 114 1. Review nominations and make the final selection of the recipient(s) of the Board of Visitors
- 115 Award at a regularly scheduled meeting in the spring of each year.
- 116 2. Review topical areas of interest related to the student experience.
- 117 3. Review major fall and spring activities.
- 118 4. Review and monitor student academic success.

119 I. Academic Success of Student Athletes

- 120 1. Review and oversee matters relating to the intercollegiate athletic program.

121 J. Student Rights and Responsibilities

- 122 1. Review matters (including approving policies) relating to student rights, responsibilities,
- 123 conduct, concerns and discipline, including matters relating to the VCU Honor System, and
- 124 Student Code of Conduct.
- 125 2. Review and oversee matters relating to student government, and appropriate student
- 126 participation in University governance.
- 127 3. Review and oversee matters relating to student organizations and extracurricular activities.
- 128

129 K. Student Services

- 130 1. Review and oversee matters relating to financial aid, housing services, counseling, student
- 131 health, safety and other student services.
- 132 2. Review and approve policies relating to student records.
- 133 3. Review report on campus safety that provides awareness of federal reporting requirement,
- 134 general overview of VCU safety-related statistics, and ongoing efforts to improve safety.

135 L. Student Communications

- 136 1. Afford an opportunity for direct communication between Board members and students.
- 137 M. International Partnerships and Collaborations
- 138 1. Review and approve international partnerships

Virginia Commonwealth University Board of Visitors

Academic and Health Affairs Committee Meeting Planner

A=Annually; Q=Quarterly; AN=As Necessary	Frequency			Planned Timing			
Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 based on Fiscal Year (July – June)	A	Q	AN	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
				Sep	Dec	Feb	May
A. General							
1. Review, update, and approve Academic and Health Affairs Committee charter	X			X			
2a. Approve minutes of previous meeting		X		X	X	X	X
2b. Maintain minutes of meetings		X		X	X	X	X
3. Authorize investigations into any matters within the Committee's scope of responsibilities			X				
4. Report Committee actions to the Board of Visitors with recommendations deemed appropriate		X		X	X	X	X
5. Communicate in executive session, with general counsel		X		X	X	X	X
6. Review and approve Academic and Health Affairs Committee meeting planner for the upcoming year	X			X			
7. Monitor student academic success.		X		X	X	X	X
B. Academic degrees, programs and structure							
1. Review and approve all proposed new domestic and international undergraduate, graduate, and professional educational programs, research programs and proposed new degrees , academic program proposals when required by the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) policy, and monitor existing programs.			X				
2. Review and approve proposals for the organization of the University's academic health center, including the affiliation between VCU and the Virginia Commonwealth University Health System Authority.			X				
3. Review and approve proposals for the organization of the academic structure of the University when required by SCHEV policy .			X				
C. Coordination of academic activities of health sciences schools and affiliation with the VCU Health System Authority							
1. Receive reports on the relationship and affiliation between the University and the Virginia Commonwealth University Health System Authority and other institutions, organizations, laboratories, and clinics involved in the University's academic health center,			X				

A=Annually; Q=Quarterly; AN=As Necessary	Frequency			Planned Timing			
Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 based on Fiscal Year (July – June)	A	Q	AN	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
				Sep	Dec	Feb	May
including reviewing program coordination between the Virginia Commonwealth University Health System Authority and academic and research programs.							
D. Academic research activities							
1. Review and approve research policies deemed to require Board of Visitor action.			X				
2. Receive reports on research advances of faculty, interdisciplinary groups, and VCU institutes and centers.			X				
3. Receive reports on the relationship of research activities to local, regional, national and international economic development.			X				
4. Report annually on the state of the VCU research enterprise including the total research awards, expenditures, trends, and outlook.	X				-		X
E. Faculty and staff employment, rights and responsibilities, and professional development							
1. Review and approve policies governing the compensation, tenure, promotion, recruitment, retention, rights and responsibilities, and development of the faculty.			X				
2. Review and approve policies and programs on equal employment opportunity and affirmative action.			X				
3. Afford an opportunity for direct communication between Board members and members of the faculty.			X				
4. Afford an opportunity for direct communication between Board members and members of the staff.			X				
F. Admissions and retention							
1. Review and approve policies governing the admission and retention of undergraduate, graduate and professional students to all divisions of the University.			X				
G. Accreditation							
1. Review and approve policies and reports related to departmental, school, and institutional accreditation.			X				
H. Academic Success of Students							
1. Review nominations and make the final selection of the recipient(s) of the Board of Visitors Award at a regularly scheduled meeting in the spring of each year.	X					X	
2. Review topical areas of interest related to the student experience and overall student engagement.		X		X	X	X	X
3. Review major fall and spring activities.	X				X		X
4. Review and monitor student academic success.			X				

A=Annually; Q=Quarterly; AN=As Necessary	Frequency			Planned Timing			
Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 based on Fiscal Year (July – June)	A	Q	AN	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
				Sep	Dec	Feb	May
I. Academic Success of Student Athletes							
1. Review and oversee matters relating to the intercollegiate athletic program.	X		X				
J. Student Rights and Responsibilities							
1. Review matters (including approving policies) relating to student rights, responsibilities, conduct, concerns and discipline, including matters relating to the VCU Honor System.			X				
2. Review and oversee matters relating to student government, and appropriate student participation in University governance.			X				
3. Review and oversee matters relating to student organizations and extracurricular activities.			X				
K. Student Services							
1. Review and oversee matters relating to financial aid, housing services, counseling, student health, and other student services			X				
2. Review and approve policies relating to student records.			X				
3. Review report on campus safety that provides awareness of federal reporting requirement, general overview of VCU safety-related statistics, and ongoing efforts to improve safety.	X					X	
L. Student Communications							
1. Afford an opportunity for direct communication between Board members and students.			X				
M. International Partnerships and Collaboration							
1. Review and approve international partnerships			X				

Revised: 8/5/2013 12:53 PM
 Approved by BOV: Sept. 19. 2013
 Revised: 03/11/2019
 Approved by BOV: 03/22/2019
 Approved by BOV: 09/18/2020
 Approved by BOV: 09/16/2021
 Revised: 09/01/2023
 Approved by BOV: (TBD)

VCU Health Sciences Senior Vice President Update

Marlon Levy, M.D., MBA

Interim Senior Vice President, VCU Health Sciences

Interim CEO, VCU Health System

September 15, 2023

College of Health Professions

Enrollment increased **33%**
(since 2019)

Graduation job placement >
90% within one year of
graduation

Overall diversity **improving**
among faculty and students

Research dollars increased
29%

- **\$6.7M** in FY23 (highest to date)

Operating within budget

Allocated funds for staff
professional development
(new)

Launched **VCU Bridge**
program

- Positively impacts health care workforce shortage in Southwest Virginia
- Increasing enrollment of community college students in CHP bachelor programs
- Launch in Aug. two students participating

School of Dentistry

Dr. Faber awarded **four grants** totaling more than **\$6.3M**

SOD faculty, staff and students provided care to **458 residents** of SWVA at the annual Wise MOM event

- Care valued at more than **\$470K**

90% of Richmond Magazine's Top Dentist winners are either faculty or alumni of the school

Associate dean of graduate studies named

Chair of Dept. of Pediatric Dentistry named

Launched new SOD website

School of Medicine

Mock LCME visit was **favorable**

Areas to focus:

1. Environment of learning
2. Parent university financial support
3. Creation of new policy and management of previous educational policy

Reimagining basic science structure

Two clinical departments accomplished **top scores** across the state in USNWR

- Orthopedics
- ENT

Growth of research expenditures by **16%**

Annual Team Roadmaps (new tool) deployed to align SOM department and health system leadership

New leadership structure implemented to align and unite the faculty strategy and practice plan

School of Nursing

\$11M in new external research funding (all-time high for SON)

\$16.5M in new gifts and pledges (all-time high for SON)

Curriculum redesign approved to align with new education standards for nursing

\$2.4M funding for a multisite project: *A randomized controlled trial to improve symptom self-management in adolescents and young adults with cancer*

Continuation of the HRSA Nursing Faculty Loan Program grant

SON Mobile Health and Wellness Program launched in partnership with the Capital Area Health Network

- Provides wellness services to Petersburg, South Richmond, Rappahannock, and the South Hill area

School of Pharmacy

Team of SOP **students won** the 2023 American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy Mock Trial Competition

Faculty members getting **national** recognition

Faculty members receiving **university recognition**

Inaugural SOP Convocation to recognize faculty and staff

\$3M in Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation funding to develop affordable, noninvasive treatment for RDS in newborns

Two **new SOP start-ups**:

- VivaMed Management Inc.
- AmpedRNA Biosciences

School of Population Health

First Update as a New School

Coordinator hired to facilitate accreditation process and support the completion of the SCHEV application

VCU's application considered by SCHEV to be used as a template for other VA universities making organizational changes

July 1, 2023 SOPH became it's own academic and administrative entity

Administrative structure underway:

- Interim associate deans
- Financial director

Next step is to on board staff for key roles

Welcomed **largest** MPH cohort ever with 25 new students

25% increase YOY

More than **\$8M in funding** with multiple awards

Attachment C



VCU

Senior Faculty Panel

Board of Visitors

Academic and Health Affairs Committee

September 14, 2023



VCU

School of Nursing

Leading a 3-site hub examining pediatric Long COVID through NIH RECOVER Initiative



RECOVER

Researching COVID to Enhance Recovery

An Initiative Funded by the National Institutes of Health

Amy Salisbury, PhD, APRN

Associate Dean for Research, Scholarship & Innovation

Long COVID is real.

And it's a
significant
public health
crisis.

Most of what we know, we
have learned about from studying
Long COVID in adults.

When it comes to Long COVID in
children and young adults, **there
are more questions than answers.**



RECOVER Cohorts



```
graph TD; A[RECOVER Cohorts] --> B[Adults<br/>85 sites<br/>14,000 participants]; A --> C[Pediatrics<br/>105 Sites<br/>20,000 participants];
```

The diagram is a hierarchical flowchart. At the top is a dark blue rectangular box with a thin white border and a slight 3D effect, containing the text 'RECOVER Cohorts' in white, bold, sans-serif font. A dark blue line descends from the bottom center of this box and splits into two horizontal branches. Each branch leads to a rectangular box below. The left box is green with a thin white border and a slight 3D effect, containing the text 'Adults', '85 sites', and '14,000 participants' in black, sans-serif font. The right box is light green with a thin white border and a slight 3D effect, containing the text 'Pediatrics', '105 Sites', and '20,000 participants' in black, sans-serif font.

Adults

85 sites

14,000 participants

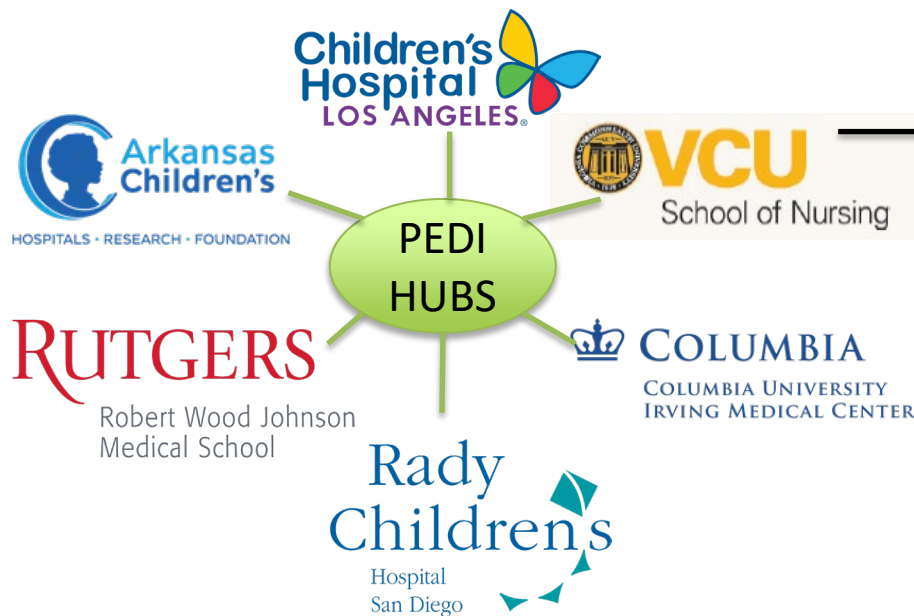
Pediatrics

105 Sites

20,000 participants



6 hubs enroll 6,000 children and young adults into a longitudinal cohort



PIs: Salisbury & Kinser
FUNDED @ ~\$9M



What will be done: Testing in 3 Protocols

Longitudinal Cohort

Tier 1: 19,500 Children → **Tier 2: 6,000 Children** → **Tier 3: 1,400 Children**



Answer survey questions



Answer survey questions



Echocardiogram
(ultrasound of the heart)



Have tests of blood and
saliva (spit)



Have simple check-ups
or exams



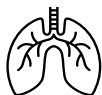
MRIs of parts of the body



Have tests of blood



Exercise tests



Lung and breathing
tests



Cognitive tests to check
how their brain is working

RECOVER Research Impact



- Person-centered
- Diverse
- Community-driven

RECOVER Research Impact

Understanding → Treatments

- VCU insights from participants
- Mild to debilitating symptoms across systems
- Children/adolescents may have a unique profile



Our patient, Rylee

Creating collaboration. Advancing science. Impacting lives.

Children present unique challenges

- Inability of younger children to describe symptoms
- Symptoms may vary based on developmental stage
- Pandemic experience may also change developmental course

Thank you for your time today.



VCU

School of Nursing

Creating collaboration. Advancing science. Impacting lives.

RECOVER is a national project

North
Pacific
Ocean



Up to **40,000**
people of all ages
and races and
ethnicities, in
almost every state

In research sites across the country, the RECOVER Cohort is enrolling adults, children and their caregivers, and pregnant participants and their infants.

recoverCOVID.org

Presentation to the Academic and Health Affairs Committee

F. Gerard Moeller, M.D.
Professor and Director, Wright Center




VCU

Office of the Vice President
for Research and Innovation



VCU

C. Kenneth and Dianne Wright Center
for Clinical and Translational Research



MARCH 14, 2023

NIH renews grant for VCU center that takes new treatments from basic research to the community

The \$27.5 million award is the largest NIH grant in VCU history and comes amid a transformational year for the university's research enterprise.

Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) Grants:

UM1 funded May 2023-April 2030: \$27,566,635

K12 funded May 2023-April 2028: \$3,747,310

T32 pending: \$914,998

Total funding: \$32,228,943



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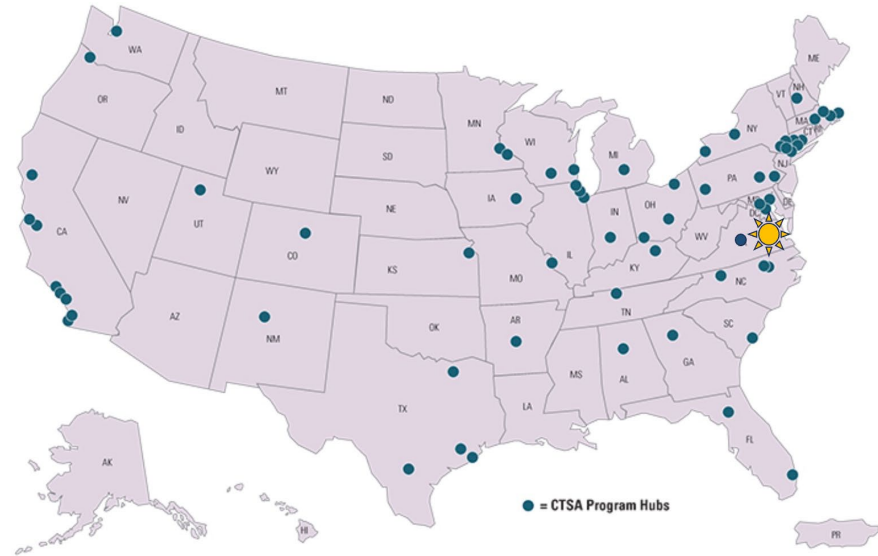
Office of the Vice President
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Clinical and
Translational
Science
Awards are
given to
**institutions
that are
national
leaders in
clinical
research**



- There are only ~60 CTSA funded research sites nationwide.
- Very few public institutions have a CTSA, a Comprehensive Cancer Center, and a Medical Student Training Program.



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The CTSA is Highly Competitive

Less than half of the CTSA submissions by well-established research institutions were funded in the most recent CTSA announcement

CTSA sites that have successfully obtained the new CTSA grant:

- Virginia Commonwealth University
- Harvard University
- University of North Carolina
- University of Michigan
- Scripps
- University of Utah
- Case Western Reserve
- University of Indiana
- Tufts University
- University of Iowa
- University of Texas HSC San Antonio



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Clinical and Translational Science Award Overall Objective

Advance health equity through:

- *Actively engaging diverse communities*
- *Training a diverse research workforce*
 - *Supporting translational science*

University and Healthcare Partners and Collaborators on the CTSA



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Clinical Research Workforce Pathway Programs for Training



[Undergraduate Students](#) Training in Research
Summer Research Programs for VCU,
ODU, VUU, VSU

[Clinical Research Professional](#) Training
Research coordinators, research administrators
VCU College of Health Professions, VCU Health Internships

[Graduate Students and Post-Doctoral Fellows](#)
Masters and Ph.D. Programs, Grant Writing

[Junior Faculty](#) Training Programs
K12 grant, Diversity Supplements,
Training for Research and Grant Submission



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for Clinical and Translational Research

Impact of the Wright Center's research and the CTSA on our community



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C. Kenneth and Dianne Wright Center
for Clinical and Translational Research

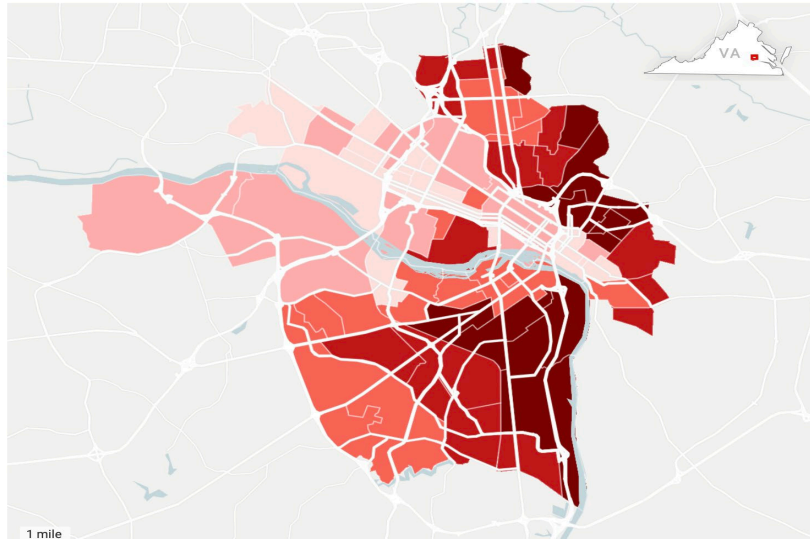
The healthcare costs of extreme heat

Neighborhoods in Richmond, Virginia, vary in their vulnerability and resiliency to heat, with historically marginalized communities being more vulnerable

Heat vulnerability by census tract, based on the RVAgreen 2050 Climate Equity Index

Heat vulnerability

Lowest Low Medium High Highest



- Daily climate and health care utilization data from Virginia illuminate the health care costs of extreme heat, which amount to approximately \$1 billion every summer when extrapolated nationally.
- Historically marginalized communities are at greater risk.



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for Clinical and Translational Research

Virginia Opioid Abatement Tool-kit



C. KENNETH AND DIANNE WRIGHT CENTER
FOR CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH



- Drug overdose is the leading cause of unnatural death in Virginia.
- Overdoses increased during COVID-19, disproportionately affecting black patients.
- We are developing a tool-kit for Virginia cities and counties to guide the spending of VOAA funding.



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for Research and Innovation



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C. Kenneth and Dianne Wright Center
for Clinical and Translational Research

Wright Center Regional Team



F. Gerard Moeller

PI and Director



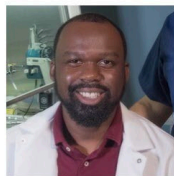
S. Patrick Nana-Sinkam

Associate Director, Career Development and Mentorship Lead



Deborah DiazGranados

Director of Evaluation and Team Science



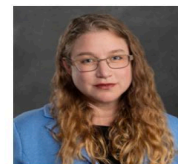
Larry D. Keen

Faculty Lead Virginia State University, Faculty Member Workforce Development



Richard Sterling

Lead, CTS Pilots



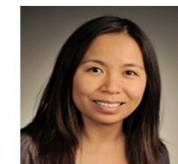
Lisa Mercik

Co-Lead CTS Pilots



Tamas S. Gal

Lead, Health Informatics



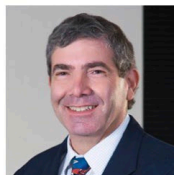
Jinze Liu

Co-Lead, Health Informatics



Alexander Krist

Associate Director, Community and Stakeholder Engagement Lead



Steven Woolf

Community and Stakeholder Engagement co-Lead



Melanie Bean

Resources and Services Lead



Roy Sabo

Director Biostatistics, Epidemiology and Research Design, Co-Lead Resources and Services



Khan Iftakharuddin

Faculty lead, Old Dominion University, faculty member, Health Informatics



Andrew Plunk

Faculty Lead, Eastern Virginia Medical School, Lead, CTS Research Program



Emily Zimmerman

Co-lead CTS Research Program



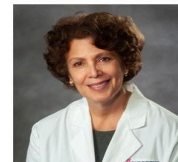
Elizabeth Fortune

Administrative Director



Mary Harmon

VCUHealth Collaborator Lead



Karen Hendricks-Munoz

Center for Health Disparities Partner Lead



David X. Cifu

Veterans Affairs Collaborator Lead



Alvin Holder

Co-Lead Old Dominion University, Faculty Member Workforce Development



VCU Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation



VCU C. Kenneth and Dianne Wright Center for Clinical and Translational Research

Improving Health Equity through Clinical Research

Vanessa B. Sheppard, PhD
Interim Founding Dean, School of Population Health
Associate Director, Community Outreach & Engagement
Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center
Theresa A. Thomas Memorial Chair in Cancer Prevention
& Control



Scientific Premise and Rationale

Disparate Cancer Outcomes



African American Women

Are, on average **40% more likely** to die of the breast cancer than White women.

Are **2 times** more likely than White women to develop triple negative breast cancer, which is associated with poorer prognosis.



Hispanic Women

Are more likely than non-Hispanic women to be diagnosed with tumors that are **larger and hormone receptor negative**, both of which are more difficult to treat.

“...people of color are not approached about participating in trials”

Enhancing Clinical Trial Representation

NCI Community Oncology Research Program (NCORP) Community and Minority/Underserved Sites



1 of 14

Minority
Underserved
Sites

9

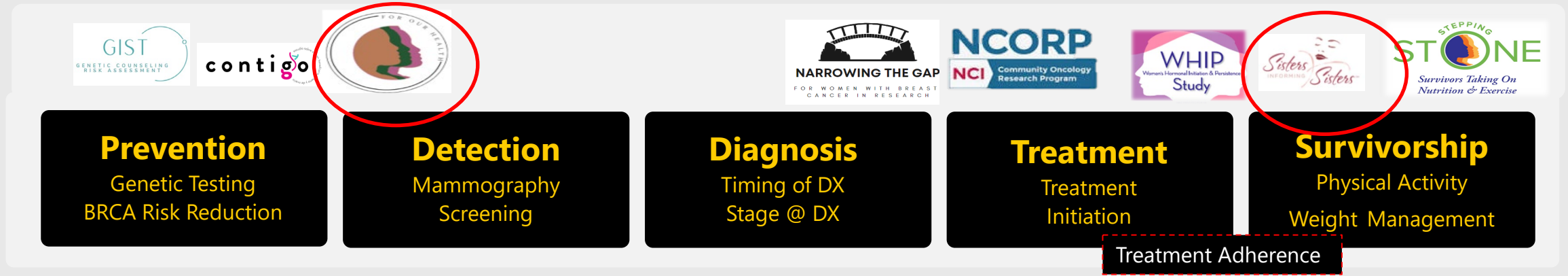
Affiliate
Sites

41%

Minorities

White patients comprise 82.9% of national clinical trial participants.

Health Equity Across the Cancer Continuum



- **Identify** factors that are associated with breast cancer disparities.
- Test **novel** approaches that have potential to **improve** breast cancer outcomes.
- Translate and disseminate findings to **impact** cancer disparities.

Non-therapeutic trials – tailored for priority communities >\$10 million in funding

Addressing Disparities in Hereditary Breast/Ovarian Cancer

NCI-funded Randomized Trials

African American Women's Limited Knowledge and Experiences with Genetic Counseling for Hereditary Breast Cancer

[Vanessa B. Sheppard](#)^a, [Kristi D. Graves](#), [Juleen Christopher](#), [Alejandra Hurtado-de-Mendoza](#), [Costellia Talley](#) & [Karen Patricia Williams](#)



Medical mistrust influences black women's level of engagement in BRCA 1/2 genetic counseling and testing

[Vanessa B Sheppard](#)¹, [Darren Mays](#), [Thomas LaVeist](#), [Kenneth P Tercyak](#)



Addressing disparities in the uptake of genetic counseling and testing in African American women; rationale, design and methods

[Vanessa B. Sheppard](#)^a, [Arnethea L. Sutton](#)^b, [Alejandra Hurtado-De-Mendoza](#)^c, [Fariha Tariq](#)^a, [Robert A. Perera](#)^d, [John Quillin](#)^d, [Myrlene Jeudy](#)^a, [Sara Gómez-Trillos](#)^c, [Marc D. Schwartz](#)^c



Two
Arm
Trial

**Black women
16% less likely to
receive genetic
counseling/testing**

**Next Step:
Multi-site trial**

Research Findings

- Low GCT knowledge
- Suboptimal GCT referrals
- Robust VCU referral rate
- Self-efficacy & mistrust

Culturally Tailored Video (vs print)

- >300 VCU patients screened
- 85% content satisfaction rate
- 78% literacy acceptability
- 69% overall study satisfaction

- 65% of those eligible reached
- 95% consent rate
- 63% completed trial



Enhancing Cancer Care Delivery Equity

Randomized Controlled Two-arm Trial: *Sisters Informing Sisters*SM



Advocate input
Patient informed content



Survivor-Coach interventionist
Patient Decision Support Tools

Enroll
400
Women

Compared to
White patients:

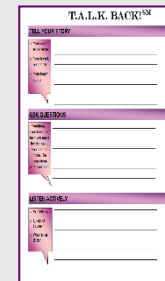
Black Women

Report

- Greater symptoms
- Poorer communication
- Lower adherence

Race and Patient-reported Symptoms in Adherence to
Adjuvant Endocrine Therapy: A Report from the Women's
Hormonal Initiation and Persistence Study **FREE**

Vanessa B. Sheppard ; Arnethea L. Sutton ; Alejandra Hurtado-de-Mendoza; Jun He; Bassam Dahman; Megan C. Edmonds;
Mary Helen Hackney ; Mahlet G. Tadesse



- Communication
- Improved Treatment Adherence = Improved Outcomes



Research Voices

Award-winning Richmond doctor hopes to bridge the gap so more Black women will beat breast cancer



**Contact the CBS 6
Problem Solvers**

As part of Women's History Month, CBS 6 wanted to share a life saving study out of VCU Massey Cancer Center that is making an impact on Black women recently diagnosed with breast cancer.




Vanessa.sheppard@vcuhealth.org

RTR Teacher Residency

Formerly known as Richmond Teacher Residency

Dr. Kim McKnight | Executive Director



What is the name of your favorite teacher and why?



VCU

School of Education



We are the largest and longest standing teacher residency program in the Commonwealth

- Research shows correlation between student achievement and teacher quality (Lee, 2018)
- Elementary students of RTR-prepared teachers made faster gains in reading and math, despite being assigned lower performing students.
- RTR graduates teaching science had significantly higher Virginia student achievement scores.

RTR Teacher Residency Funding Status

Phase 1: 2011-15 - Began with U.S. Dept of Education awarding \$5.8M and then a subsequent \$7.5M grant

Phase 2: 2016-20 - The VA General Assembly funded \$500K which grew to over \$1.5M

Phase 3: 2021-24 - Scaled up to 16 divisions; Augustus F. Hawkins Center of Excellence and unanimous approval of first 'Lab School'

\$35M+ in funding over 13 years to advance RTR

- Research grants funded through federal, state, school divisions, and local philanthropic organizations
- To recruit, train, support, and retain teachers and school leaders in the Commonwealth

IMPACT ON CULTURE

To, Through, Thrive



Sheila Mosby (left), Na'Que Walker (center), Paula Steward (right)



VCU

School of Education





Observations, Feedback & Reflection

Research tools for engaging in meaningful conversations that support a trusting mentor-resident relationship.



VCU

School of Education



7 BT

**Research in
teaching:**

**To advance the
profession that
helps create all
other professions.**



VCU

School of Education



THE CONVERGENCE LAB INITIATIVE

A strategy for advancing R&D, education, workforce and growth

Nibir K. Dhar, Ph.D.

Professor & CCI Eminent Scholar, Electrical and Computer Engineering
Director of Virginia Microelectronics Center (dharnk@vcu.edu)

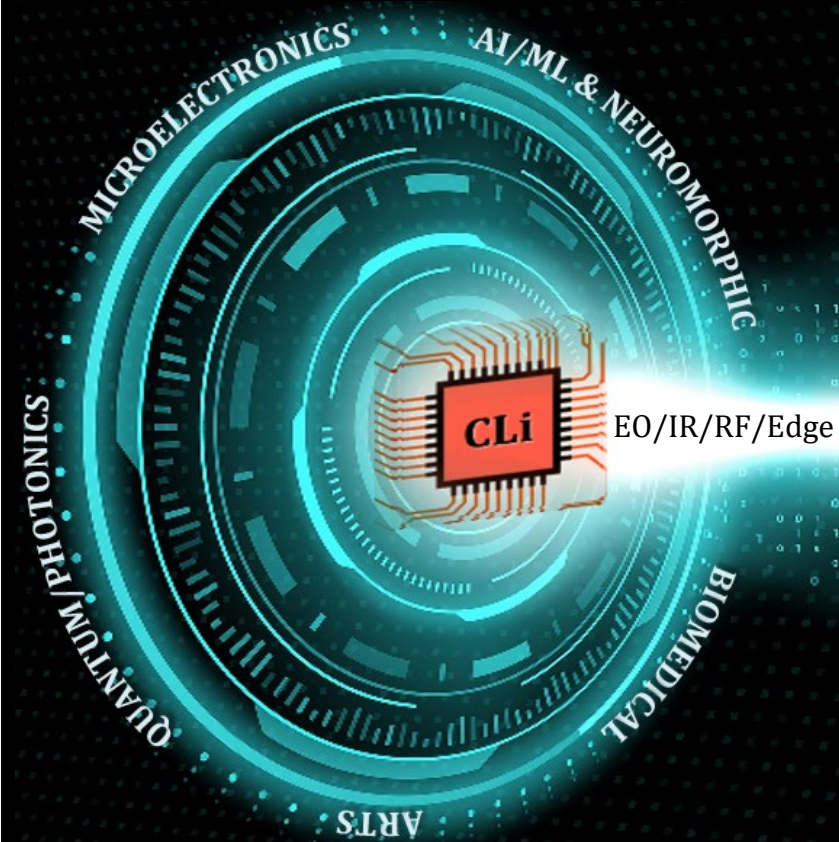
Innovation Inspired – Research Driven – Education Focused



VCU

College of Engineering

THE CONVERGENCE LAB INITIATIVE (CLi)



WHAT IS CLi?



1. CLi is a VCU led initiative that will address Defense Security and Global Competition.
2. Convergence of five science pillars illuminates new insights, new products, and novel capabilities and workforce development in **EO/IR/RF/Edge technologies**.
3. CLi is funded by the Air Force for **\$27M** over three years.

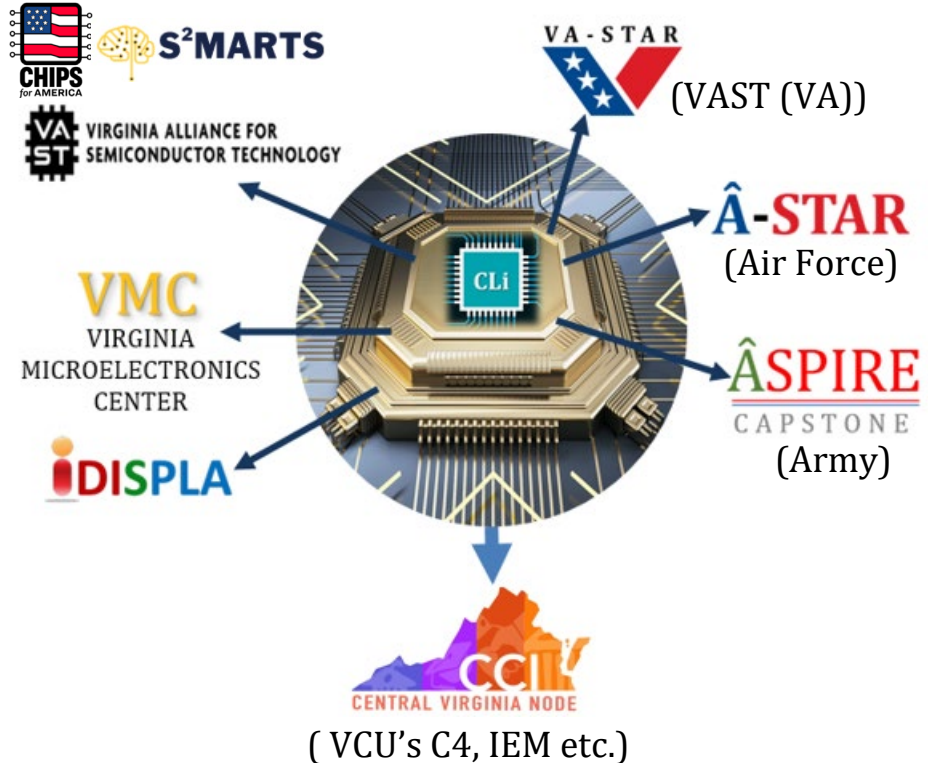
CLi: Key Strategy Concepts



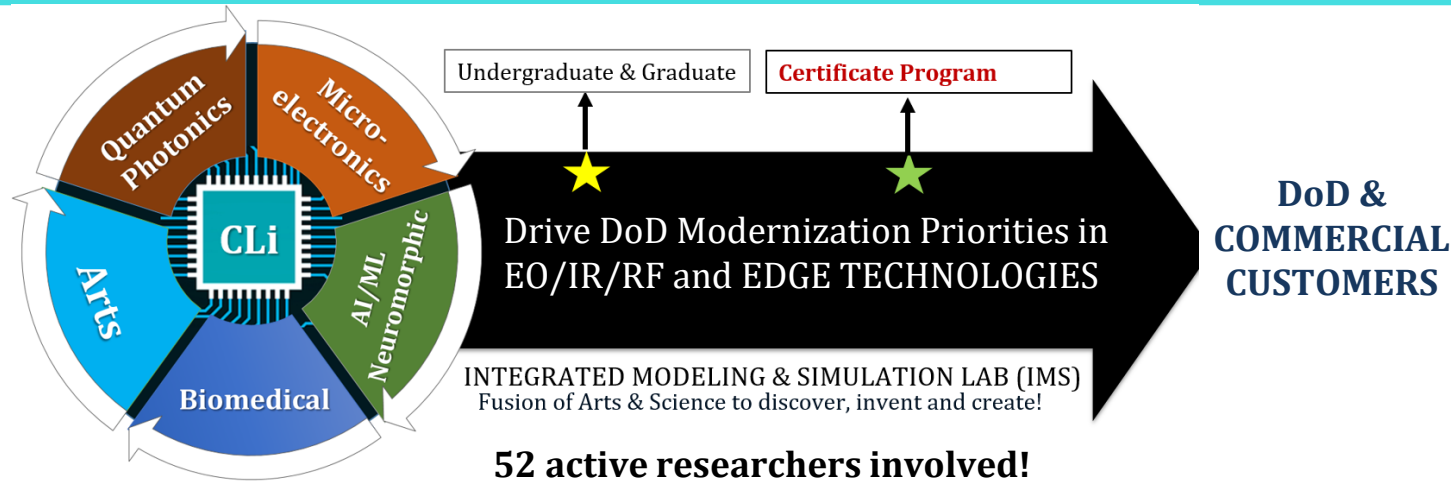
Value Proposition and Integrated Growth Strategy for CoE:

- Help advance DoD modernization science areas
- Education, Experiential Learning & Workforce
- Building an Ecosystem with a System on a Chip strategy

Position VCU to lead the 5.0+ technology wave !



CLi: Advancing US Defense Research, Innovation & Education



IAB ADVISORY BOARD



VCU Microelectronics Center (VMC)



VMC Building new semiconductor capabilities for future investment and growth.

Advanced research in Nano, Opto & Microelectronics:

- Developing education, training, R&D and workforce programs
- Partnering with VAST, MASC, S²MARTS
- Creating partnership through CRADA with Federal Laboratories
- Creating Industry Partners



MID-ATLANTIC SEMICONDUCTOR COLLABORATIVE (MASC)



VIRGINIA ALLIANCE FOR SEMICONDUCTOR TECHNOLOGY



VCU is creating a strong relationship with the US Office of Under Secretary of Defense (OUSD)



VCU College of Engineering

VCU addresses national 'The CHIPS & Science Act'

CLi: Big Picture Ecosystem



Enabling intelligence sensing, imaging, security & communication capabilities as a decision support tool

