

VHEAD
VIRGINIA HIGHER EDUCATION
ADVOCACY DAY
2020

2021-22 Biennial
Budget

REPRESENTING VIRGINIA COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY FACULTY

INVESTING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Virginia's Excellent Higher Education Needs Continued Support

According to SCHEV's [2020-22 Budget Recommendations](#), Virginia has the second highest public institution graduation rate among states, and our higher education system is ranked number one on a metric that includes faculty-student ratios, average net price, graduation rates and average graduate earnings. SCHEV reports that in the last biennium Virginia increased state support from 45% to 48% of in-state undergraduates' calculated costs, a welcome improvement but still below the state's cost-share policy target of 67%. Virginia ranks 37th in the country for level of state support. According to Illinois State University's "[Grapevine](#)" reporting, Virginia's spending on higher education increased 26% from FY 2015 to FY 2020, 13th highest in the country; and 7.5% from FY 2019 to FY 2020, 12th in the country.

Increasing Student Access to Higher Education

Governor Northam's budget proposal (**HB30** and **SB30**) increases need-based financial aid by \$45.4 million and increases the top undergraduate Tuition Assistance Grants (TAG) to \$4,000 by FY 2022. This would be the largest increase in TAG support since at least the 2013-2014 biennium. The Governor has also proposed \$72.5 million per fiscal year for tuition-free community college attendance for low and middle-income students; and extra support for Virginia's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). We believe these are important investments in access to higher education and urge the General Assembly to adopt these budget proposals.

Faculty Salaries

Competitive faculty salaries are important for recruiting and retaining the best educators and researchers. SCHEV reports that Virginia's faculty salaries are in the 34th percentile compared to peer institutions, well short of the target of the 60th percentile. The institutions' 2018 six-year plans stated that salaries "falling behind those of competitor institutions represent the greatest threat to faculty recruitment and retention." SCHEV projects salary increases at our competitors of nearly 3% annually. General Fund support for significant salary increases will keep Virginia competitive nationally and relieve the institutions of using tuition increases to pay for faculty and staff raises.

Invest in Higher Education!

We ask our representatives to do all they can to continue to strengthen the fiscal health of higher education in Virginia.