



## PCLE NEWS

### PAMPLIN COMMUNITY FOR LEADERSHIP & ENGAGEMENT

October 2021

Hello everyone, this edition of the Pamplin news offers a recap of the September 23, 2021 meeting of the PCLE, its first in-person meeting in two years. The PCLE News has been curated to provide a snapshot of the meeting for those who were not able to attend in person and also provides a means to share the content of our meeting with your individual boards. A key objective of the PCLE is to create a more informed and engaged community of all Pamplin advisory boards. That objective can only be achieved if the content of PCLE meetings is shared.

We were extremely pleased to have a stellar group of Pamplin and Virginia Tech senior staff make very informative presentations at the meeting.

#### **Pamplin Update - Dean Robert Sumichrast**

The Dean remarked that this was a really great time for Pamplin and Virginia Tech in general. Students are grateful to be back in the classrooms and sporting events. Faculty are enjoying engaging directly with students as well. While last year was difficult as a result of the pandemic, normalcy has returned. Applications for the Fall class of undergraduates increased 42% over the prior year.

Some areas, such as auxiliary services, suffered from budget reductions and some positions which became vacant were filled. Eleven new faculty were hired, with an emphasis on hiring top faculty in research. Pamplin's budget has doubled since the Dean came to Pamplin in 2013.

Pamplin Advancement, which promotes philanthropy and alumni engagement, had a record fundraising year, reaching \$26 million raised during the year. Recently, the Blackwood family announced a \$10 million donation to the Program in Real Estate.

New initiatives are underway to expand the Living Learning Community(LLC) concept, which was launched in 2014 with Innovate, the LLC for the Apex Center for Entrepreneurs. The newest LLC will be called Impact, a data analytics LLC established in partnership with the College of Science. Apex recently opened a new 6,000 square foot center for its student entrepreneurs in downtown Blacksburg. Finally, the Global Business and Analytics Complex is under construction with the new Data and Decision Sciences building. GBAC will promote teamwork, interdisciplinary activities and collaboration among colleges.

### **Dwayne Pinkney, Senior Vice President and Chief Business Officer**

Kevin Lane, Vice Chair of the PCLE introduced Dwayne Pinkney, Senior Vice President and Chief Business Officer for Virginia Tech.

Dr. Pinkney began his remarks by expressing his appreciation for the opportunity to speak to the PCLE and commended the organization for its initiatives to have all Pamplin advisory boards work together to strengthen the Pamplin community. He expressed the view that there was much to be gleaned from working together.

#### Virginia Tech Operations

Dwayne addressed the impact that COVID has had on VT operations, noting that the pivot to online delivery of instruction had been successful and that there had been strong support for flexible work arrangements for staff. He noted that operations and support functions were scaled to support those activities occurring on campus.

#### Future of Work

Dwayne oversees the VT Human Resources function which has initiated a project to design the future of work, a real time initiative designed to launch new work

models to support recruitment, retention, and productivity while leveraging the latest technologies. Pamplin participated in the piloting of this initiative. Core principles of the Future of Work emphasize that new work models must support and complement on-campus programming and instruction. Also, that flexible work includes remote work, hybrid work, and alternative work schedules.

Technology is integral to the achievement of the academic mission and the future of work. Technology enhancements include:

- Support for the growing demand for collaboration and communication platforms.
- Digitizing the signature process
- Digital accessibility (particularly supporting the mobility impaired)

Cybersecurity-developing adaptive approaches to monitoring and securing controls. Data infrastructure is a valuable VT asset.

NOTE: Dwayne reported that VT had recently experienced a cyber attack and that strategies that are in place for cybersecurity served VT well, but that valuable lessons were learned.

The Future of Work initiative has identified opportunities for further exploration and refinement, including transformation of physical work spaces and enhancing universal access to technology. Looking ahead, the Future of Work will address:

- Staying agile and adaptive
- Preparing for disruptions to the continuity of operations
- Endless opportunities in attracting talent

Dwayne concluded his remarks by stressing the importance of building community by:

- Leveraging the latest technology to accomplish our mission
- Enacting adaptive IT and operational infrastructure
- Flexibility and agility
- Listening to employee and student feedback

## Janice Branch Hall, Pamplin Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion And Belonging

The Chair next introduced Janice Branch Hall, Pamplin's Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB). Janice had previously spoken to the PCLE last December and presented a report of significant progress on DEIB since then.

Janice and her team have been working to design the infrastructure that will address current needs and foster future opportunities that will help transform our culture in a sustainable way. The Pamplin DEIB team is working to design a robust implementation plan for DEIB that is strategic and intentional. The goal is to make sure that students graduate with the diverse skills to be successful in today's environment.

Excellent progress is being made in the student representation of underserved and underrepresented minorities which now represent 37% of the student population vs. a goal of 40%.

Since Janice last spoke to the PCLE last December much has been accomplished, including:

- Development of performance goals
- Establishing scholarship goals: creating funding models that will enable us to attract and retain the diversity we are seeking
- Understanding barriers to recruiting diverse students
- Pursuing initiatives to recruit students early (pre-college)
- Expand partnerships with NBCU's
- Developing performance metrics for advisory board representation
- Empowering each board to develop their own plan to allow for customization to meet each board's unique needs.

Pamplin's Strategic Plan is driven by an Implementation Plan which contains a specific DEIB plan in Initiative 5.6. Initiative 5.6 has the following goals:  
Goal 1: Build the infrastructure in Pamplin to assure sustainable transformation in areas of DEIB. Achievement of this goal is supported by the establishment of the

Pamplin Community Committee, which has representatives from faculty, alumni and student constituents, and the formation of departmental committees. In addition the Pamplin Advisory Council (PAC) has established a DEIB Task Force.

Goal 2: Achieve representational diversity in Pamplin.

A pre-collegiate summer program for prospective students will commence in the Summer of 2022. This program will be a 7 day residential pathway program to attract new URM and underserved high school students. A description of this program called PIP is attached.

Work is underway to develop a student success model that goes beyond traditional advising.

Alumni metrics:

- Achieve 15% URM members and 40 % women on Emerging Leaders and Recent Alumni boards
- Achieve 100% of alumni advisory boards developing DEIB plans

Goal 3: Advance the academic mission through DEIB

- Undergraduate learning objectives established in the Spring 2021
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of cultural humility and its application to business contexts.

Goal 4: Foster an equitable and inclusive community where stakeholders have a sense of belonging. Initiatives are underway to partner with firms such as Deloitte and PwC.

A copy of Strategic Initiative 5.6 is attached.

Finally, Janice announced an important event honoring all Pamplin veterans, Veterans Appreciation Day on Nov 11, 2021

## Debbie Day, Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations

The Chair introduced the next speaker, Debbie Day, Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations. Debbie is the senior staff member responsible for alumni programs at Virginia Tech and is also coordinating the university's 18 month long Sesquicentennial celebration from July 2021 through December 2022.

The 150th anniversary celebration is focused on three cross cutting themes:

- Solving problems
- Expanding knowledge
- Creating and engaging communities

The kick off event for the celebration occurred during Homecoming weekend earlier this month. The midpoint of the celebration will be a capstone event in April 2022, while celebrating "Ut Prosim Month". An Ut Prosim symposium will be held in November 2022, celebrating what Ut Prosim means. Finally, a closing celebration will be held in December 2022.

Over the next 16 months, colleges and units will be featured each month with Pamplin's event occurring in December 2022. Throughout the celebration period there will be a number of events and promotions statewide and globally. Tangible events and activities will include a time capsule, a Sesquicentennial grove of trees, merchandise and giveaways.

### Engagement Update

Debbie then presented some highlights of alumni engagement activities.

The current Campaign's goal is to raise \$1.5 billion and to increase the number of engaged alumni to 100,000. The engagement goal is to reach 22% by 2022. Note: The Dean commented that Pamplin has already achieved 24% alumni engagement.

Debbie cited the following engagement learnings:

- Virtual engagement works

- Alumni want “stuff” and are willing to pay for it
- Alumni want to engage in a number of ways
- We are all better when we are on the same page
- Alumni want to come back to campus
- Alumni want to be together

### Negar Jamshidimehr, PCLE member and Director

Negar described two issues that she and Blair Fiala, Chair of the RAB and [Michael Vitak](#) Chair of the Prism advisory council are addressing. These are new graduates, 0 to 2 years after graduation and members of recent alumni or emerging leader boards who have reached the 10 year limitation for membership on most of these boards. Blair reported that the RAB has taken steps to address these issues, including establishing an apprentice program for new graduates.

Negar, Blair and Michael will collaborate to develop a PCLE model to offer a potential framework for these boards to consider in the future.

### General Discussion

Kevin Lane then led an open discussion of topics for potential PCLE involvement, beginning with DEIB.

Considering ways for the PCLE to support DEIB objectives for Pamplin can be an ongoing discussion as it considers a possible model for all advisory boards to consider. The Dean noted that the BIT board, in particular due to its rapid growth

should have opportunities for added diversity. Gerry Trainor commented that the Real Estate board does not have any younger members, an issue that needs to be addressed. Artemis Berry, Chair of the Marketing Board mentioned that their board has established a DEIB committee and that they want to grow the board and enhance diversity with its membership.

Taking Dwayne Pinkney's comments about Virginia Tech's operations in the new normal, discussed ensued about how advisory boards might better support engagement. One example was offered by Christina Todd of the Finance Advisory Board. Christina indicated that a recent hybrid (in-person and virtual attendees) had the highest attendance ever for the Finance Board. Ways to encourage greater alumni engagement were discussed including offering ways to get board members more involved by letting them choose. Tim Chase, Chair of the MBA Advisory Board suggested that his board is interested in finding ways to drive engagement. This topic appears to warrant further discussion by the PCLE.

Finally, Kevin Lane noted that with the Sesquicentennial celebration concluding in December 2022 with a Pamplin featured presentation, that there may be an opportunity to hold another Engagement Summit similar to the one held in October 2019. Jim Hatch suggested that the PCLE could be the logical primary sponsor of such an event.

**Brad Fravel, Executive Director  
LINK Center for Advancing Partnerships**

Kevin Lane introduced the final speaker for the meeting, Brad Fravel, Executive Director of the Link Center for Advancing Partnerships. Link is one of three centers- Link+License+Launch which report to Brandy Salmon, Associate Vice President for Innovation and Partnerships. LINK works to develop front end external partnerships, working directly with companies and foundations to help recruit talent, collaborate on sponsored research and promote fundraising through a hybrid model. LINK is 50% supported by University Advancement and 50% by



the Vice President for Research and Innovation. LINK began in 2018. License was started in 2019 and serves as the Virginia Tech technology transfer office for intellectual property and sponsored research. Launch began in 2020, connecting entrepreneurs and investors. All three centers desire to make the most out of business relationships with the university.

LINK is customer focused with a key emphasis on building alumni networks to realize the promise/benefit of that relationship with the University. For alumni, LINK is focused on ways in which alumni can be engaged in their places of work and how Virginia Tech can play a role in their career after they have graduated. Also LINK desires to help companies with their recruiting strategy, including Business Horizons and getting the yield of talent that they want from Virginia Tech.

Underscoring why business partnerships are important, Brad indicated that 70% of R&D is funded by industry. R&D is a critical piece of sustaining what companies expect from higher education. Big Ideas- LINK listens to what companies are saying about the challenges they are facing. LINK assembles around big ideas that matter, aligning University capabilities with industry interests to solve the world's problems and helping business leaders understand where Virginia Tech is strong. Other Big Ideas include promoting diversity, ensuring that the right people are in the conversations. Companies such as GM and Charles Schwab are making investments in inclusion and diversity. Boeing recently announced a \$50 million commitment to support a very diverse Innovation Campus that Virginia Tech is building in Arlington.

LINK seeks to engage alumni through strategic activities designed to bring value to Hokies, strengthen Virginia Tech industry partnerships and advance shared goals. Alumni corporate networks offer mentoring opportunities by building workplace networks and inspire workplace giving to Virginia Tech and promote company matching gifts. Identifying corporate champions for Virginia Tech helps promote sustainable corporate relationships.

Brad concluded his remarks by noting that LINK had helped promote Virginia Tech Giving Day with corporate partners such as Deloitte and Freddie Mac.

Next PCLE Meeting

We will be scheduling the next PCLE meeting sometime in December. Be on the lookout for a Doodle poll offering suggesting possible dates and times for the meeting.

Thank you for your support.

Jim Hatch, Chair  
PCLE

If there have been any changes in your advisory board leadership please advise Crystal Jefferson ([crocke@vt.edu](mailto:crcrocke@vt.edu)) and myself ([jhatch@vt.edu](mailto:jhatch@vt.edu)), so that the electronic roster can be updated.