

2023 SIX-YEAR PLAN NARRATIVE (Part II)

INSTITUTION: CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT UNIVERSITY

OVERVIEW

The six-year plan should describe the institution's goals as they relate to the Commonwealth's goals as articulated in the *Pathways to Opportunity: The Virginia Plan for Higher Education*; the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2011 (TJ21); the Restructured Higher Education Financial and Administrative Operations Act of 2005; and the Governor's objectives to prepare every graduate for success in life. Please use this opportunity to outline your institution's plans and objectives, especially as they relate to the Commonwealth's goals.

The instructions within the institutional mission and priorities section below ask for specific strategies related to affordability and access to quality postsecondary education that prepare students for success in life. Other sections offer institutions the opportunity to describe additional strategies to advance institutional goals and Commonwealth needs.

Please be comprehensive but as concise as possible with responses; you are encouraged to use bullet points vs. prose. Consider this a starting point for the dialogue with OpSix; you will have the opportunity to further elaborate on the narrative in your review sessions later this summer.

SECTION A: MISSION & PRIORITIES

Key question: What are your institution's unique strengths and how do those inform your strategic priorities?

A1. What is your institutional mission? Please share any plans you have to change your mission over the six-year period.

The current mission and vision statements for Christopher Newport on record are listed below. Under the leadership of Christopher Newport's 6th President, William G. Kelly, the statements will be revisited as part of the strategic planning process.

Mission. The mission of Christopher Newport University is to provide educational and cultural opportunities that benefit the students, the residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the nation. Christopher Newport provides outstanding academic programs and National Championship winning athletic programs, encourages service and leadership within the community, and provides opportunities for student involvement in nationally and regionally recognized research and arts programs.

Our primary focus is excellence in teaching, inspired by sound scholarship. At Christopher Newport, personal attention in small classes creates a student-centered environment where creativity and excellence can flourish. Our primary emphasis is to provide outstanding undergraduate education. We also serve the Commonwealth with four master's degree programs that provide intellectual and professional development for graduate-level students.

We are committed to providing a liberal arts education that stimulates intellectual inquiry and fosters social and civic values. Christopher Newport students acquire the qualities of mind and spirit that prepare them to lead lives with meaning and purpose. As a state university, we are committed to service that shapes the economic, civic, and cultural life of our community and Commonwealth.

Vision. Christopher Newport University, a small academically selective public university, is grounded in the principles of liberal learning and dedicated to the ideals of scholarship, leadership and service. We celebrate the values inherent in the liberal arts and sciences and live as a community of honor to inspire our students to lead lives of significance.

We aspire to be a preeminent, public liberal arts and sciences university. We will pursue excellence in all that we do and dedicate ourselves to those initiatives that will strengthen our teaching, our scholarship, our academic programs and disciplines, and our campus community. We will build an intimate, diverse, residential community which will attract the most academically talented, inquisitive and intellectually adventuresome students. We will ignite in our students a love of learning and instill a sense of responsibility and civic duty that will give our graduates the knowledge and confidence to engage as responsible leaders and citizens in their communities, the nation and the world.

A2. What are your institution's greatest strengths and areas of distinctiveness that it should continue to invest in? What are your institution's greatest opportunities for improvement?

Greatest Strengths and Areas of Distinctiveness worth continued investment

- **Students first, values-based community.** Christopher Newport faculty and staff are “all in” on our students first, values-based community where the focus is academic excellence, leadership, service and civic engagement. The experience is grounded in the teacher-scholar model where our undergraduates are taught and mentored by talented faculty who support student focused efforts in research, study abroad, service and internships.

Our community is enabled by our size. Christopher Newport is small enough to promote a strong culture of community and large enough to provide limitless opportunities for our students. And as mental health has become a more pressing concern among students, the size of our community and the individual attention we are able to provide has become a true asset.

- **Outstanding retention and graduation rates along with exceptional post-graduation outcomes.** Christopher Newport's first-to-second year retention rate is 86% and the four and six year graduation rates are 66% and 75% respectively. According to career outcome data, the annual percentage rate of Christopher Newport graduates who are employed or enrolled in full time graduate programs 6 months after graduating is consistently between 92% and 96%.

Underpinning the numbers are a comprehensive set of student support services that include one-on-one success coaching, transition courses and counseling, summer bridge programming, CRLA certified peer tutoring and peer mentoring, first-time in college student calibrated course scheduling and major exploration programs.

They are further enhanced by Commonwealth-supported programs like Community Captains, a college preparation, access and success program providing a pathway to higher education for qualified first generation and economically challenged high school students.

- **World class facilities and state-of-the-art technology provide an exceptional learning environment for STEM and the Arts.** In 2025, Christopher Newport will open the last phase of the Integrated Sciences Center (ISC3) and the new structure will contribute to over \$1 billion of new capital construction over the last 20 years. ISC3 supports the continued growth of our STEM programs and, in fact, our College of Natural and Behavioral Sciences now represents half of our graduating class each year.

In 2021, Christopher Newport opened the Mary M. Torggler Fine Arts Center to complement the award-winning Ferguson Center for the Performing Arts. Together, these institutions form an extraordinary cultural complex that captivates audiences with

an array of incredible performances, exhibitions, classes, and events. The Centers offer something for everyone, transcending campus boundaries and invigorating the cultural and economic life of our community, region and beyond.

Opportunities

- **President William G. Kelly joined Christopher Newport on July 1, 2023 as the 6th President following the 26 year presidency of Paul Trible. Christopher Newport has a unique opportunity to engage all of our stakeholders to reflect on all that has been accomplished and prepare for the future.** President Kelly's first major initiative will be to launch a new strategic plan - the Strategic Compass. Over the next several months, we will have the opportunity to ask a fundamental question of a public university: Are our resources in the right place to address the current needs of the community, economy and the Commonwealth?
- **Christopher Newport must expand revenue opportunities to enhance access and affordability to keep tuition increases to a minimum.**
 - Pursue new out-of-state and international enrollment strategies to bolster Christopher Newport's enrollment and expand the Commonwealth's talent pipeline. Out-of-state students that graduate from Christopher Newport are almost twice as likely to remain in Virginia when compared to the statewide average. (see chart A, page 23, institution-specific fact pack.)
 - Increase our alignment with the local and regional economy. Establish new partnerships (military, large employers, etc.) whereby Christopher Newport begins to offer more flexible program offerings (part-time, degree-completion for non-traditional students, certificate or continuing education programs.)
 - Build on the success of the Community Captains Program to increase first-time in college and transfer enrollments. In doing so, we would expand transition courses and summer bridge programming.

A3. What are the top 3-5 strategic priorities you are currently pursuing or planning to pursue in the next six years? Please explain how each strategy relates to the strengths and/or opportunities for improvement mentioned above and will ultimately drive better outcomes for students.

- **President Kelly will launch the *Strategic Compass* to develop a new strategic plan for Christopher Newport.** Our students and stakeholders will benefit as the University pursues greater alignment of resources towards the greatest possible impact we can have on our community, Commonwealth and country.
- **Pursue new programmatic offerings.** Develop programs in nursing and undergraduate education to meet critical shortages in the economy. Additionally, explore more flexible education options through local and regional partnerships and internships, e.g. certificates, graduate credentials.
- **Improve efficiencies across the university.** We must continue to automate processes to improve efficiency and responsiveness (i.e. implementing the DegreeWorks solution and e-transcripts, revising the at-risk alert process, and automating paper processes across the university.) The goal is to produce cost savings for reallocation to high priority areas to ultimately improve the student experience and increase retention and graduation rates.
- **Strategically pursue opportunities to strengthen accessibility efforts for all students.** The objective is to pursue diversity in all forms to ensure the greatest possible access to the Christopher Newport experience to high ability students from all across the Commonwealth, the nation and globe, including launching an aspirational fundraising campaign with high emphasis on student scholarships and academic programs.
- **Solidify athletic conference affiliation.** There are only two public Division III schools in Virginia, and the private Division III schools have formed their conference affiliations to the exclusion of Christopher Newport and Mary Washington. Stabilizing our athletic conference will help the university recruit students from other geographic locations, to include out-of-state. Robust athletic programs are vital to the fabric of universities.

A4. What support can OpSix provide to help you achieve those strategies? Please include both budget and policy requests and reference Part I of your submission where appropriate.

Policy

- **Better statewide enrollment management policies to ensure disincentivize growth at “choice driver” institutions when it becomes a detriment to regional campuses.**
- **Streamline the process of academic program review by SCHEV, and remove SCHEV from reviewing purely administrative matters at the department level.** An example is the naming and structure of academic departments.
- **Allow Christopher Newport to provide in-state tuition discounts to attract more out-of-state students who stay and contribute to the Virginia talent pipeline.** Out-of-state students that graduate from Christopher Newport are almost twice as likely to remain in Virginia when compared to the statewide average. (see chart A, page 23, institution-specific fact pack.)

Budget

- **More funding is needed to increase enrollment and success of low-income students.** The current model of funding based on historical enrollment is counter to improving access and affordability at institutions with lower endowment resources and lower historical enrollment from traditionally underrepresented populations.

One example: Christopher Newport met 82% of unmet need for Pell-eligible students in 2022-23. To meet 100% of need for Pell-eligible students, we would approximately need an additional \$3.5m. This is a significant impediment to enrolling additional Pell-eligible students at Christopher Newport.

- **Funding to further assist with state mandated programs including the Virginia Military Survivors & Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) and compensation increases for employees.**
- **Increase equipment trust fund allocation.**
- **Make permanent or expand the SCHEV Higher Education Mental Health Workforce Pilot.**
- **Funding to support new programmatic offerings such as the new nursing and teacher education programs under development.**

SECTION B: STRATEGIC DEEP DIVE – ENROLLMENT VOLUME & COMPOSITION

Key question: How is your institution managing enrollment in light of state and national trends, and what are the financial implications?

B1. What do you see as the primary drivers of recent enrollment trends for your institution? Please reference any specific academic programs that have had a significant (positive or negative) effect on enrollment, if relevant.

- **Growth of undergraduate enrollment at the doctoral institutions in Virginia during a time of flat and/or declining numbers of students graduating from high school.**
- **New Post-Pandemic enrollment behaviors.** We have seen an increase in the number of “gap year” students. The “gap year” has become more acceptable and popular with traditional first-time-in-college students and this gap in the pipeline is causing enrollment loss.
- **Virginia Community College System (VCCS) enrollment decline.** The VCCS has historically served as a feeder for transfer students, so as their enrollment has declined so have our transfers from VCCS institutions.
- **Competition from out-of-state institutions for Virginia students.** We are facing increased competition for students from larger out-of-state institutions that see Virginia as a source for students as they manage their own enrollment declines.
- **High net cost compared to our competitors.** As a young institution without a substantial endowment, we are simply unable to offer significant grant packages as compared to institutions across the Commonwealth.
- **Decline in out-of-state students at the “choice institutions” causing additional in-state spots to open up at those institutions as they try to manage their own enrollment challenges.**
- **Christopher Newport has seen significant growth of students studying in our Department of Physics, Computer Science and Engineering (PCSE), including the new Bachelor of Science in Information Science degree.** We attribute much of this to the investment of the Tech Talent Investment Program.

B2. Please summarize your enrollment management strategy moving forward and the specific actions (if any) you are taking to implement that strategy.

- **Underrepresented Students.** We continue to explore and develop strategies to attract more students from historically low socioeconomic areas of Virginia; expand outreach to Virginia Community College System TRIO support offices to increase recruitment and application numbers from the VCCS and low-income households; increase group visits for TRIO students on Christopher Newport's campus; partner with Virginia Peninsula Community College to attract and enroll more students who are eligible for the Federal Pell Grant; increase tutoring support; and increase counseling and support in other ways, such as changes in training for Residence Life to provide new levels of support.
- **Strategic Compass.** Enrollment management strategy will be a primary focus of the University's new Strategic Compass (planning effort). After many years of "Build it, and they will come" (and fall in love and stay/graduate), meaning 1,200+ freshmen, 200 transfers, and 5,000 total, we are at a critical juncture. The impact of COVID and the need to assess nationwide and regional enrollment demographics has resulted in a chaotic landscape and a short-term need to downsize in reaction to the reality we found ourselves in during and post-COVID. During budget development for 2023-24 in particular we have had to begin to come to grips with the reality of the enrollment management landscape in Virginia by downsizing some functions, prioritizing what we offer and do for our students, and reinventing ourselves.
- **Revised Undergraduate Enrollment Strategy.** Expand out-of-state recruitment and marketing with an immediate emphasis on the markets in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, and North Carolina. In the coming years, extending into Georgia, Florida, and Texas, paying special attention to Pell eligible and students from low income households.
- **College Preparation Program/Community Captains.** Expand the Community Captains program to additional K-12 schools in the region. Community Captains is a college preparation, access and success program aimed at providing a pathway to higher education for qualified first generation and economically challenged high school students. Students are recruited in their sophomore year of high school and then receive two years of mentoring, coaching, and education at Christopher Newport to prepare them for a successful launch into their college experience, wherever that may be. However, those who complete the two-year preparatory program and maintain a 3.4 GPA or higher are guaranteed admission to Christopher Newport.

B3. How ambitious/realistic/conservative are the enrollment projections you most recently submitted to SCHEV? What are the greatest unknowns or risks that could lead enrollment to differ significantly from your projections? Please reference national and statewide enrollment trends/projections and cite any other data (e.g. regional trends, performance of prior enrollment strategies) that informed your projections.

- **Enrollment Cliff, Risks, and Unknowns.** There is robust discussion on campus as to whether the projections are conservative based on the current status of high school graduates in Virginia, or ambitious relative to both the current climate and the near future. (<https://www.wiche.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Knocking-pdf-for-website.pdf>). Risks include continued growth at "Choice Driver" institutions in Virginia; lack of adequate funding to meet the demonstrated financial need of students; and continued aggressive recruitment and funding models at out-of-state flagships. It is unknown if all other state schools continue to be successful in recruiting Virginia students.
- **Current Enrollment Projections.** Following from above, enrollment projections submitted to SCHEV incorporate a 3% increase in headcount and FTE by 2029-30; Increase of 50 first-time in-college students enrolling by 2029-30; increase of 10 new transfer students by 2029-30; and increase of 10 new graduate students by 2029-30.
- **Student Profile.** In the short term, student profiles do appear to be changing but it is difficult to separate overall pandemic impacts from other causes. https://research.schev.edu/enrollment/B10_FreshmenProfile.asp
- **New Programs Take Time.** Even if we add programs like Nursing and Education, it will take several years to realize significant application, admit, and enrollment gains.
- **New Strategic Plan.** The overall long-term FTE goal will be revisited with President Kelly and the strategic plan. In the meantime, given the uncertainty involved in such forecasting, the recent projections essentially maintain historic goals as the out-year horizon.

B4. Explain the implications of your enrollment strategy on your institution's financials. Please consider impacts on both revenues (e.g., discounting, financial aid, net tuition revenue) and expenditures (e.g., costs to implement enrollment management strategies, costs of enrolling more students or students with different needs, cost-per-student impact of flat/decreased enrollment).

- **Students require more services to persist and be successful in college.** Accordingly, additional financial resources are needed.
- **New first-time-in-college students are less prepared for college-level work and expectations due to the learning gap and adjustments made to grades, assignments, and deadlines during COVID-19.** Therefore, the high school GPA is no longer a clear predictor of success in college. As a result of test-optional admission, it is more difficult to determine proactive interventions to support student learning. Resources are needed to respond to the needs and create the intervention.
- **The number of first-time-in-college students who do not meet the minimum satisfactory academic progress requirements to qualify for need-based aid increased by 46%.** More students have become ineligible for aid in their second year of enrollment, adversely impacting retention and completion. Approximately 34% of students who did not meet these standards are from low or middle income households. Financial assistance is needed to meet the needs of students impacted by COVID-19 and to support retention and completion for those students from low and middle income households.
- **As we seek to enroll in-state students from needier backgrounds, funding for student financial aid will be required to reduce the students' unmet need.** The current available state allocation is limited at \$7.3 million.
- **As we seek to enroll students from other states, there will be a need for financial assistance for our neediest population.** In 2022-23 there were only 15 out-of-state students with high financial need (Pell eligible). Currently, there is a limited amount of additional Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant Funding (FSEOG) for Pell eligible students and there is no specific additional funding available for out-of-state students.
- **Mental health requirements are dramatically different than they were 10 years ago and especially post-pandemic.** The demand for counseling services has increased dramatically and the need to support our students, faculty and staff in new ways drive costs in directions we cannot always predict or quantify.

SECTION C: STRATEGIC DEEP DIVE – PROGRAM ALIGNMENT & PERFORMANCE

COMPLETION OUTCOMES

Key question: How is your institution supporting all students to succeed in completing their degree in a timely manner?

C1. What are your highest-priority completion outcomes targets, both overall and for particular student segments? Please include aspirational targets, realistic expectations, and qualitative targets and specify by when you are aiming to meet those targets (e.g., X% 6-year graduation rate for Pell students by 2030).

***These are subject to change pending the completion of the Strategic Compass. ***

- **Aspirational target is to increase the number of applications and continued enrollments of students from low- to middle-income families by 1-2% annually by 2030.** This will be measured by the number of students eligible for the Federal Pell Grant in their first year of enrollment. Our goal will be to increase the percentage of Pell eligible students from 14% to 22% by 2030.
- **Aspirational targets for students from historically underrepresented groups include eliminating the retention gap between White students and students of color as well as between male and female students by 2030.** The most recent retention data demonstrate that White students are retained 2% higher than students of color and females are retained 2% higher than males.
- **Aspirational target for overall retention rate is 90% and for six-year completion is 80% by 2030.** Realistically, this goal may be challenging as we are still feeling the effects of COVID-19. Students continue to take “gap” semesters and years, and some students demonstrate a significant loss in learning which is resulting in a student’s inability to complete their degree in a timely manner.

C2. What specific strategies/actions are you planning to take to achieve those goals? How will you draw on successes/challenges from your prior completion outcome improvement strategies?

Pell Eligible and Underrepresented Student Support Strategy:

- Conduct more targeted outreach for Pell eligible and underrepresented groups at critical grade periods
- Incorporate financial literacy into our transition courses
- Submission of three proposals to SCHEV regarding increasing applications, enrollments, and graduation of Pell eligible students.

Excluding the COVID-19 years, Pell eligible students have been retained at 86%, a one percent difference from the overall retention rate.

Retention and Completion Support Strategy :

- Ninety-three percent of the first-time-in-college Fall 2022 students participating in success coaching were retained to their second semester.
- Students completing our summer transition program and/or enrollment in the first-year transition course were retained at a rate of 91% from Fall 2022 to Spring 2023.
- In Fall 2023, expand existing and successful peer tutoring and mentoring, assign success coaches to incoming at-risk students, add a section of COLL 140: The Transitional Learner is a course designed for at risk, first-time in college students who may need extra support. This summer, we also expanded access to our summer bridge programming.

Investments in mental health support for our students is an investment in their graduation rates and timeframes. One third of each graduating class has used the Office of Counseling Services during their time at Christopher Newport.

C3. How will you use existing/recently provided resources to execute those strategies? Will you be requesting incremental state resources? Please state the request and rationale and explicitly tie to Part I of your planning template.

- To support the strategies in C2, professional and student staff will build upon existing services such as one-on-one success coaching, a summer bridge transition program, credit-bearing transition courses, and peer tutoring and mentoring services.
- To continue to expand these services and programming, we would need additional student success coordinators.

POST-COMPLETION OUTCOMES

Key question: How is your institution preparing all students for success beyond completion (e.g., career preparation)?

C4. Please explain how you monitor post-completion outcomes (e.g., employment rates, wage attainment, debt load, upward mobility). What data do you collect? What metrics are you monitoring most closely? What do the data reveal about your institution's greatest strengths and areas for improvement with respect to post-completion outcomes? Please include any relevant data/reports in the appendix or as a separate attachment, including any data that captures outcomes by school/department/program.

Outcomes Surveys. Utilizing collection and reporting standards from the National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE), we gather survey data for each graduating class (both Bachelor's and Master's level graduates)

- Survey tracks those who have a career outcome (employed full-time, employed part-time, enrolled in graduate study/continuing in education, or in a military or service role), those who are still seeking employment or graduate school/continuing education, and those not seeking/not engaged.
- Salary information is also collected from participants who are willing to share.

Class of 2022 Outcomes Survey.

- College of Natural & Behavioral Sciences had the highest career outcomes percentage at 97.8% which includes 44.3% pursuing graduate study/continuing education.
- Luter School of Business had the highest percent employed overall at 69.9%; however, there was an increase in the percentage of Marketing graduates still seeking employment or graduate study which could be due to companies limiting their hiring for marketing positions.
- Majority of our graduates secure employment in Virginia, specifically 39.1% in Hampton Roads, 32.2% in Northern Virginia, and 28.7% elsewhere in Virginia;
- **Over the last five years, graduates with a career outcome have consistently been between 92-96%.** Between the Class of 2021 and the Class of 2022, several graduates reported "a gap year" after graduation before seeking employment or graduate school admission.

C5. What specific strategies/actions, including potential changes to your program portfolio or curriculum, are you planning to take to maximize the career readiness and job attainment of all students across programs of study, including increasing early career exposure for students (e.g., internships) during their time at your institution? How will you draw on successes/challenges from prior initiatives?

- **Christopher Newport is working to expand internship opportunities for our students across the board.** We are working to ensure every major has a for-credit internship option and we are working with internship providers where possible to communicate how they can and should incorporate career readiness into internships.

In addition, we will be streamlining collection and reporting of internships and other work-based learning experiences to include employers/organizations names, and locations.

- **Continue offering our micro-internship program each summer to help students explore a specific career field and develop skills.** Micro-internships provide experiential learning opportunities to those students who might not be able to complete a full internship due to class standing, other obligations, etc.
- **Enhance and seek scholarship partnerships with local employers (Huntington-Ingalls Industries, Riverside, Canon) to include internships as part of the scholarships.** Many of these scholarships lead to employment for graduates with these companies and all afford valuable experiential learning opportunities and professional preparation for our students.
- **All academic departments incorporate a Senior Research Project, Thesis, or Capstone Experience, which develops career readiness competencies like Critical Thinking and Communication.**
- **Employment of a Leadership Identity Development Model to incorporate co-curricular activities to Leadership courses that tie to specific career readiness competencies of Career & Self-Development, Communication, Teamwork, Leadership and Equity & Inclusion.**

C6. How do you intend to use existing/provided resources to execute those strategies? Will you be requesting incremental state resources? Please explicitly tie to Part I of your planning template.

- Included in our Student Success request is one Internships Coordinator position beginning in 2024-25.

WORKFORCE ALIGNMENT

Key question: How are your institution's programs of study and degree conferrals aligned with the evolving talent needs of the Commonwealth?

C7. For which specific workforce needs is your institution best positioned to supply talent, based on regional, industry, or occupation alignment?

- **Christopher Newport University's liberal arts and sciences core curriculum prepares graduates for an ever-evolving job market.** Our core curriculum is rigorous, cited by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni as the strongest core curriculum of any public college in America. Every Christopher Newport graduate is prepared to be a critical thinker and to collaboratively and creatively solve problems ensuring they are ready for a wide variety of professional opportunities.
- **Christopher Newport programs are directly responsive to many of the fastest growing occupations.** According to the Occupational Outlook Handbook, the 20 fastest growing occupations between 2021 and 2031 include data scientists, information security analysts, web developers, physician assistants, and physical therapy assistants. Christopher Newport offers majors in computer science, cybersecurity, neuroscience, kinesiology, pre-med/health and a minor in data science.

The Virginia Employment Commission's occupational projections for Hampton Roads between 2020 and 2030 show over 10% growth in financial management and financial services, marketing, teaching, social work and human resources. Christopher Newport offers undergraduate degrees in business-finance, business-marketing, business-management, communications, social work and graduate degrees in financial analysis and teaching.

- **In response to the nursing crisis facing the Commonwealth and country, Christopher Newport is working with a local healthcare partner to launch a nursing program, possibly as soon as Fall 2024.**

C8. What specific strategies/actions is your institution planning to take to better align your program offerings or degree conferrals to current and projected workforce needs? Please provide a list of specific programs you intend to sunset or grow in the next 6 years to increase alignment, partnerships/initiatives you intend to launch or deepen, etc. If you intend to launch any new programs, please explain why your institution is particularly well-suited to succeed in that area.

- **Christopher Newport is working with Riverside Health System to launch a joint nursing program.** The dramatic need for nurses across the Commonwealth and country creates an ideal environment for this partnership to flourish. We are well-suited to succeed in Public Health and Science because of a unique opportunity to use Medicaid dollars to fund the program. Students will receive their clinical exposure at Riverside Hospital and their coursework at Christopher Newport.
- **Christopher Newport intends to offer an undergraduate education degree.** Currently we offer a Master of Arts in Teaching. We plan to expand our offering to include a Bachelor of Arts. We are the only public institution in the Commonwealth that does not offer undergraduate level education coursework.
- **Kinesiology.** We began offering a Kinesiology program four years ago in response to interest from students in pre-health. Since then, it has become a popular and well-enrolled program for students interested in pre-physical and occupational therapy as well as sports therapy and athletic training. We anticipate Kinesiology will continue to grow in the next several years.
- **Micro Credentialing.** We plan to begin offering programs to better connect the University with the community via micro credentialing, especially through the Luter School of Business, and to provide important job-market credentials to current students. Microcredentials are a way for the university to more quickly respond to the needs of industry, by offering more focused and often skills-based educational opportunities.
- **Master's Programs.** We are at the early stages of exploring graduate programs in social work, security studies, and business leadership.
- **Local Industries.** We are looking to grow computer science, computer engineering, electrical engineering, and computer information systems degree programs particularly to capitalize on the learning and employment opportunities offered nearby through the Newport News Shipyard, Canon, and local military bases.

SECTION D: STRATEGIC DEEP DIVE – FINANCIAL EFFECTIVENESS & SUSTAINABILITY

AFFORDABILITY FOR STUDENTS & FAMILIES

Key question: How is your institution accounting for and improving affordability for students and families?

D1. What specific strategies/actions do you plan to take to improve affordability moving forward across your overall student body and priority subpopulations, and what is the expected impact? Please account for a broad range of factors including the full cost of attendance, net price, time to degree, debt load, etc.

****This is a major component of President Kelly's Strategic Compass. We look forward to reporting additional strategies in the future. ****

- **We are working to reduce energy consumption across campus.** With increasing cost of energy, we must be strategic in our energy use to, at a minimum, maintain our current costs if not lower the cost.
- **We are also working to maintain or reduce the overall cost of attendance by reducing Auxiliary expenses.** One example is to keep meal plans stable. The increase in food expenses is enormous. We have restructured meal plans in an effort to stabilize cost.
- **Continue our commitment to providing financial assistance for students from needier backgrounds.** With guidance from SCHEV, we continue to restructure the financial aid awarding methodology for state aid to help mitigate costs for students with the highest levels of financial need (e.g. Pell-eligible and low-income students). The process includes analyzing data of our enrolled students' level of remaining need (as defined by SCHEV) with a focus on providing larger awards to those with the highest need, thereby covering a larger portion of their tuition and fees. In 2022-23, the unmet need for low income students, in receipt of state aid, was reduced by over \$2,000 per student in comparison to 2021-22.

Additionally, we have invested over \$4 million in our Community Captains Program through direct, personnel or indirect expenses. Thanks to the Commonwealth, the City of Newport News and private donors, the program provides substantial financial support including a scholarship that covers all of their dining expenses all four years.

- **We provide institutional retention grants.** A portion of tuition revenue (\$2,455,000 in 2022-23) is used to fund an institutional grant targeted at promoting student retention and completion. Funds are used to help students with financial need, who have remaining costs due to unanticipated financial difficulties to support their ability to continue their enrollment. In 2022-23, a total of 638 students received an average grant of \$3,847. Over 50% of the available funding was provided to students in the low income range and 33% to students in the middle income range. The average award for those with low income was \$4,818, compared to \$3,489 for middle income. Of these recipients, 98% were retained from Fall 2022 to Spring 2023, compared to 91% for non-recipients.

REVENUE

Key question: How is your institution approaching pricing and revenue management? What are the implications on long-term top-line financial health?

D2. Please explain the rationale behind your full pricing (i.e. published tuition & fees, including mandatory non-E&G fees) and financial aid award strategy (i.e. net tuition revenue projections). What data informed your assessment of T&F increase feasibility (e.g., market comparisons, student capacity to pay) and estimates of discounts/ waivers/unfunded scholarships? What informed your strategy around financial aid awards, merit and need-based, particularly for various student segments by income level and academic preparation?

- **Tuition and Mandatory Fees.** Christopher Newport's tuition ranked in the middle of the Virginia public institutions (7th out of 15 in 2022-23), however, that ranking shifts slightly upward when including the comprehensive fee.
- **Financial Aid Need-Based Award Strategy.** Centered on retention and degree completion, Christopher Newport's financial aid award strategy focuses on providing students with the highest levels of financial need (e.g. low-income students) with more funding to offset tuition and fees expenses.
- **Identify Financial Need.** The following formula is used: Cost of Attendance – Expected Family Contribution = Financial Need. In 2022-23, 37% of students demonstrated financial need and 16% are from low income households. Of those from low income households, we met 81% of their financial need with an average award of \$23,700. We met 76% of financial need for in-state students and we met 82% of financial need for Pell-eligible students.
- **Need-Based Financial Aid Awards.** Christopher Newport uses need-based aid to mitigate costs for students with the highest levels of financial need (e.g. Pell-eligible and low-income students). In 2022-23, 904 students received an average state financial aid grant of \$6,877 and 568 of these students also received the Federal Pell Grant with an average grant of \$8,350. Average unmet need for low income students who received state aid was \$4,648, and \$6,862 for middle income.
- **Financial Aid Merit Based Award Strategy.** Christopher Newport seeks to enroll 400+ high ability students in each merit scholarship cohort. To reach that goal, the Office of Admission uses historical applicant and yield data to determine funding levels based on the quality of each applicant cohort (average GPA, test scores, academic program) and the amount of available funds in a given year. In 2022-23, 1280 students were offered a merit scholarship through our flagship programs funded by private donors.

- **Merit-Based Financial Aid Awards.** Christopher Newport uses merit-based aid to attract and yield high ability students, in addition to reducing costs for families. The majority of merit scholarships are funded by the President's Leadership Program (PLP) and the Honors Program, both of which seek to enrich the educational experience and attract high achieving, well-rounded students. Students transferring from Virginia Peninsula Community College who are TTIP majors participating in the Captains Connection program, a guaranteed program admission agreement, may be awarded a \$7,500 annual scholarship. There are additional merit awards that are provided by corporate foundations that flow through our separate 501c3 Education Foundation.

D3. What do you expect to be the impact of your pricing/discounting approach on enrollment numbers/mix (if any) and net tuition revenue moving forward and why?

- **Tuition Level for Five Years.** Tuition was held at the same level for five years from 2018-19 to 2022-23. We are encouraged that despite the increase for 2023-24, the projected size of the incoming first year class will exceed the prior year.
- **Increase in State Need-Based Aid.** We greatly appreciate the substantial increase in need-based financial aid provided by the Commonwealth for 2023-24 as well as support for the Community Captains program. It is especially important for a younger, small institution that does not have vast endowment resources available to fill the gaps.
- **Competition for Students.** In addition, anecdotal evidence tells us that students who have adequate family ability to pay are nonetheless often wooed by some level of merit awards, perhaps even more important than a lower overall list price.
- **Quality.** In balancing price and quality, our faculty especially will tell you that it is the quality of the educational experience we offer that will continue to attract students over time. An example of this is our investment in our higher cost Business School programs that are expected to result in a strong return on investment for students in the form of higher post-completion wages.

COST EFFECTIVENESS

Key question: How has your institution maintained bottom-line financial health and focused investment on the levers that will drive improvements in student outcomes?

D4. Reflect on the categories/subcategories of cost that have recently experienced the most significant increases on an absolute or per-student basis. What have been the primary drivers of those increases? Please be specific and include supporting data.

- **FY 2024 Reductions.** Regarding how we have maintained bottom-line financial health and focused investment on the levers that will drive improvements in student outcomes, for the FY 2024 budget, we adopted budget reductions totaling \$6 million, including \$4 million in E&G. Internally we began developing these proposals before spring break, to thoughtfully vet the proposals and lay the groundwork for longer-term strategic reductions that will be needed. Some university-wide themes include scaled back events, reduced hours and overtime where feasible to obtain both energy efficiencies and reduced staffing levels, fewer major print products and the like. In total the savings include eliminating 26 vacant positions and freezing up to 10 faculty positions
- **R&R, Library, and Student Wages.** Candidly, we have underfunded Repair & Replacement type items where it has been possible to defer items, and these budgets will need to be replenished in future years. Other areas that have been limited include library purchases and student worker wages, as the minimum wage has rapidly increased in recent years.
- **Employee Benefits and Compensation.** Chart F (page 49 of the fact pack) shows employee benefits as the highest annual growth rate at 7.4%, and compensation increase mandates.
- **Unavoidable, Economy-driven Cost Increases.** Other unavoidable, economy-driven costs include energy, specifically electric and gas, consumables (paper towels, cleaning supplies, etc.), and food costs. In addition, construction costs have also increased as well as maintenance cost for equipment and part replacement.
- **Staffing Costs, Technology, Business School programming, and Mental Health.** We have prioritized staff wage updates, starting with hourly and classified staff, to be competitive to hire and retain a talented workforce. In Fall 2021, we increased our minimum starting wage to \$13.00/hour in an attempt to be more competitive in the labor market. Despite the budget reductions across campus, we provided \$100,000 per year as match for the state's two-year mental health initiative grant highlighting the importance of this program to Christopher Newport.

D5. What specific strategies/actions do you plan to take to contain/reduce key costs and improve fiscal health going forward while improving student outcomes? What are your objectives and what have been your results to date of any already-launched initiatives? What is the expected impact and timeframe of these strategies? Include any short-term costs that would need to be incurred to implement the strategies.

Some of the strategies listed below will not improve outcomes. While we have worked very hard to minimize the impact of the strategies outlined below, many of the budget reductions enacted for the 2023-24 university budget will be seen and felt across campus.

- **Faculty and Academic Resources Analysis.** We are conducting a faculty staffing analysis across all departments and colleges to determine faculty staffing needs in anticipation of an expected lower faculty count going forward.

Additionally, we are not filling 10 faculty positions as a cost savings measure for 2023-24.

- **Changing how we do business in multiple areas.** For example, we are making Housekeeping reductions, implementing less frequent cleaning, and reducing hours of operation for some services across campus.
- **Consolidating facility use where appropriate.** We are moving classes and densifying housing into fewer buildings to reduce operational costs.
- **Reduced student employment across campus.** We have reduced both hours and positions.
- **Negotiating with suppliers where possible.**
- **Implementing energy efficiency projects across campus.** We are converting to LED lighting, upgrading water heaters and boilers, and utilizing additional temperature set point guidance.

D6. Provide information about your institution's highest-priority E&G capital projects and requests (including new construction as well as renovations) over the six-year plan period and how they align to your enrollment trajectory, student outcomes improvement plans, or other strategic priorities. Please also reflect on your current E&G facilities utilization (especially classrooms, labs and student service areas), particularly in light of any recent trends that might impact space needs (e.g., enrollment trends, shifting learning modalities). How has square footage per student changed over time and why? What efforts have you made to reassess and further optimize the use of your existing facilities, and what has been the impact of those efforts to date? What do you intend to do in the next six years to increase utilization?

Forbes Hall Classroom/Lab Renovation \$5.3 million

- Replacement of 77 obsolete fume hood air valves and controls and the corresponding 234 room pressurization valves/controls
- Upgrade 42 labs and support spaces, some with multiple hoods
- Direct support to research and academic instruction
- Mitigate a significant safety concern for students and faculty that negatively affect academics.

Construct New Maintenance Building \$45.7 million

- Replacement of the existing plant operations and warehouse building
- Current building is a converted grocery store
 - Houses facilities and housekeeping administration, electrical, HVAC, plumbing and carpentry shops (skilled trades) and warehouse for supplies, achieves and central receiving
- Proposed 62,000 square foot
- Phased construction to minimize disruption of services provided across campus
- Following the initial phase, the occupied building will be demolished, giving way for the new building to be complete in its footprint.

Information Technology Data Center and Research Computing. Additional needs include IT data center space and research computing capacity, with preplanning for both to begin in 2023-24. These needs are the result of the Commonwealth's interest in assessing Hampton Roads as a data science innovation hub and a National Science Foundation planning grant for research computing that the university was recently awarded.

Utilization, Space Needs, and Optimization. Going forward, we continue to re-think the size of classrooms, including the number of larger spaces. In particular, we are assessing utilization and need for computer labs, in part by employing utilization software to gather data. Related to energy efficiency, we have been more intentional about which spaces are most appropriate for extended hours and which could be more limited, for example, concentrating use during evenings, weekends, and holidays in certain spaces to achieve savings in both energy and staffing. In general, spaces are well used from morning through evening and the strategic planning process will continue this evaluation.

SECTION E: BUDGET REQUESTS

E1. Provide additional information for any budget requests in Part I of your planning template that are not described elsewhere in your narrative.

Our budget requests fall into the following categories:

- **Financial Aid.** Includes funds over time intended to meet the remaining need of Pell eligible students.
- **VMSDEP waivers.** This requests state funding to offset projected increased revenue loss.
- **Safety, Security, and Compliance.** This includes support for Title IX investigations, campus violence and threat assessment, risk management, and emergency management.
- **O&M.** This includes operating funding for the Integrated Science Center Phase 3 (opening Fall 2025), the new Administration building, and the new Plant Operations building. Anticipated additional O&M needs are included in the out years.
- **Captains Peninsula Pathways.** This includes coordination of the Captains Connection program, peer mentors and academic coaching, as well as scholarships.
- **Student Success.** This includes up to six positions, including an internships coordinator and additional student success coordinators, as well as support for a first-generation pilot program, student wages and mentors, and increased costs of outcomes surveys.
- **Technology.** This includes positions and nonpersonal services costs related to networks, cybersecurity, and data.
- **Base Operating Support.** Requests base operating support, including for out of state recruiting, counseling services, library resources, and student success functions.
- **Community and Cultural Programs.** This includes expanding shared services and other support for programs that reach the community, including Lifelong Learning and the arts.

SECTION F: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ANNUAL REPORT

F1. Provide a link to any report your institution has produced about its economic development contributions. You may also share it in the appendix or as an attachment.

The contributions of Christopher Newport University to the economic development of the Peninsula and Virginia are significant but perhaps its most important contribution is the human capital component, that is, the economic effect of our graduates entering and participating in the state workforce. The overwhelming majority, greater than 90 percent, of our graduates are state residents and their contributions to the state's economy and the quality of life in the Commonwealth will be extraordinary over their lifetimes.

Real Estate and Community Redevelopment. The more visible and financially significant contributions to economic development in recent years have been through the University and its Real Estate Foundation's investments on the Peninsula. The many projects accomplished by the Real Estate Foundation over the years have significantly added to the betterment of the community and strengthened the area's efforts in economic development. The projects have transformed the physical landscape and spurred the redevelopment efforts in mid-town Newport News. Importantly, each project has been designed, engineered and constructed by Virginia-based firms. The projects' construction, through general contractors, employed hundreds of people, many dozens of suppliers, vendors and subcontractors - all funneling wages, sales tax and ancillary spending in the community for food and services.

Mary M. Torggler Fine Arts Center. The mission of the Torggler Fine Arts Center is to enrich the cultural landscape of the Commonwealth of Virginia by presenting exceptional visual arts programming that empowers creative expression, critical thinking, lifelong learning, and cultural dialogue. The Torggler presents three major exhibitions each year featuring professional artists with national and international reputations. Exhibitions are open **FREE** to the public, six days per week. Three additional galleries will each present changing exhibitions, often on a more frequent basis than the main gallery. Fee-based public programs include: summer Art Camp (8 weeks) / school holiday programs for kids (The 2022 camp served over 550 area children.), art classes for adults/teens/children, offered each season, year-round; workshops, offered each season, year-round; and docent or staff-led group tours. Free public programs include community events including Family Fun Days, offered three times per year in conjunction with major exhibitions; exhibition-related lectures and gallery talks; and events and programs for local teachers, the annual *Prefaces* art exhibition for local high school students, an annual *Artistic Verses* program for high school students, and more. Since the Torggler opened to the public in October 2021, we have counted over 23,000 visitors including participants in our classes during the first year and anticipate serving 100,000 visitors annually. For the future, we are planning growth in outreach programs to include engagement with public and private schools, teachers, community centers, social service agencies, and partner organizations such as the Downing-Gross Cultural Center.

Ferguson Center for the Performing Arts. Since opening in 2004 more than two million guests have attended performances at the Ferguson Center. These guests have had an undeniable impact on the local economy – enjoying meals at restaurants, scheduling accommodations at hotels and purchasing clothing and countless other items at local retailers - all in association with attending shows at the Ferguson Center. Additionally, having the Ferguson Center on the Peninsula changes the quality of life in our communities, attracts businesses and drives real estate sales. Even anecdotally, it is clear that having internationally touring attractions and Broadway shows within an easy half hour drive makes our neighborhoods more attractive to potential buyers.

Research Efforts and Partnerships Impacting Local Community/Region. Christopher Newport faculty and staff frequently partner with local governments, economic development agencies, museums and non-profit community organizations to study challenges and opportunities for economic development. The Wason Center for Civic Leadership now has a more than 10-year track record of providing citizens and lawmakers unbiased, nonpartisan insight into the policy issues shaping the future of the Commonwealth. More than 100 students work side-by-side with faculty researchers to produce survey research and political analysis that informs decisions by citizens and lawmakers in Virginia, and increasingly around the country. The Center for American Studies sponsors programming, annual conferences, national security workshops and research at the undergraduate and postdoctoral levels to promote political liberty, economic liberty and civic responsibility. And finally, our Community Captains partnership with the Newport News Public Schools inducts 75 outstanding rising high school juniors each year into an intensive two-year college preparatory program.

Service Programs Impacting Local Community. The Center for Community Engagement develops and facilitates academically grounded and sustainable community partnerships that connect students, faculty and community members with the strengths and needs of Newport News and the local region. Service programs that impact the Peninsula and broader region are a hallmark of Christopher Newport University. Typically, students volunteer in excess of 100,000 hours each year in service to the community, particularly on the Peninsula. At a rough estimate of \$10 per hour, these students contribute the equivalent of \$1 million of labor to non-profit and charitable organizations each academic year. In any given year, one-third or more of Christopher Newport graduates earn special honors for Service Distinction based on hours contributed in voluntary service to the community. The University also continues to operate its prestigious Bonner Service Scholars Program and engages in extensive capacity development projects through its Ferguson Fellows program.

Business Consulting. Faculty and students contribute significant time and business expertise to local and regional businesses, organizations and municipalities. The Luter School of Business also supports the community through its Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, and through students working with businesses to improve operations. Our VITA program, which has become a fixture in the community, uses specially trained business students under the supervision of a faculty member to prepare income tax returns for low-income members of the community, free of charge. VITA typically prepares returns for up to 500 persons each year. Our new Master of Financial Analysis program features a capstone course in which students engage in a hands-on project with local

businesses; several of our undergraduate courses include similar projects. Luter School of Business students, under the supervision of business faculty, complete 15 or more projects each semester in support of businesses in the region.

SECTION G: FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INQUIRY, FREE SPEECH, ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND DIVERSITY OF THOUGHT

G1. Provide a copy of any policy or reports your institution has produced and provide information about annual training or orientation related to this topic.

- **The foundation of Christopher Newport’s commitment to the Freedom of Speech and Expression on campus can be found within a very robust statement on our website.** This statement provides the framework by which we defend and promote our commitment to free and open inquiry in all matters to ensure our students, faculty and staff have the broadest possible latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge and learn.
- From this statement, revised policies on facilities use and event scheduling have been adopted. These policies set out the general conditions upon which University facilities may be used, set priorities for the use of facilities, and ensure that decisions related to the use of facilities are based upon clear, objective and consistent criteria limited to the time, place and manner of speech. The Facility Use Policy can be found at: https://cnu.edu/scheduling/_pdf/cnu-policy-facility_use.pdf
- **Annual Report on Free Speech submitted on February 16, 2023 in compliance with Virginia Code §23.1-401.1(D.).**
- **New Student Orientation / Setting Sail. New students are introduced to our community of honor and mutual respect during the summer before beginning their first fall semester.**

During Setting Sail, our new students and their families gather together for a presentation on honor, mutual respect and free speech. They are introduced to these concepts as fundamental to the fabric of our community and to the essence of academic excellence at Christopher Newport. This is the last presentation of Setting Sail and very intentionally involves parents to ensure students understand that our value system is based on respecting each other.

In addition, we also provide all of our incoming students and their families each with “The Guidebook” during Setting Sail. The book includes a full page on free expression and reaffirms to the new members of our community that this is who we are and what we stand for.

- **New Employee Orientation.** We have implemented a new module so our new employees (faculty and staff) understand our University Statement on Free Speech and Expression and how we live by it at Christopher Newport.

SECTION H: NEW SCHOOLS, SITES, AND MERGERS

H1. Provide information on any new instructional sites, schools, or mergers supported by all types of funding that your institution is considering or planning to undertake during the six-year period.

- None at this time.

[OPTIONAL] SECTION I: RESEARCH

I1. [OPTIONAL] Highlight any strategic research priorities, programs, or key areas of investment (e.g., hiring plans, critical research agendas, interdisciplinary centers, business partnerships, commercialization efforts) and IP dissemination and commercialization priorities you intend to pursue over the next 6 years that have not already been mentioned in this narrative. What are the anticipated benefits to your faculty attraction/retention strategy, student value proposition, and the economic competitiveness of the Commonwealth?

- **Strategic initiative to increase the number of external grants for research across all areas of the university.** We are increasing the level of support provided via Sponsored Programs to applicants. Increasing external support for research adds to one of the University's key distinctives of undergraduate research by providing more funded research opportunities for undergraduate students.
- **Strategic initiative in Academic Affairs to develop programs and expertise in data science and research computing.** This initiative is driven by two things: a recent NSF grant awarded to faculty to study our capacity and needs in developing a research computing initiative and the state's support for investing in a regional Hampton Roads data science hub.
- **Strategic initiative in the Luter School of Business to develop credentialing and internship partnerships with local, regional, and state businesses.** This initiative is driven by the Luter School of Business' efforts to become more responsive to the credentialing needs of the business community, and leveraging that into internship opportunities for Luter students.

[OPTIONAL] SECTION J: COLLABORATION

J1. [OPTIONAL] Outline any existing or potential initiatives you have not already highlighted in this narrative that feature collaboration across public higher education institutions (and other state agencies as appropriate) in furthering the goals outlined in sections B-D. What is the expected impact and in what timeframe? What is the timeline for the initiative and how far along is it? What (if anything) would be required from a budget or policy perspective to facilitate the success of the initiative?

- **Accelerated Master’s Degree Program with Virginia Tech.** The program provides undergraduates at Christopher Newport with an accelerated option to earn a bachelor’s degree from Christopher Newport and a master of engineering either in computer science or computer engineering from Virginia Tech in five years. The program accelerates students’ time to degree in high-demand fields, reducing cost and increasing the Commonwealth’s Tech Talent Pipeline.
- **Utilization of the Virginia Tidewater Consortium (VTC):** Resource sharing to assist students in completing their degree programs in a timely manner.
- **Employer Relations Best Practice Exchange:** Resource and information sharing between career services professionals across Virginia institutions to include recruiters and human resources professionals from a variety of employers. The goal is to share resources and information on career readiness and workforce recruitment trends.

[OPTIONAL] SECTION K: STATE POLICY

K1. [OPTIONAL] Use this section to outline any state policy changes you have not already mentioned in this narrative that would enhance your ability to achieve greater success on the topics, strategies, and initiatives referenced in this narrative. What existing policies, if any, are hindering your ability to maximize outcomes and value for students? What new policies might create conditions that are more conducive to achieving those goals? What strategies or initiatives would these policy changes enable your institution to do or try that you are not yet able to do today? Please be as specific as possible.

- **Consider stronger enrollment management strategies at the state level.** As “choice institutions” expand or grow their in-state student populations in a time of flat and declining numbers of high school graduates, there is an inherent demand for additional services, funding and capital. Ironically, as institutions shrink, there is also inherent demand for funding as the shrinking college loses efficiencies that are gained through economies of scale.

- **As part of the strategy above, the Commonwealth should allow “choice institutions” or those with national profiles to enroll more out-of-state students.** This strategy would allow those institutions to generate additional revenue, grow the Commonwealth’s talent pipeline and reduce pressure on those institutions to grow their in-state enrollments.
- **The Commonwealth should re-evaluate the strategy of the fund split with regard to faculty and staff salaries for institutions without significant out-of-state student resources and/or significant endowments.**

[OPTIONAL] SECTION L: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

L1. [OPTIONAL] Use this final section to provide any additional context and/or supporting materials you feel should be incorporated into the six-year planning process.

- None at this time.