



Board of Visitors

Annual Retreat

October 24, 2025

8:30 a.m.

Activation Capital

800 E. Leigh Street

Richmond, VA

MINUTES

DRAFT

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Ms. Ellen Fitzsimmons, *Rector*

Mr. Steve DeLuca, *Vice Rector*

Mr. Neil Amin

Mr. Anthony Bedell - *virtual pursuant to Code Section 2.2-3708.3(B)(4) personal matter where the member was unable to attend the meeting due to a work commitment - Ashburn, VA.*

Ms. Lara Tyler Chambers

Ms. Rooz Dadabhoy

Hon. Peter Farrell

Ms. Lori Jennings

Dr. Dale Jones

Dr. Kenneth Lipstock - arrived at 9:06 a.m.

Dr. Clifton Peay

Mr. Randolph Reynolds, Jr.

Mr. C.J. Sailor

Mr. P2 Sandhu - arrived at 9:07 a.m.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Dr. Siobhan Dunnavant

Mr. Andy Florance

OTHERS PRESENT

Dr. Michael Rao, *President*

Ms. Chelsea Gray, *Executive Director of Board and Executive Operations*

Ms. Stephanie Hamlett, *University Counsel*

Ms. Suzanne Milton, *Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer*

Presidential Cabinet of VCU

VCU students, faculty and staff

Members of the Media

CALL TO ORDER & OPENING REMARKS

Rector Ellen Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order at 8:38 a.m. She welcomed attendees and expressed appreciation for everyone's presence and contributions. Rector Fitzsimmons praised President Rao and his team for their exceptional and stable leadership, which sets VCU apart in the challenging landscape of higher education. She noted the board's role not just as an oversight body but as a strategic partner, and encouraged the university's leadership team to view the board as a valuable resource to be leveraged. Rector Fitzsimmons noted that the discussions should center on the long-term trajectory of VCU and its role in shaping the future of higher education.

The public was able to view the open session of the meeting via livestream at <https://mssvideo.vcu.edu/BOV>.

PRESIDENT'S OPENING REMARKS

President Rao expressed gratitude and enthusiasm, welcoming board members both new and returning to the annual retreat. He emphasized the importance of board members' contributions to the university's mission. He highlighted the significance of board retreats as opportunities to deeply engage with the university's complex mission and societal impact, particularly as a public research institution shaping the Commonwealth of Virginia and beyond. President Rao underscored the board's powerful role in telling VCU's story and guiding its future, and urged members to actively participate in shaping the university's direction, especially in areas like research, innovation, and student development. He called attention to the unique strengths of VCU's health sciences programs and the urgent need to address workforce shortages in healthcare. He called for thoughtful engagement throughout the day's discussions, recognizing the board's influence and the value of their insights in helping VCU thrive as a leading R1 university.

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS AN ENGAGED RESEARCH 1 UNIVERSITY?

Interim Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Beverly Warren expressed excitement about sharing the vibrant energy and brilliance of VCU's students, faculty, and staff with the board. She emphasized that the day's interactive sessions would offer a meaningful glimpse into the people who drive VCU's mission forward. Dr. Warren expressed gratitude to the board, Rector, President Rao, students, deans, and faculty for their participation and contributions.

She reinforced VCU's identity as an R1 research university, not only through its impressive research output and doctoral degrees, but through its commitment to unlocking opportunity, particularly for the 38% of students who are first-generation and the 40% who are Pell-eligible. Dr. Warren highlighted the transformative power of VCU's research-driven learning environment and the importance of developing students holistically, from undergraduates to doctoral candidates who collaborate with world-class faculty. She celebrated VCU's distinction as one of only 12 institutions nationwide with a full complement of six health sciences schools, partnered with a comprehensive health system that serves vulnerable populations. She concluded by underscoring the university's dual mission of excellence in research and deep care for student development, inviting the board to engage fully in the day's conversations and witness the impact of VCU's work firsthand.

Next, Dr. Marlon Levy, Senior Vice President for Health Sciences and CEO of the VCU Health System, offered reflections on the essential role of research in the health sciences, emphasizing its centrality to VCU's mission. Dr. Levy noted that research is the foundation of knowledge advancement and directly

contributes to saving and improving lives. He noted that research creates a virtuous cycle by attracting top talent, which in turn drives further innovation. He noted that faculty engaged in research are deeply embedded in patient care settings across disciplines, from medicine to dentistry, nursing, and pharmacy, and they play a critical role in educating future health professionals.

He then led a discussion on how the institution protects faculty research time, with compensation models allowing for flexible allocation of effort and annual attestations ensuring accountability. He concluded his remarks with an update on the university's participation in a three-year medical degree track, modeled after programs like NYU's. While currently limited to a small number of students, there is interest in expanding the program, particularly given its potential to reduce student debt by eliminating a year of tuition. The board was advised that this evolving model of medical education may warrant further discussion.

STUDENT FOCUS

Dr. Hernan Bucheli, Vice President for Strategic Enrollment Management and Student Success, and Dr. Aaron Hart, Vice President for Student Affairs, introduced the undergraduate student panel. In his introduction, Dr. Bucheli highlighted the importance of student success in providing students the opportunity to thrive in an R1 University environment and to graduate as the leaders of tomorrow - prepared for the future of work and for post graduate study as scholars and researchers who will contribute to research that matters - research that changes lives and often saves lives.

Dr. Hart introduced the student panelists, which included Alexander Campbell, a senior majoring in political science and criminal justice, Jacqueline "Jackie" Nguyen, a senior majoring in interdisciplinary studies, Alana Nicotera, a junior majoring in biology, Joseph Hernandez, a senior majoring in interdisciplinary science, and Jaila Hendricks, a junior majoring in mass communications and journalism. The students spoke with members about their experiences with work-based learning and the campus resources that have supported their success at VCU, including what drove their decision to come to VCU and what keeps them engaged at VCU.

Next, Dr. Warren introduced the Deans and invited them to lead a discussion about the graduate student experience. The panel consisted of Dr. Manu Gupta, Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Catherine Ingrassia, Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences, Dr. Kelechi "K.C." Ogbonna, Dean of the School of Pharmacy, and Dr. Arturo "Art" Saavedra, Dean of the School of Medicine. The deans discussed the importance of graduate education, particularly doctoral education within an R1 university environment. Each dean spoke about how their doctoral education influenced their careers as scholars, researchers and educators. The panel reflected on the role of doctoral students in elevating faculty research and in attracting top scholars to the university. The panelists' remarks underscored the strategic value of graduate education in VCU's academic mission. Dean Gupta shared slides depicting five year graduate enrollment trends and graduate and doctoral stipends of VCU compared with other R1 universities.

A copy of Dean Gupta's presentation is attached hereto as ***Attachment A*** and is made a part hereof.

Lastly, Dr. Warren introduced the panel to discuss R1 university student body engagement. Panelists included Mr. William Nelson, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Administration and Operations, Dr. Hernan Bucheli, Vice President for Strategic Enrollment Management and Student Success, Mr. Grant Heston, Vice President for Enterprise Marketing and Communications, and Dr. Jill Blondin, Vice Provost for Global Initiatives. The panelists discussed the importance of out of state student enrollment, including international, and presented recruitment strategies for fall 2026 enrollment and beyond.

A copy of the panelists bios is attached hereto as **Attachment B** and is made a part hereof. A copy of the recruitment strategy presentation is attached hereto as **Attachment C** and is made a part hereof.

LUNCH

During lunch, Mr. Ed McLaughlin, Vice President and Director of Athletics, led a discussion about the future of athletics. Mr. McLaughlin provided an overview of the growth and success of VCU athletics since 2012. He described the current national landscape of college athletics, including how the House settlement, other lawsuits, the Executive Order in July 2025 and congressional interventions have impacted the NCAA's decision-making. He discussed current impacts in collegiate athletics, including the implications on revenue sharing from name, image and likeness (NIL) and the growing divide within the current Division I framework.

A copy of Mr. McLaughlin's presentation is attached hereto as **Attachment D** and is made a part hereof.

RESEARCH FOCUS

Dr. Srirama Rao, Vice President for Research and Innovation, introduced the faculty panelists - Dr. F. Gerard "Gerry" Moeller, Associate Vice President for Clinical Research, Dr. David Limbrick, Jr., Chair of the Department of Neurosurgery, Dr. Puru Jena, Director of the Institute for Sustainable Energy and Environment, Dr. Chris Gough, Executive Director of the Rice Rivers Center, and Dr. Radhika Barua, Assistant Professor in the Department of Mechanical and Nuclear Engineering. The panelists provided insights into the importance of research in their specific areas of expertise - Neuroscience, pain, addiction and mental health and Energy, Environment, Sustainability - within an R1 university environment. Each panelist reflected on their experiences leading integrated university-wide research efforts and highlighted VCU's role in advancing critical work to address vexing health and environmental challenges.

A copy of the research presentation is attached hereto as **Attachment E** and is made a part hereof.

INNOVATION FOCUS

Dr. Andrew Arroyo, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Interim Dean of University College, introduced the dean and associate dean panelists - Dr. Amy Darragh, Dean of the College of Health Professions, Dr. Catherine Ingrassia, Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences, Dr. Carol Scotese, Interim Associate Dean, Academic and Faculty Affairs in the School of Business, and Dr. Gary Tepper, Senior Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs in the College of Engineering. Dr. Arroyo noted that AI instruction and research permeates through the entire university, preparing our students to graduate with a clear understanding of the high impact opportunities AI presents and the ethical challenges we face as a society in understanding AI and its implementation. He noted that each school/college represented on the panel participates in the interdisciplinary applied AI curriculum happening through Enterprise Convergence Labs in University College.

The panelists discussed their interdisciplinary roles, particularly in connecting innovation with real-world applications. They engaged with board members in a discussion of AI in academia, highlighting how the university is preparing students and faculty to navigate and shape the future of AI in education and the workforce.

WRAP UP

Rector Fitzsimmons concluded the discussion by reflecting on a pivotal discussion about AI two years

prior, noting how far the university has come in embracing AI since then. She commended the rapid progress and emphasized the critical importance of AI proficiency in today's fast-evolving business landscape. Rector Fitzsimmons noted that AI literacy is quickly becoming a baseline requirement for employment, not just a competitive edge.

Rector Fitzsimmons continued by making two key requests: first, a response to a colleague's earlier question about how the board can better support the university team; and second, a request for access to any existing online AI curriculum or tools that could help board members become more fluent in AI, both for their own understanding and to anticipate how board processes might evolve in the near future.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Rector Fitzsimmons adjourned the retreat at 3:04 p.m.



ATTACHMENT A

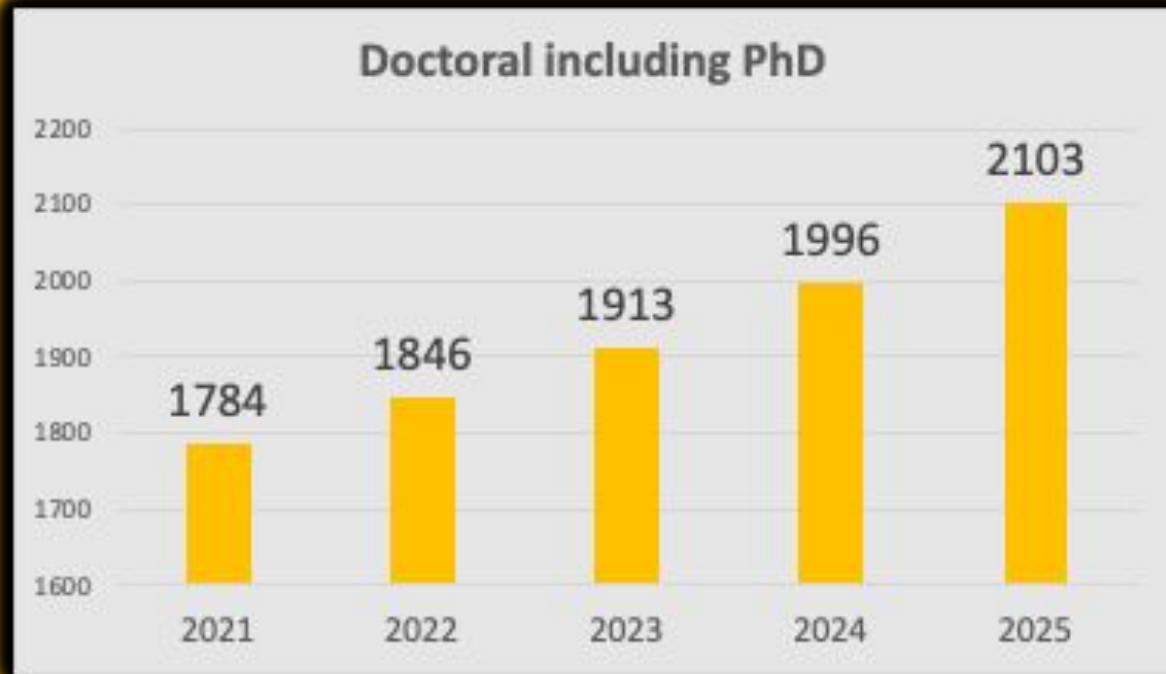
VCU Graduate Funding

Relative Standing



WE ARE THE UNCOMMON.

VCU Doctoral Enrollments



Largest Doctoral Enrollment Ever

VCU Doctoral Stipends - Overall

Total Doctoral Stipend (2024-2025)			
Degree	# of Asst.	Total Annual Funding for Stipends	Average Stipend
Doctoral	811	\$ 22,923,404	\$ 28,230

VCU Colleges/Schools pay tuition of doctoral assistants but most do not pay university fees.

Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, VP Research pay university fees.

Average Cost of Living for a single person in Richmond VA: \$30,600 - \$34,800*

***Assumptions:**

- A “city-center” or near-downtown 1-bedroom apartment.
- Normal utilities, moderate restaurant / entertainment / groceries.
- Own or lease a car / use public transport.
- Health insurance (VCU pays 70%; doctoral students pay 30%) , cell phone, internet, etc.
- Some discretionary spending, modest travel, clothing, etc.

VCU versus Peer and Aspirant Universities

University	PhD Stipend Annual
University of Virginia	\$33,500 average for engineering, physics, history and anthropology
Virginia Tech	\$33,700 average graduate stipend for all PhD
George Mason University	\$36,000 for STEM fields
Univ of Alabama at Birmingham	\$30,600
University of Cincinnati	\$26,031 minimum, actual not clear
University of Illinois Chicago	\$32,271
University of Louisville	Varies by Program; min. \$18,000, Nursing: \$22,000,
University of South Carolina	\$41,200
University of South Florida	Varies by Program; Psychology: \$30,000; Medicine: \$37,000
UCLA	\$37,000
Florida State University	Varies by Program; Physics: \$30,115; Medicine: \$33,600, Eng \$19,163
Univ of Minnesota - Twin Cities	Medicine avg \$34,000; Liberal Arts \$30,097
University at Buffalo	\$30,787
The Ohio State University	\$32,184
University of Pittsburgh	\$30,000
VCU	Average stipend = \$28,292

Note: Public info is not readily available. These estimates are based on web searches and personal contacts.





VCU

Board of Visitors Retreat

October 24, 2025

Panelist Biographies

Students

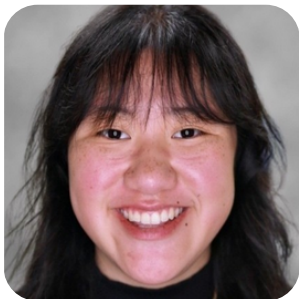


Alexander Campbell

Academic year: senior

Majors: Political Science and Criminal Justice

Alexander is a senior from Powhatan, Virginia where he came to VCU with a completed Associate of Arts degree via dual enrollment. In his time at VCU he has served as a resident assistant, supporting fellow students in VCU Housing, and as an orientation leader, providing insight and encouragement to incoming students. During his junior year he participated in the study abroad program through which he spent a semester studying at University College Cork in Ireland. He is currently interning in the Office of U.S. Senator Mark Warner. He plans to graduate in 2026 with bachelor degrees in Political Science and Criminal Justice.



Jacqueline Nguyen

Academic year: senior

Major: Interdisciplinary Studies - Sports Marketing and Media

Jackie is a senior who will be graduating this coming May with her Bachelor of Science degree in Interdisciplinary Studies with a dual emphasis in Sports Marketing and Media. As a first generation TRIO student, Jackie's journey started at VCU as a first year student, but due to many obstacles, stopped out, completed additional credits at Northern Virginia Community College, and became a returning student back to VCU. She has been an active member of various clubs and organizations within the School of Business. She has completed multiple work-based learning opportunities on-campus through VCU's Office of Sustainability and the Office of Student Engagement in the School of Business.



Alana Nicotera

Academic year: junior

Major: Biology

Alana joined VCU from Newport News, VA as a first generation student majoring in Biology. Her engagement at VCU has been both inside and outside of the classroom, serving as a Residence Hall Association representative, Student Government Senator, and as a Peer Assisted Study Session (PASS) instructor with the Campus Learning Center. She is also serving as a Laboratory Research Intern with the VCU School of Pharmacy.



Joseph Hernandez

Academic year: senior

Major: Interdisciplinary Science

As twins coming from a military family, Joseph chose the path to VCU while his brother headed off to Virginia Tech. With the passion to become a cardiologist, Joseph has been on the fast path to graduate in less than 4 years. He joined Pi Lambda Phi during his sophomore year and has now served as Chapter President for over a year. Community service has always been a large part of his personal mission, and as a member of VCU's Transform Living & Learning Community, he has completed hundreds of hours in the RVA community. Joseph has also recently completed a research internship at the MCV campus.



Jaila Hendricks

Academic year: junior

Major: Mass Communications/Journalism

Jaila is currently a junior, majoring in Mass Communications and Journalism. She graduated from high school in Alberta, VA. Jaila has served as a two time Youth Leader intern with Virginia ABC, and currently works in VCU Career Services as a student assistant in the Suit Yourself Closet, providing free professional clothing to VCU students. Jaila is a first generation student pursuing her professional path towards the field of Journalism.



Deans



Amy Darragh, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA

Dean

College of Health Professions

Amy R. Darragh, Ph.D. joined VCU in August 2024. She is a nationally recognized researcher in pediatric neurorehabilitation, community engaged science, and virtual technologies. At the College of Health Professions, Dr. Darragh leads nine departments and one center, 84 full-time faculty representing 20 educational programs and nearly 1,250 students across four campuses in Richmond, Roanoke, Abingdon and Alexandria. With an extensive history of curricular and program development at the doctoral, master's and undergraduate levels, Darragh has focused recent efforts on expanding HRS health professions programs in partnership with The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center to meet workforce demand; expanding online undergraduate and graduate offerings; and designing the School's first strategic enrollment management plan. Darragh is a licensed occupational therapist, who has centered her teaching on dynamic learning environments, universal design principles and psychological safety. Her current research includes developing and testing novel pediatric and adult interventions that optimize patient outcomes while protecting caregiver health. Darragh's recent work includes NIH-funded phase II and phase III clinical trials in pediatric neurorehabilitation and virtual simulation interventions for young adults and adults. Darragh received a Ph.D. in environmental health epidemiology from Colorado State University, an M.S. in occupational therapy from Colorado State University and a B.A. as a double major in psychology and Program in the Arts, Barnard College, Columbia University.



Manu Gupta, Ph.D.

Dean

Graduate School

Manu Gupta, Ph.D. became dean of the VCU Graduate School in 2024, after serving in the role as interim dean for two years. He began his academic career as a finance professor at the University of Missouri Columbia in 2004. The next year he held the same role at Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville before joining the VCU School of Business in 2008. Gupta earned tenure in the VCU School of Business, was promoted to professor, and became the chair for the Department of Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate while serving as a faculty advisor for the M.S. in finance program. Over the next decade, Gupta led major curriculum revisions responsive to market demands. In the Graduate School, Gupta led the development of a strategic plan for graduate enrollment across the university and has worked with academic units across VCU's campuses to improve their processes for graduate program admissions. His leadership was instrumental in creating a tailored tuition plan to attract more out-of-state and international students. Gupta earned a bachelor's degree from S.V. National Institute of Tech (NIT) in Surat, India; a master's degree from the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade in New Delhi; and a Ph.D. from the Mays Business School at Texas A&M University.

**Catherine Ingrassia, Ph.D.**

Dean

College of Humanities and Sciences

Catherine Ingrassia, Ph.D. was named dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences (CHS) in 2023 and leads its 17 departments and three schools with more than 400 faculty and 10,000 students. Under Ingrassia's leadership, the College has undergone a strategic repositioning that has reimagined the relationship and structure of academic units and degree programs including the founding of the new School of Life Sciences and Sustainability, the return of the first-year writing program to the College, and the realignment of programs with shared research and curricular interests. During her deanship, the College opened its state-of-the-art STEM Building, significantly expanded its philanthropic success, and improved student retention rates. Committed to interdisciplinary collaboration, Dean Ingrassia established the dean professorships to facilitate transdisciplinary research and teaching, expanded the engagement of undergraduates in research, and also facilitated the creation of innovative curricular offerings including a minor in AI studies. An active scholar, Ingrassia has published seven books in the field of eighteenth-century British literature, with a particular focus on women writers.

**Kelechi C. Ogbonna, Pharm.D., MSHA**

Dean

School of Pharmacy

Kelechi "K.C." Ogbonna, Pharm.D., M.S.H.A., was named dean of the School of Pharmacy in December 2022. Before that appointment, he served as associate dean of admissions and student services at the School of Pharmacy, overseeing recruitment and student support for the Doctor of Pharmacy program. Ogbonna has a fantastic record of innovation and delivering results for students, patients, faculty and staff. As a pharmacist and educator, he has focused on connecting communities with health care, improving health disparities and expanding access to the health professions. Ogbonna earned his Pharm.D. at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences and a master's in health administration from VCU. He completed his PGY-1 general pharmacy practice residency and PGY-2 geriatric pharmacy residency within the Veteran Affairs Connecticut Healthcare System in West Haven, Conn. He joined the School of Pharmacy in 2012 as an assistant professor, teaching geriatrics and helping to create the Richmond Health and Wellness Program, the precursor to the VCU Health Hub at 25th. Ogbonna was also founding director of the school's postgraduate geriatric residency program. He currently holds the rank of professor at VCU.



Arturo Saavedra, M.D., Ph.D.

Dean
School of Medicine

Arturo P. Saavedra, M.D., Ph.D has served as dean of the VCU School of Medicine and executive vice president for medical affairs for the VCU Health System since April 2023. He specializes in the diagnosis and care of complex medical dermatology and is considered one of the national experts in the care, management and immunopathology of Graft-versus-host disease. He came to VCU from the University of Virginia School of Medicine, where he was the Kenneth E. Greer Endowed Professor and Chair in Dermatology and the President and interim Chief Executive Officer for the University Physicians' Group. After graduating magna cum laude from Harvard College with a degree in Biological Sciences, Dr. Saavedra received a combined medical and doctoral degree from the University of Pennsylvania, with specialized training in pharmacology. He completed his residency training in Internal Medicine at the Brigham and Women's Hospital, where he was also Chief Resident. He graduated from the Harvard Combined Dermatology Residency Training Program and completed his fellowship in Dermatopathology. Saavedra is an editor of Fitzpatrick's Color Atlas and Synopsis of Clinical Dermatology and is the past president (and inaugural president) for the Virginia Dermatology Society. He is currently the president of the Board of the Medical Dermatology Society and the Treasurer of the American Professors of Dermatology.



Associate Deans



Gary Tepper, Ph.D.

Senior Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs
College of Engineering

Gary C. Tepper, Ph.D. became the senior associate dean for academic and faculty affairs for the College of Engineering in 2023 after serving one year as interim dean. He previously served as chair of the Department of Mechanical and Nuclear Engineering. Tepper began his career at VCU in 1997 as an assistant professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering. During his 13 years as chair of the Department of Mechanical and Nuclear Engineering, the department grew significantly and added a Ph.D. in Mechanical and Nuclear Engineering and was recognized in national rankings for its graduate program and online master's program. Tepper's research, which focuses on advanced functional materials has resulted in more than 80 peer-reviewed journal papers, eight U.S. patents, and grants totaling more than \$10 million. In addition to university-level and college-level service, he has served as vice chair of the Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium Authority and as a member of the editorial board for the journal *Molecules*. He is a fellow of the International Association of Advanced Materials and a 2022 inductee of the VCU chapter of the National Academy of Inventors. He received his Ph.D. in engineering sciences from the University of California at San Diego and was a postdoctoral fellow of engineering physics at the U.S. Navy Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center.



Carol Scotese, Ph.D.

Interim Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs
School of Business

Carol Scotese, Ph.D. was named interim associate dean for academic and faculty affairs for the School of Business in January 2025. An associate professor in the Department of Economics, Scotese's 25-year tenure at VCU is distinguished by her leadership in both academic and administrative capacities. As chair of the Department of Economics, she secured two grants to expand online course offerings, strengthened partnerships with external organizations and developed professional experience opportunities for students. She has also served as a faculty advisor for the online MBA program, acting as a bridge between faculty and administration. Beyond her department, Scotese has contributed to significant university-wide initiatives, including contributions to the VCU Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) and supported other governance initiatives aimed at enhancing student outcomes and promoting equity for faculty. Scotese is a three-time Penn State University graduate, earning her bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees. Her research focuses on economic growth and the labor market implications of automation.

Faculty



F. Gerard Moeller, M.D.

Professor and C. Kenneth and Dianne Wright Distinguished Chair in Clinical and Translational Research: Addiction Science

Director, Wright Center for Clinical and Translational Research and VCU Institute for Drug and Alcohol Studies

Associate Vice President for Clinical Research, Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation

F. Gerard “Gerry” Moeller, M.D. is Associate Vice President for Clinical Research at Virginia Commonwealth University and Director of the C. Kenneth and Dianne Wright Center for Clinical and Translational Research (Wright Center). He is the principal investigator of the Clinical and Translational Science Award to VCU from the National Center for Advancing Translational Science at the National Institutes of Health. He is also Professor and Addictions Division Chief in the Department of Psychiatry, and the Director of the Institute for Drug and Alcohol Studies. Dr. Moeller is an internationally recognized researcher in translational science of substance use disorders and addictions, and has worked closely with Virginia government programs, such as the Opioid Abatement Authority, on efforts to overcome the drug overdose epidemic. He has over 240 peer reviewed publications and several books in this area. Dr. Moeller is a Fellow of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology and the American Society of Addiction Medicine, and a member of the Virginia Academy of Science Engineering and Medicine.



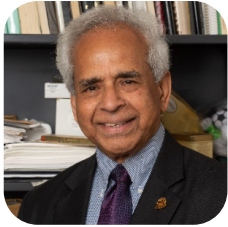
David D. Limbrick, Jr., M.D., Ph.D.

James W. and Frances G. McGlothlin Chair, Department of Neurosurgery

School of Medicine

David D. Limbrick Jr., M.D., Ph.D. joined the VCU Health and CHoR faculty as chair of the Department of Neurosurgery in 2023. Prior to joining VCU Health, he served as the T.S. Park Chair and Chief of Pediatric Neurosurgery, and Executive Vice Chair of Neurological Surgery at Washington University. Dr. Limbrick is internationally regarded for his expertise in treating disorders of the craniovertebral junction, including the Chiari malformations, neuro-endoscopic treatment of hydrocephalus, and pediatric brain tumors. He has received the Public Service Citation from the American Association of Neurological Surgeons and Congress of Neurological Surgeons for international neurosurgical relief work, the Humanism in Medicine Award from Washington University School of Medicine, and the Innovator Award from the Hydrocephalus Association.

Dr. Limbrick’s primary research focus is on cerebrospinal fluid disorders, where he is active in basic, clinical, and translational research. His research has been continuously funded by NIH, PCORI, and other federal agencies since he joined the faculty in 2008. Most recently, he was the recipient of a program project award (PPG) and an R25 educational grant with a long-term goal of increasing the diversity of the pediatric neurosciences workforce.

**Puru Jena, Ph.D.**

Director, Institute for Sustainable Energy and Environment
Professor, Department of Physics
College of Humanities and Sciences

Puru Jena, Ph.D. Distinguished Professor of Physics and Founding Director of the Institute for Sustainable Energy and Environment at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), received his B. Sc. (Hons) and M. Sc. from Utkal University, India and Ph. D. in Physics from the University of California at Riverside. He has been at VCU since 1980 with the exception of a year as Program Director at the National Science Foundation in 1986 and as Jefferson Science Fellow and Senior Science Advisor at the US Department of State in 2007. Dr. Jena's research covers a wide range of topics in nano-structured materials, condensed matter physics, chemistry, and materials science. He is the author of more than 700 papers including 14 edited books, with Google citations and H index at 42,500 and 102, respectively. His many honors include Elske v. P. Smith Distinguished Lecture, Member of the National Academy of Investors, Professor A. K. Chandra Memorial Award from the Indian Chemical Society, Fellow of the American Physical Society, Outstanding Scientist of Virginia, Outstanding Faculty of Virginia, Presidential Medallion, University Award of Excellence and Outstanding Scholar from Virginia Commonwealth University. He has served as a member of numerous scientific panels at the National Academy of Sciences, National Science Foundation, Department of Energy, and Army Research Office. He was a member of the Presidential Commission on bilateral scientific collaboration between USA and Russia.

**Chris Gough, Ph.D.**

Executive Director, Rice Rivers Center
Professor, Life Sciences and Sustainability
College of Humanities and Sciences

Chris Gough, Ph.D. is an ecologist and professor in the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Life Sciences and Sustainability, where he also serves as executive director of the VCU Rice Rivers Center. Gough has spent much of his career studying how forests and wetlands absorb and release greenhouse gases, often from the vantage point of tall research towers. His research explores how disturbance, vegetation structure, age, and climate influence ecosystem function, drawing on long-term studies at the Rice Rivers Center. With more than 20 years of experience at leading field stations, including the University of Michigan Biological Station, Harvard Forest, and UVA's Blandy Experimental Farm, Gough has mentored over 75 students and educators, integrating scientific research with the arts to engage broader audiences. Supported by grants from the NSF, NASA, DOE, and Dominion Energy, he has authored more than 135 publications in top journals such as Nature and PNAS, and was honored with the 2025 Distinguished Scholar Award from VCU's College of Humanities and Sciences.



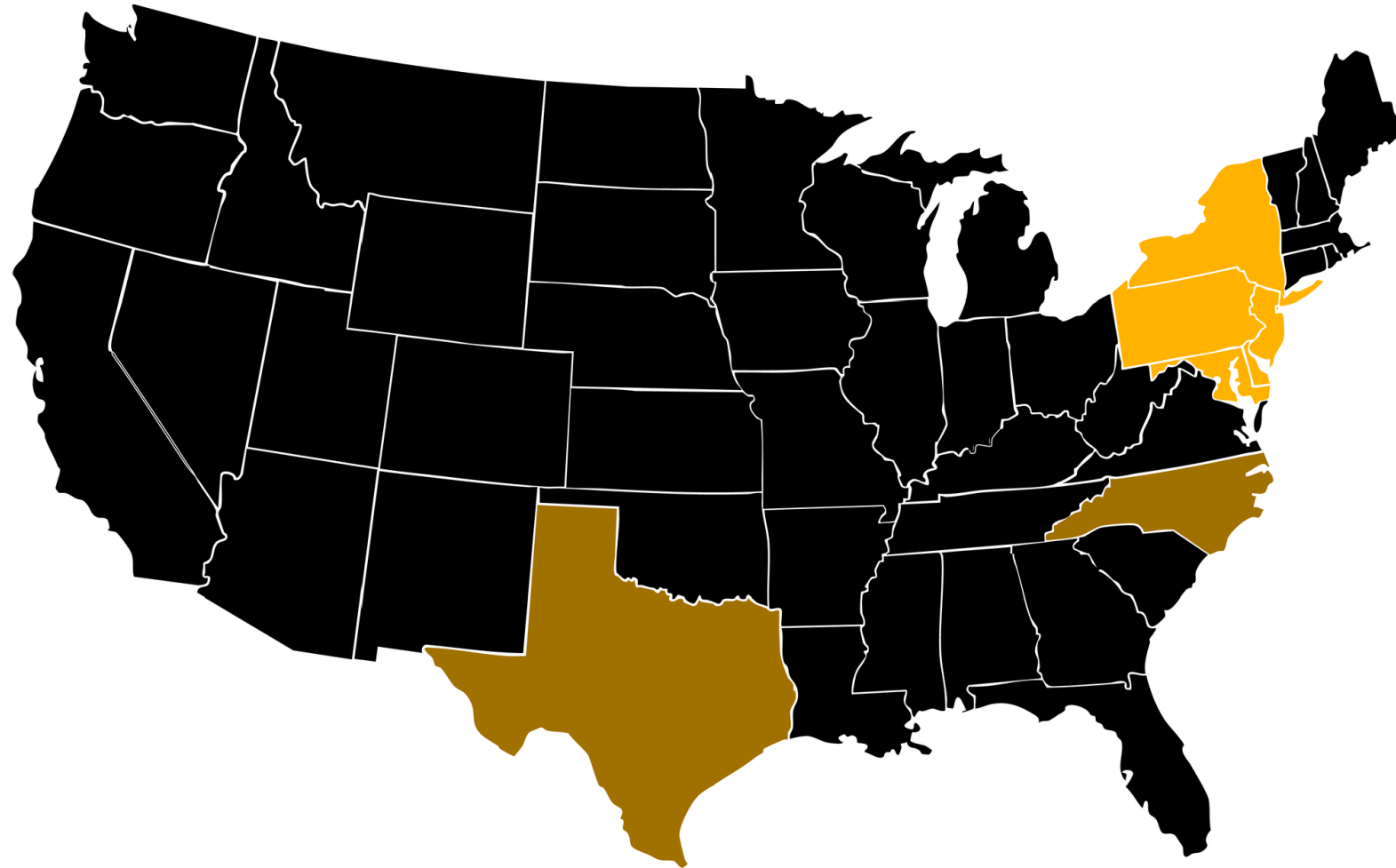
Radhika Barua, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Department of Mechanical and Nuclear Engineering
College of Engineering

Radhika Barua, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor in Mechanical and Nuclear Engineering at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and a core faculty member of the Materials and Manufacturing Research Center (MMRC). She leads the Advanced Magnetic Materials Processing (AM²P) Laboratory, advancing sustainable materials and manufacturing for emerging technologies in the power and energy sector. Her research integrates additive manufacturing, AI-driven process optimization, critical materials recycling, and life-cycle assessment to promote material circularity and decarbonization. At VCU, she champions the Engineering for One Planet (EOP) Framework, embedding sustainability and systems thinking into engineering education to prepare students for responsible innovation.

An Engaged R I University Student Body

Regional Recruitment Strategy



Mid-Atlantic Core (Established markets)

- Maryland & Washington
- Pennsylvania
- New York & New Jersey
- Delaware

Southern United States (High-growth markets)

- North Carolina
- Texas

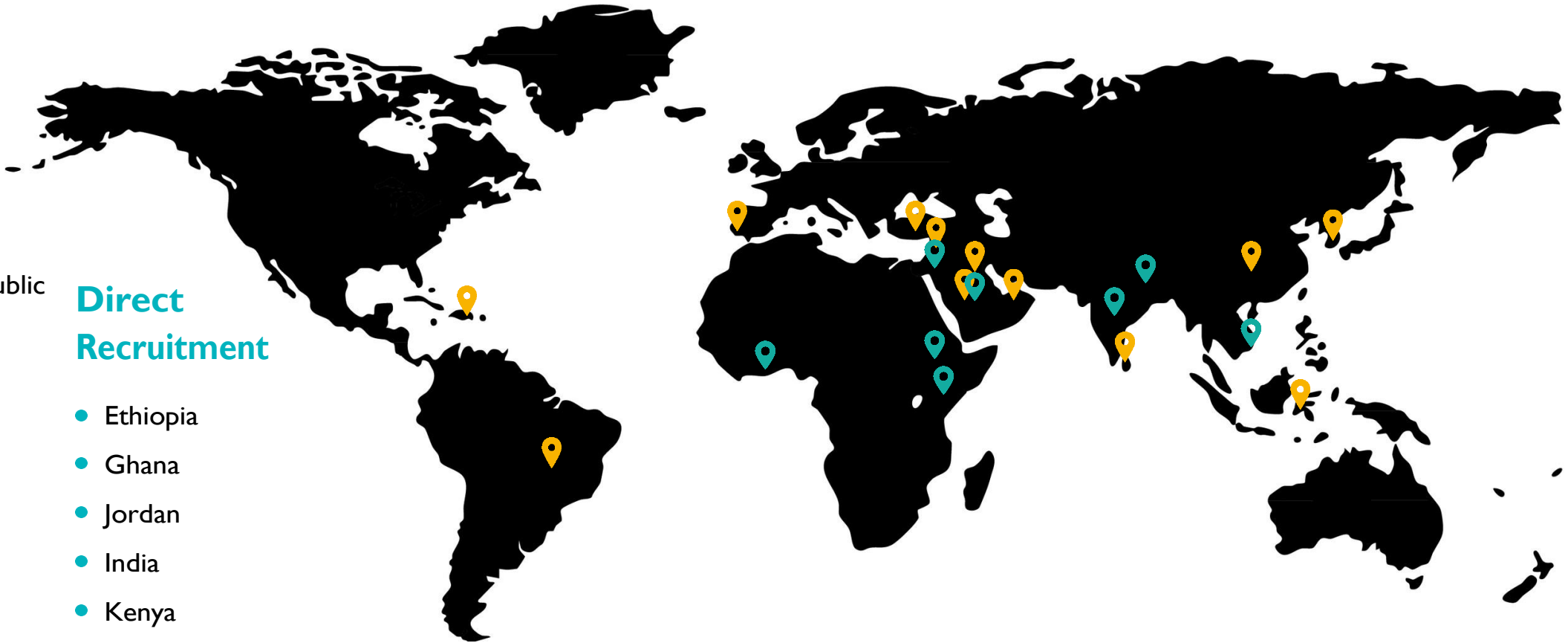
International Strategy

Partnerships

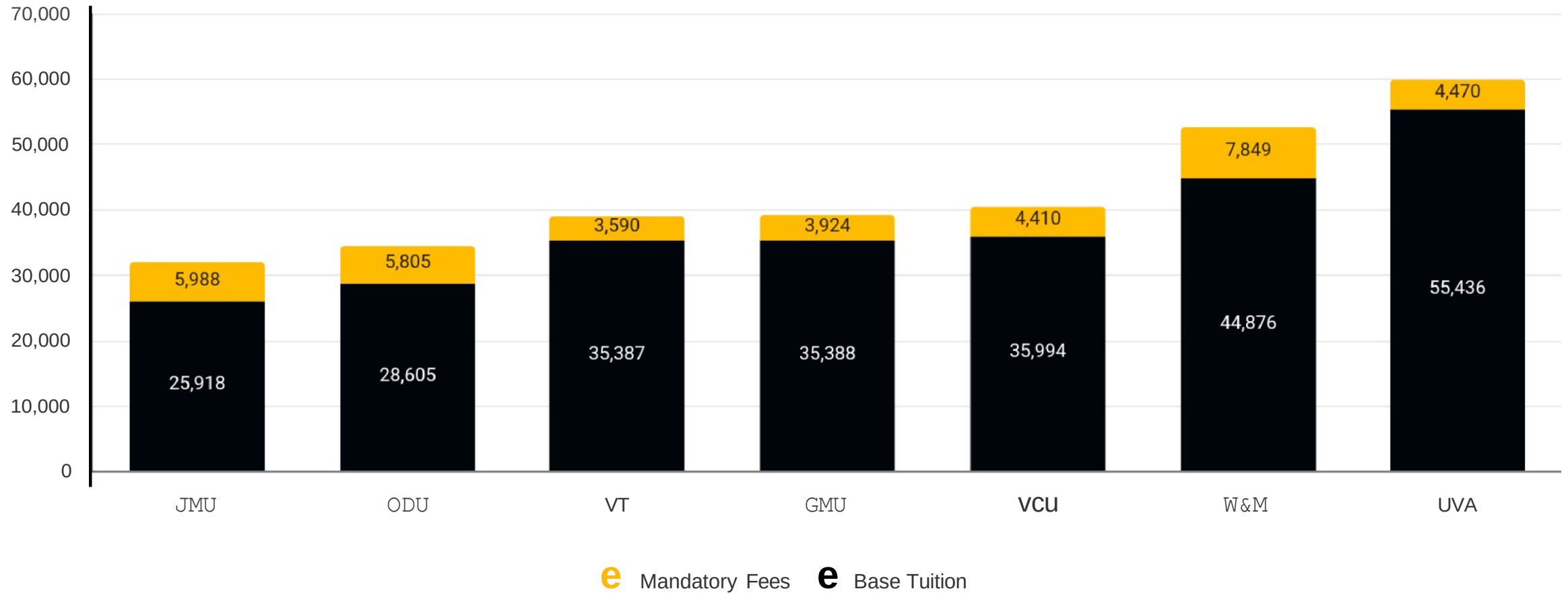
- China
- Brazil
- Dominican Republic
- Indonesia
- Kuwait
- Lebanon
- Portugal
- United Arab Emirates
- Saudi Arabia
- South Korea
- Sri Lanka
- Turkey

Direct Recruitment

- Ethiopia
- Ghana
- Jordan
- India
- Kenya
- Nepal
- Saudi Arabia
- Vietnam



Non-resident undergraduate tuition & fees FY26





The Future of Athletics

BOV Retreat - October 2025



WE ARE THE UNCOMMON.

Agenda

- 1. Where we are (and how we got here)**
- 2. Where we are going**
- 3. How we will get there**

Where we are (and how we got there)

- 1. VCU Performance since 2012**
- 2. National Landscape**
- 3. Current affairs**

Where we are (and how we got there)

1. Success of VCU Athletics

- Athletic success**
- Basketball success**
- Academic success**

Where we are (and how we got there)

2. National landscape

- House v. NCAA settlement**
- Other lawsuits challenging current rules**
- Executive Order of July 2025**
- Congressional intervention: SCORE Act and SAFE Act**
- NCAA Decision Making Model**

Where we are (and how we got there)

3. Current affairs

- Revenue sharing**
- Status of Olympic sports**
- Autonomy 4 (Power 4) conferences with disproportionate amount of influence**

Where we are going

- 1. Financial realities and budget growth**
- 2. VCU Athletics Village**
- 3. Lack of clarity with new collegiate model**
- 4. Eventual split**

Where we are going

1. Financial realities and budget growth

- FY 2018 to FY 2021
- FY 2022 to FY 2025
- FY 2026 and beyond

Where we are going

2. VCU Athletics Village

- Need to practice, develop and compete in Division I facilities**
- Large capital outlay over 10 years**

Where we are going

3. New collegiate model

- revenue share has no cap if outside NIL included
- effectiveness of NIL GO in question
- Equally, differently exceptional experiences

Where we are going

4. Eventual split

- **Current Div. I framework protected only for five years**
- **Gap between “haves” and “have nots” getting greater**
- **Conference memberships and at large access**

How we get there

- 1. Opportunity**
- 2. Threats**
- 3. Increased revenue opportunities**
- 4. Solidify nonnegotiables**

How we get there

1. Opportunity

- What has made us successful does not change
- MBB and WBB national reach
- Lack of FBS football

How we get there

2. Threats

- Revenue sharing has no guardrails
- Transient, transactional nature of Div. I experience
- Unknown structure of NCAA after five years
- Conference membership

How we get there

3. Increase revenue opportunities

- Grow fundraising with more donors and refined priorities, projecting best year
- Use current facilities and athletic village for revenue generation
- Nontraditional project financing

How we get there

4. Solidify nonnegotiables

- **Success in men's and women's basketball**
- **Maintain current levels in Olympic sports**
- **Priority of Athletics within University framework**
- **Must remain at the highest level**



Research Focus

Commitment to strategic initiatives and research clusters

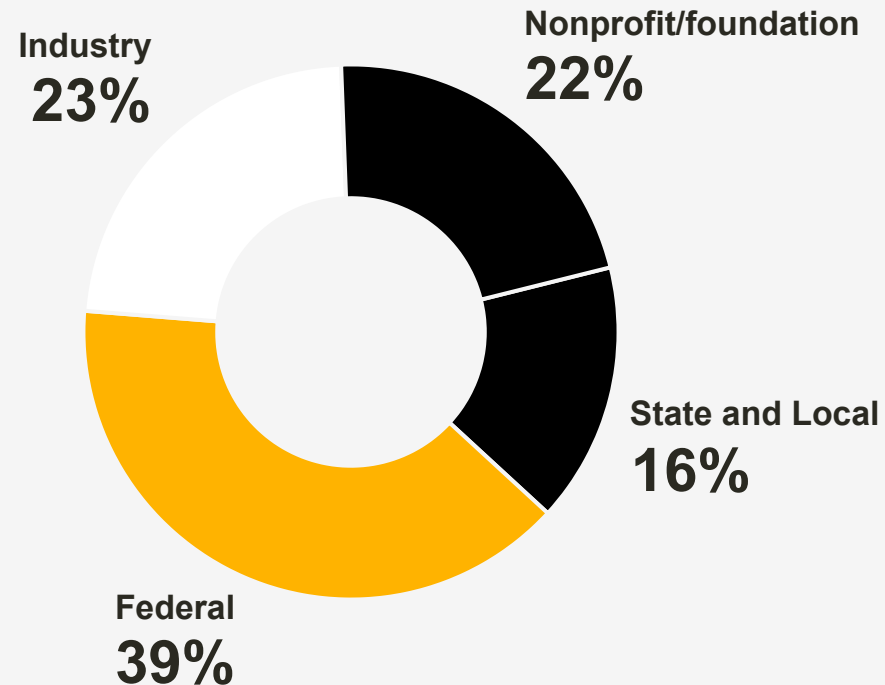


WE ARE THE UNCOMMON.

\$568M for FY25 is sponsored funding record

Sponsored funding and expenditures have doubled since FY18

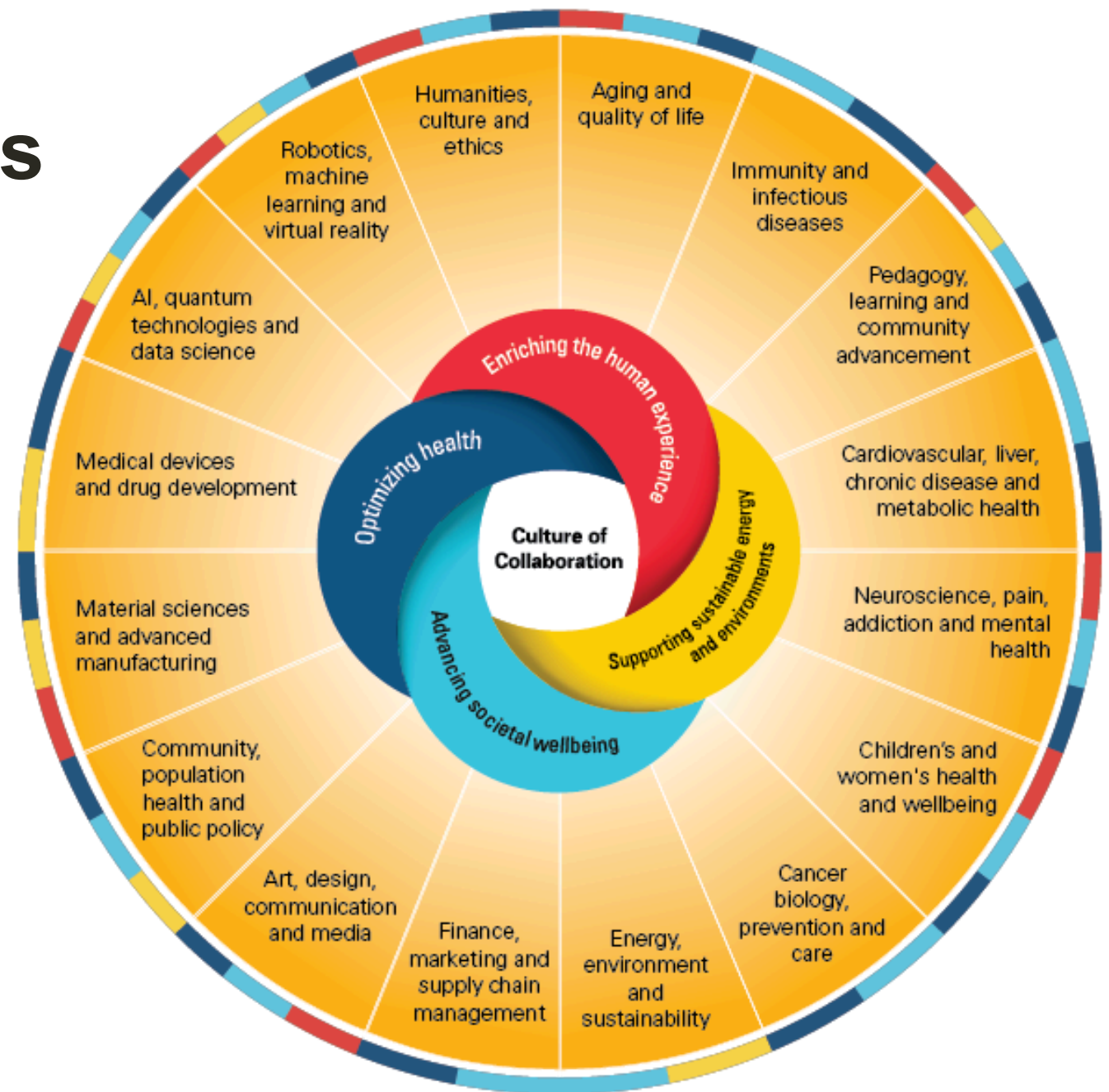
Distributed funding portfolio

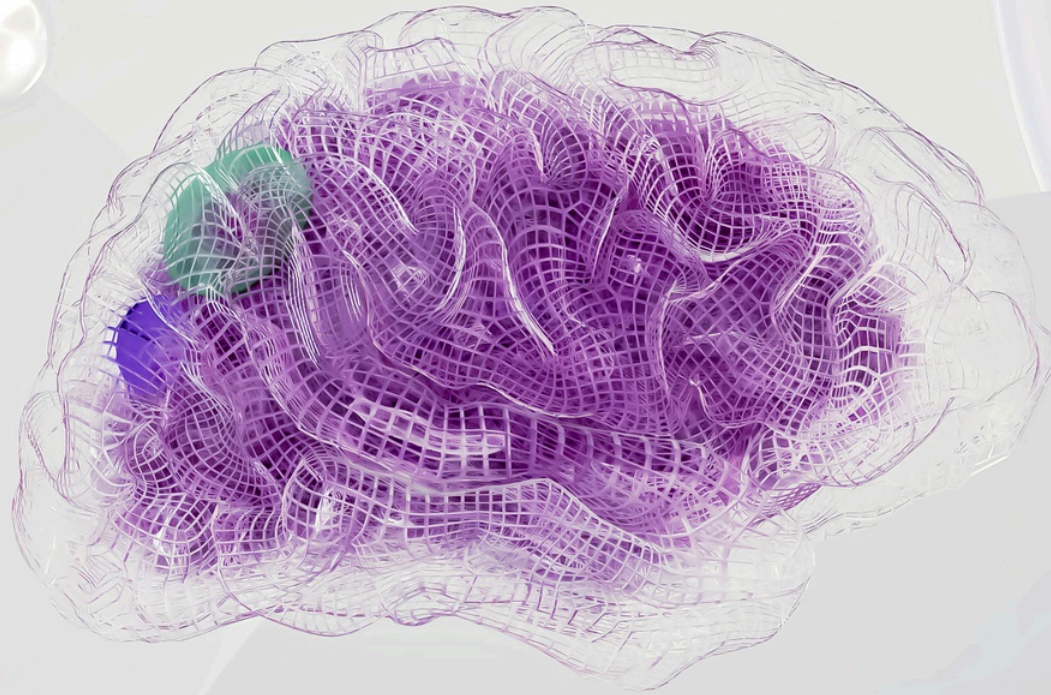


Four major initiatives integrating 16 research clusters

Programmatic clusters are inclusive of a team science-based approach that spans across basic, applied and translational research.

Research at VCU spans the arts, humanities, social sciences, STEM fields and health sciences.





Neuroscience, pain, addiction and mental health

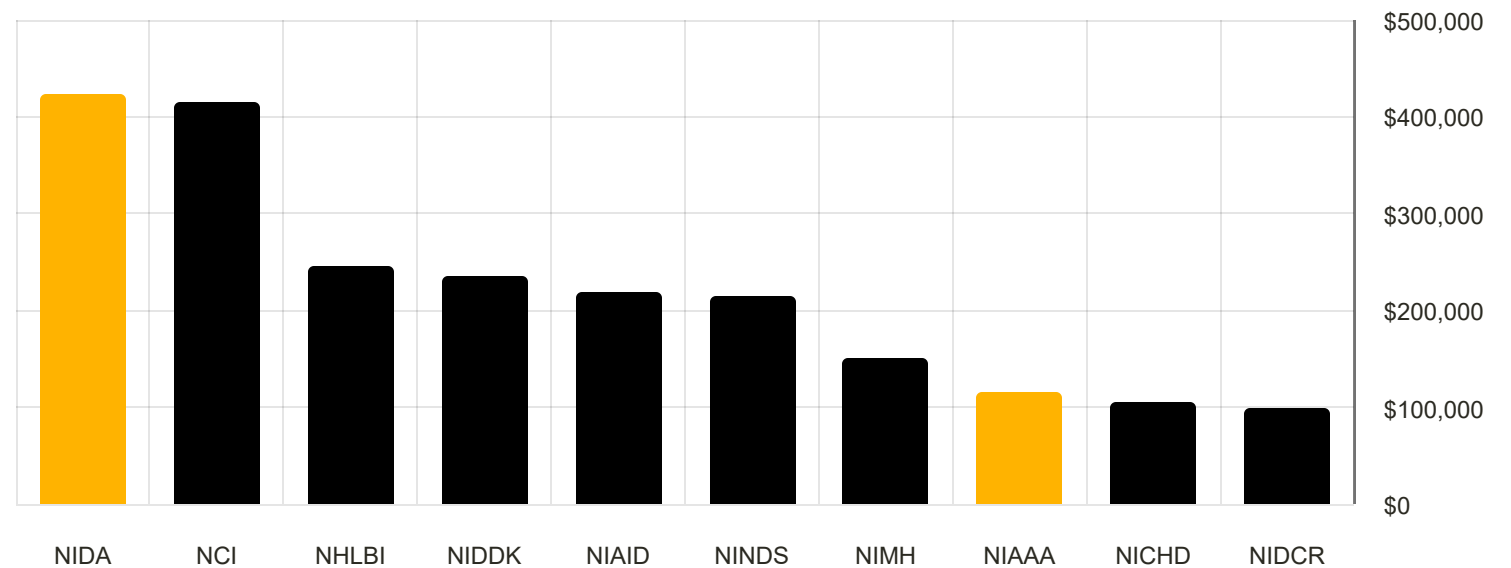


Research cluster #1

F. Gerard Moeller, M.D.

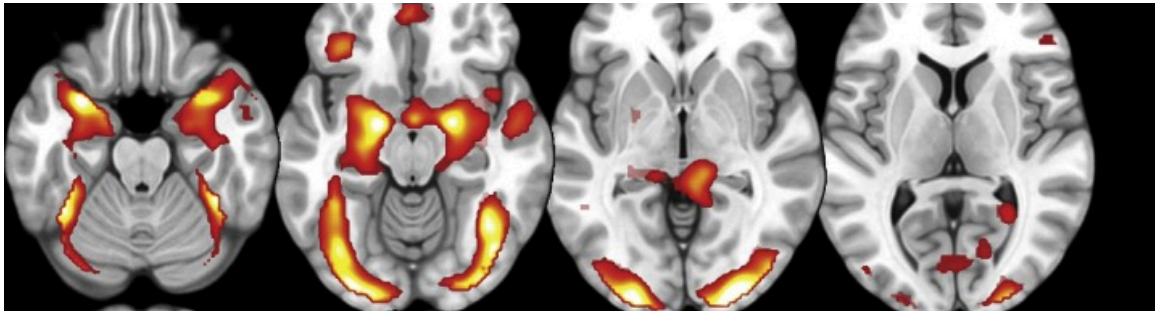
VCU has a long history of NIH-funded addictions research

Over \$500M in addictions-related research funding since 1985 (more than any other disease type)



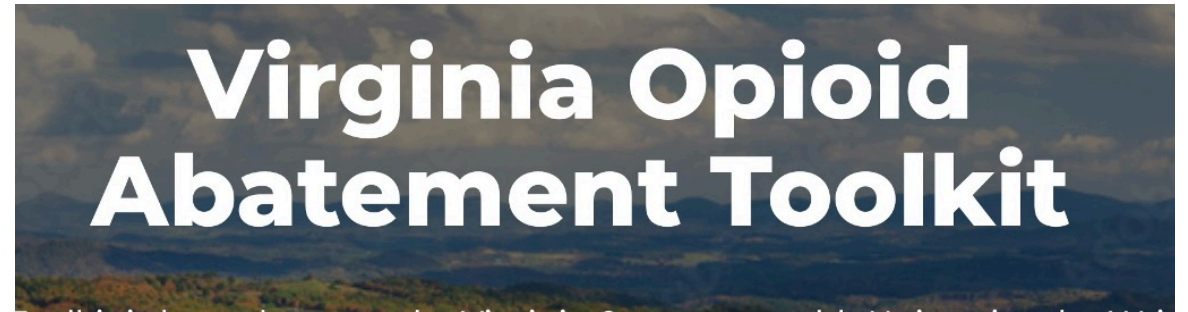
Neuroscience, pain, addiction and mental health

Addictions research at VCU is translational from basic and clinical science to community action



Brain imaging

Research on causes, consequences and basic science of new treatments for addictions.



Community education and engagement

Collaboration with Opioid Abatement Authority to educate communities across Virginia on evidence-based methods for reduction in drug overdose.

Addictions Research Provides Opportunities for Industry Collaboration

Merck breaks ground on \$3bn
pharmaceutical manufacturing facility in
Virginia

VIRGINIA NEWS

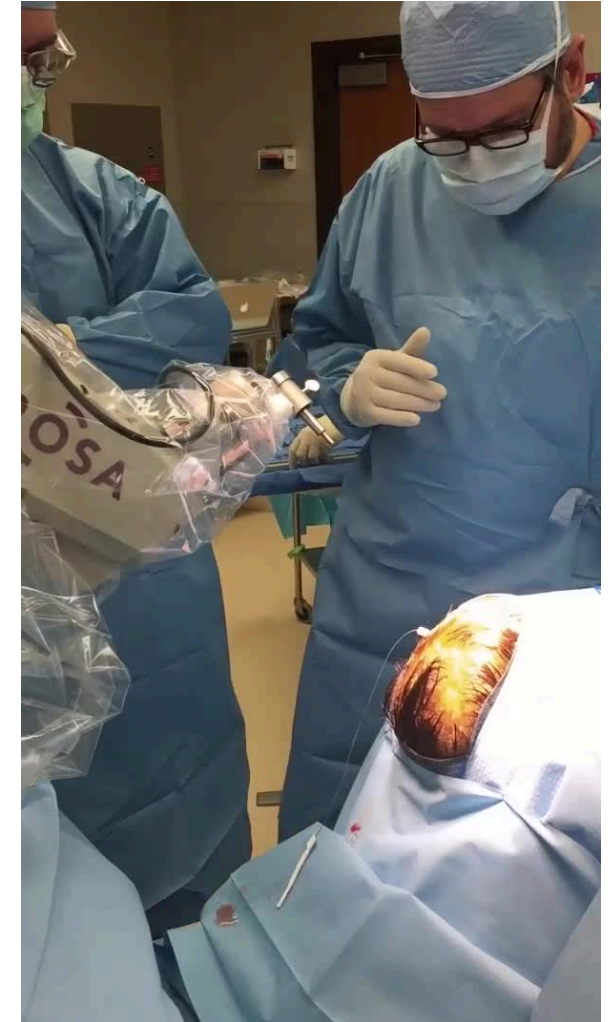
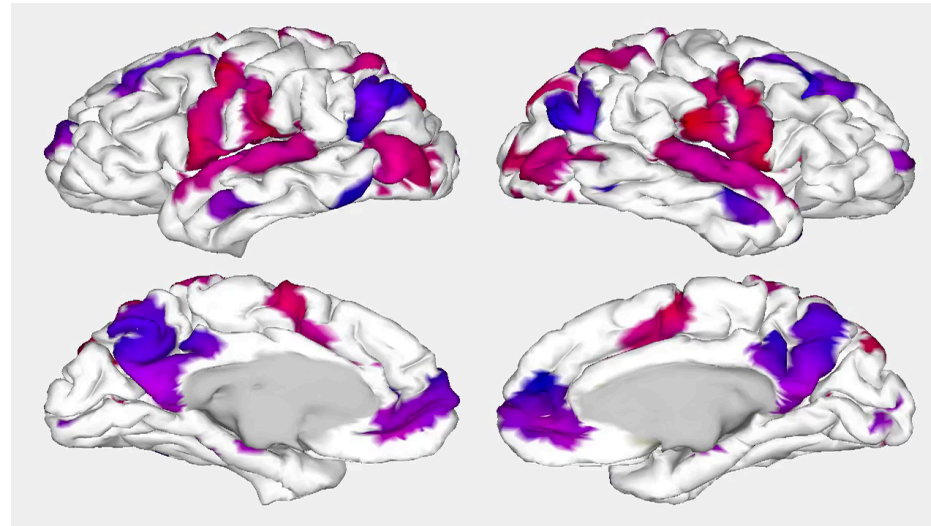
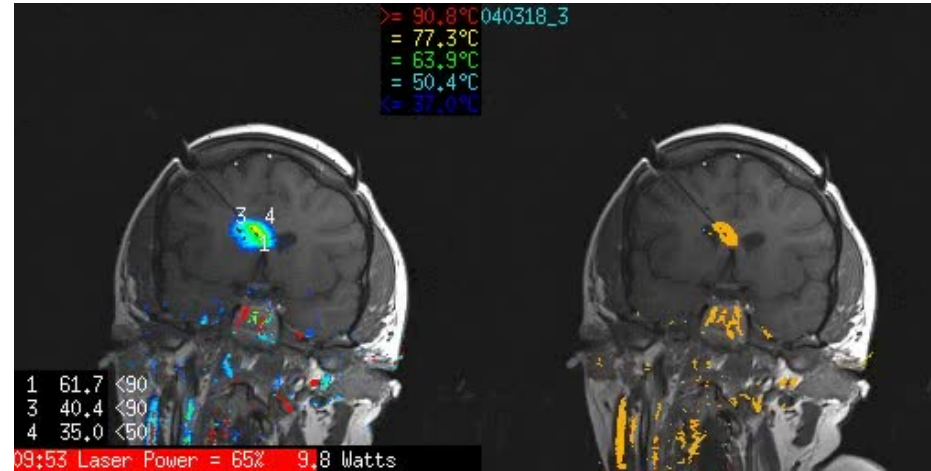
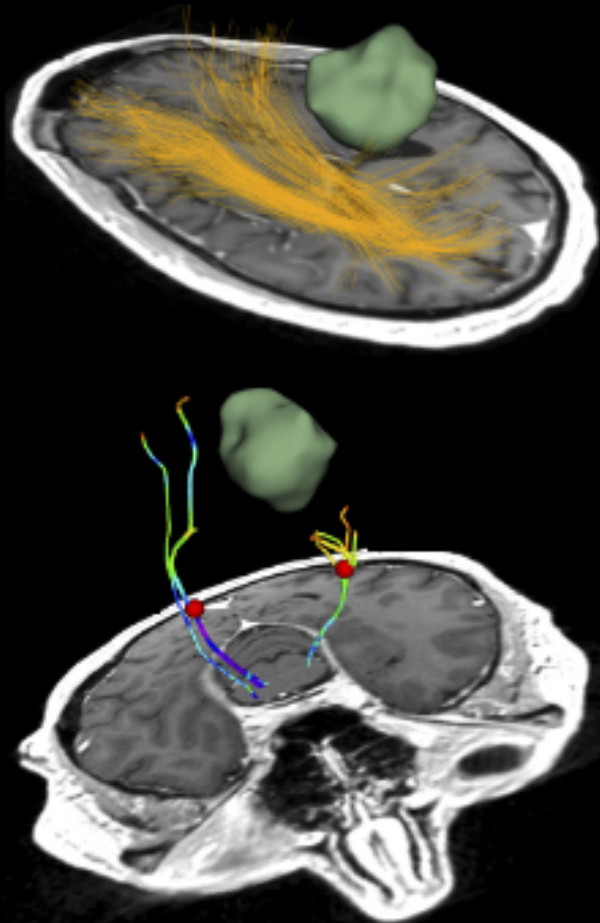
**AstraZeneca manufacturing
facility coming to Virginia**



**Eli Lilly picks Virginia for \$5bn
drug manufacturing plant**

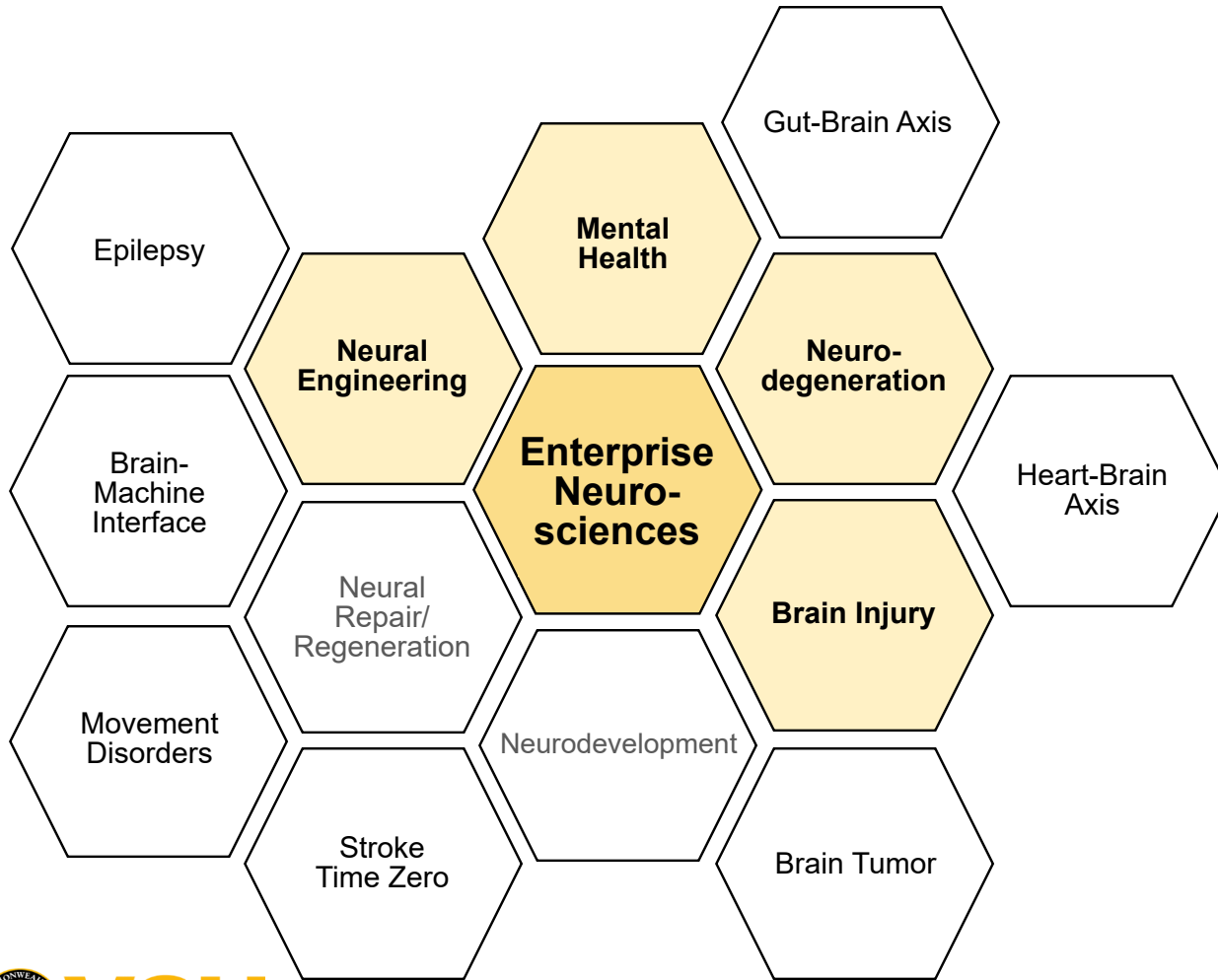
David D. Limbrick, Jr. M.D., Ph.D.

Enterprise Neurosciences

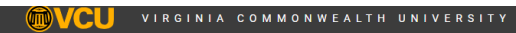


Enterprise Neurosciences

Convergence of neuroscience disciplines



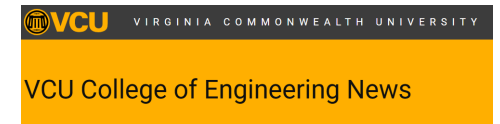
- **Convergence Mental Health (in flight)**
- **Convergence Neurodegeneration (in flight)**
 - Pepper Center (P30)



SCHOOL OF MEDICINE



Stravitz-Sanyal Institute for Liver Disease and Metabolic Health



Brain injury and recovery



Wide use of blood biomarkers and MRI: improve triage, diagnosis, management, and prognostication, potentially at all phases of TBI

- Robust trauma care networks
- Physician assisted retrieval
- decreased second insults in HICs

Reasonably good outcomes for severe TBI in LMICs with protocols based on imaging and clinical examination

High quality acute and post-acute care can achieve good outcomes in patients with severe TBI



- Suboptimal pre-hospital care in LMICs
- increased second insults in LMICs
- Current triage underestimates low-energy TBI
- suboptimal triage of such injuries

Little evidence to inform treatment of older patients (who represent 30-40% of cases)

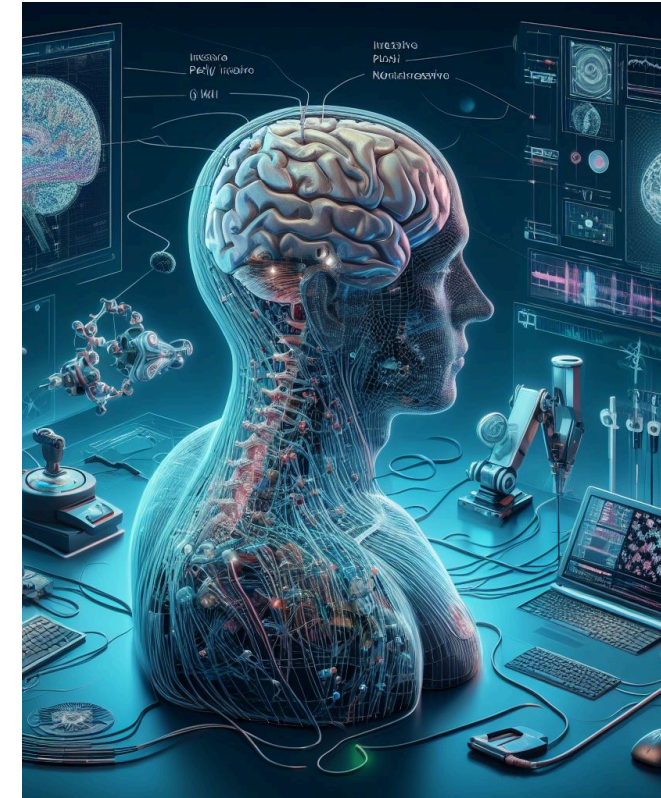
Access to rehabilitation:

- Very poor in LMICs
- Inconsistent in HICs

- Structured follow-up uncommon in mild TBI
- 50% of patients with mild TBI do not return to pre-injury fitness by 6 months

Journey of patient with TBI and impact of key aspects of care systems on outcome

Neurotechnology and brain-machine interface



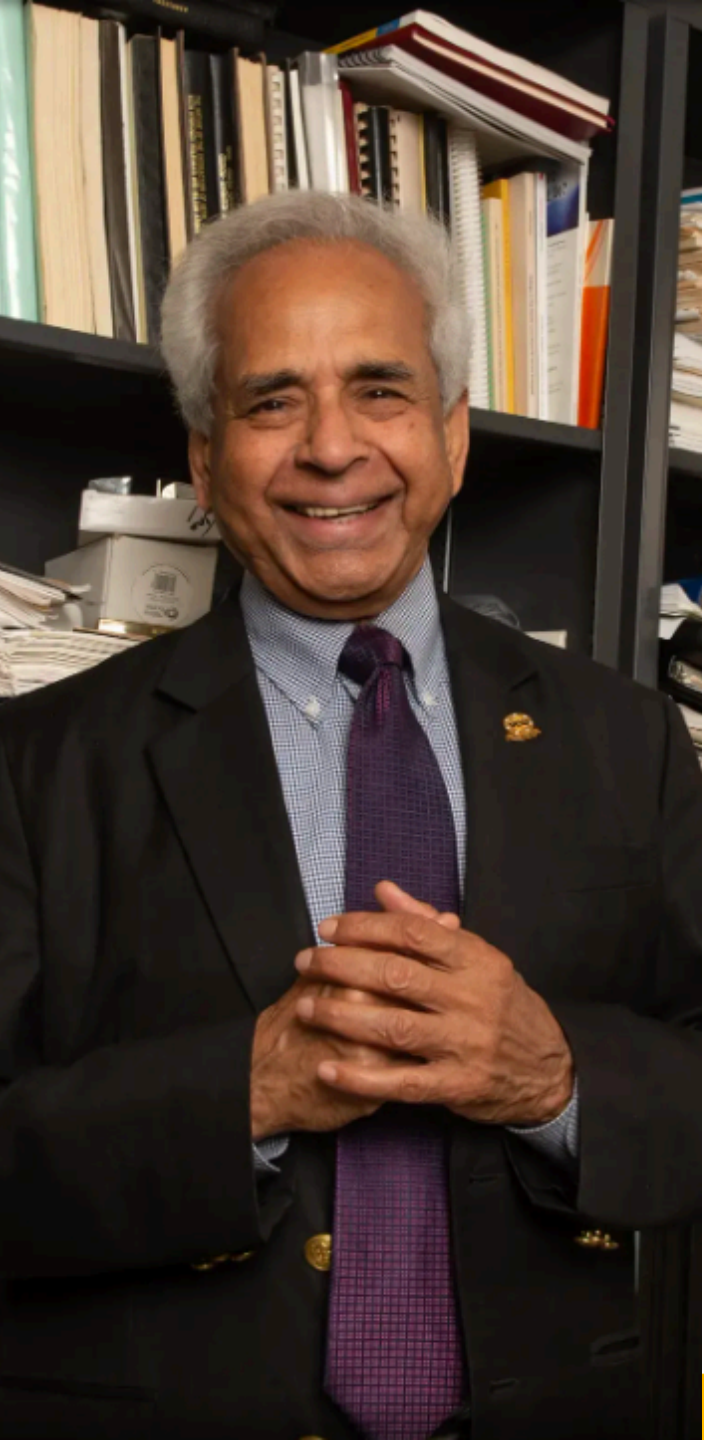
Neural Engineering

Bioelectronics & Brain Machine Interface



Energy, environment and sustainability

Research cluster #2



Puru Jena, Ph.D.

Education

University of California, Riverside (1970)

Appointments

Distinguished Professor, Virginia Commonwealth University (1980-present)

Program Director, National Science Foundation (1986-87)

Jefferson Science Fellow and Senior Science Advisor, U.S. Department of State (2008-09)

Research interests

Materials at the Nanoscale – Properties and Applications

Publications – 700+ papers, 14 books, 5 patents

World ranking

Top 0.05%

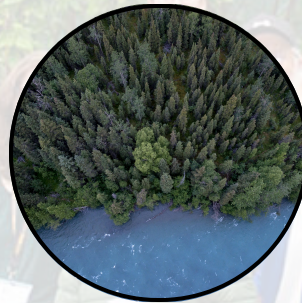
VCU Institute for Sustainable Energy and Environment

The VCU Institute for Sustainable Energy and Environment's mission is to address the existential threat of climate change by creating sustainable energy systems and sustainable ecologies, while educating students and working with community partners to meet these challenges. The ISEE is a collaborative effort composed of faculty from seven VCU schools and colleges focusing on scientific, technological, policy, humanities and education topics.



Energy

Production, storage, distribution and efficiency



Environment

Impact of greenhouse gasses, climate, ecology and society, carbon capture and conversion, science-based policies and education



Sustainability

Materials and ways of life

ISEE Accomplishments



Education

Promoting university-wide education and understanding of the issues and opportunities faced in the energy, environment and sustainability spaces



Collaborative research

Transdisciplinary research leading to 25 collaborative publications for FY25



Annual symposium

International event highlighting research conducted by ISEE faculty, networking and community outreach



FY25 external funding

\$71M in submitted grant proposals. \$5.67M funded



Translational research

Hydrogen production from water, fusion technology, solid-state batteries, novel catalysts, energy efficient devices, energy and environmental policy, community outreach activities



Invited paper

Invited by ACS Energy Letter to submit paper: *Addressing the challenge to create a sustainable future for all: It takes a village*

Chris Gough, Ph.D.

Virginia educated and educator



**Spotsylvania
County PS**

1993



**M.S., Ph.D. at
Virginia Tech**

2003



**Became
executive
director of VCU
Rice Rivers
Center**

2025



**B.S. at James
Madison
University**

1997



**Joined VCU as a
faculty member**

2008

VCU's River Campus

The VCU Rice Rivers Center is a living laboratory and outdoor classroom on the bluffs of the historic James River, encompassing 366 acres of streams, wetlands, and forests. Located 25 miles from Richmond, we are a comprehensive field station, partnering with students, researchers and the community to understand and sustain the health of our region's wildlife, ecosystems, water, and environment.



Sturgeon conservation and sustainable fisheries

\$1.27B, 6,500 jobs in Virginia



Wetland restoration

\$9.6B, 53,000 jobs in the United States



Sustainable forestry

\$21B, 108,000 jobs in Virginia

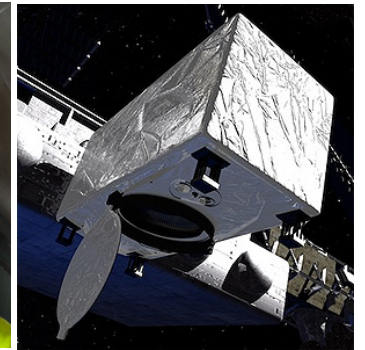
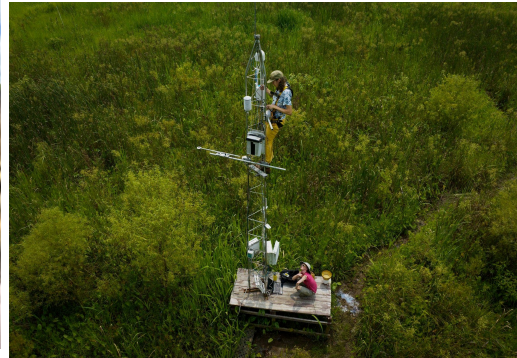
Sustainability research and training at the intersection of disciplines

ground

air

space

Multiple tools,
disciplines:

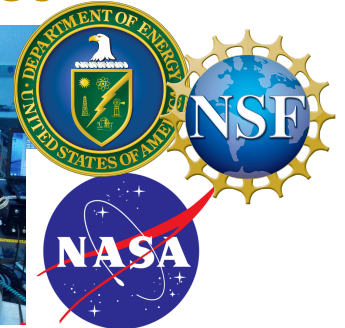
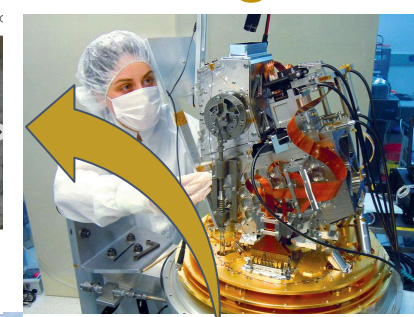
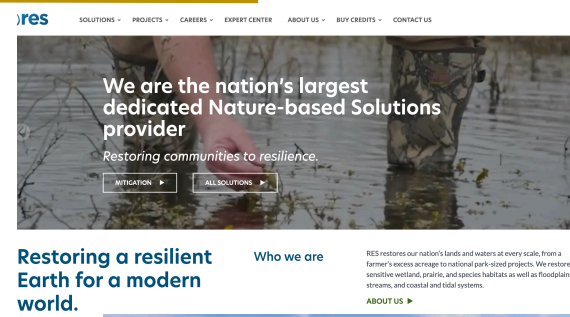


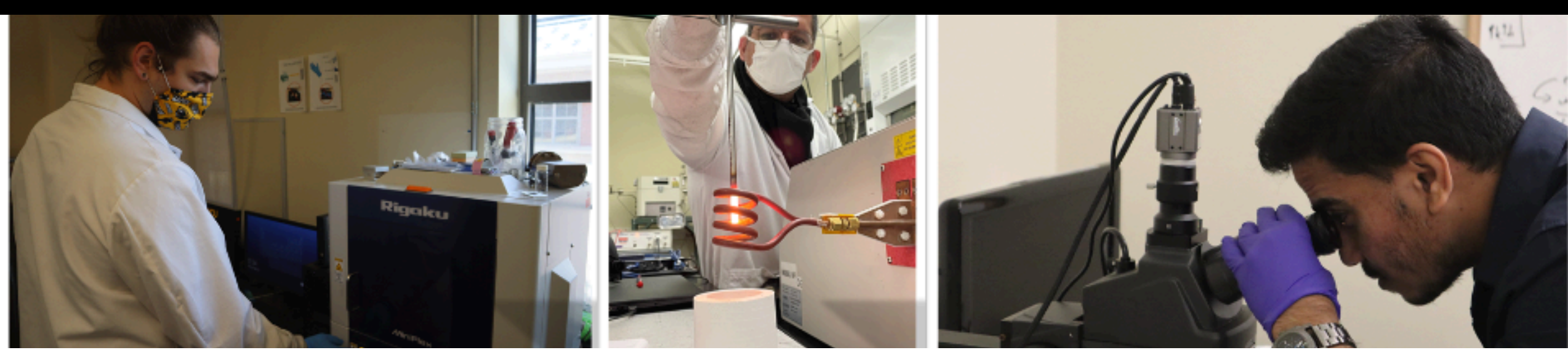
private sector

federal agencies

Public-private
partnerships:

Workforce training
through research:





Advancing sustainable materials and manufacturing at VCU

Radhika Barua, Ph.D

Assistant Professor, Mechanical & Nuclear Engineering, VCU

Director, Advanced Magnetic Materials Processing (AM²P) Lab •

Technical Advisory Board, Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing (CCAM) •

Core Faculty: Institute of Sustainable Energy and Environment (ISEE), Materials & Manufacturing Research Center (MMRC)

Bridging materials innovation, advanced manufacturing and sustainability to enable a circular, low-carbon economy.

U.S. dependence on imported critical materials (rare earths, cobalt, lithium) limits supply-chain resilience. This has to be addressed by building the foundation for a **circular materials economy**—designing, manufacturing and recycling magnetic materials that reduce dependence on scarce imports while powering a more sustainable, electrified future.



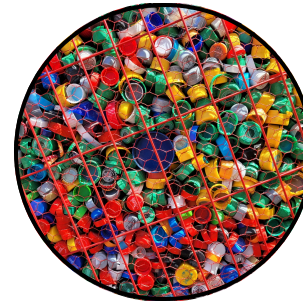
Materials Innovation

Develop next-generation magnetic, battery, and semiconductor materials with reduced critical-element content.



Advanced Manufacturing

Employ advanced manufacturing (including additive processes) for microstructure–property control, near-net-shape fabrication, and end-of-life recyclability/repair.



Recycling Technologies

Integrate solvent-free and electrochemical recovery methods to reclaim and reuse critical elements from manufacturing scrap and retired components.



Life-Cycle Assessment (LCA)

Quantify embodied energy, recyclability, and environmental impact to guide closed-loop materials design.



From Lab Discovery to Circular Manufacturing Ecosystems & Workforce Development



Pathways

Undergraduate and graduate research experiences in sustainable material design and manufacturing

Mico-credentials and STEM outreach for green thinking

Emphasize transdisciplinary training: engineering, data analytics and environmental science

Engagement with local companies (e.g. those in Chesterfield, Prince George, Richmond) through internships, co-ops and applied research

Vision 2025–2030

VCU as a regional hub for circular-materials innovation, linking policy, education, and industry

