



# BOARD OF VISITORS

201 SMITH HALL, LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA 24450-0304

## Executive Committee Minutes October 23, 2024

A meeting of the VMI Board of Visitors Executive Committee was held virtually via Zoom on Wednesday, October 23, 2024, at 10 a.m. pursuant to notice posted on vmi.edu and the Commonwealth Calendar. A recording of the meeting is available at [https://www.youtube.com/live/ekxGmJ8zGyo?si=wbn\\_YgC2xRQf3jFM](https://www.youtube.com/live/ekxGmJ8zGyo?si=wbn_YgC2xRQf3jFM).

### Members Present

John Adams '96  
Teddy Gottwald '83  
Kate Todd  
Tom Watjen '76  
Damon Williams '90

### Others Present

Maj. Gen. Cedric Wins '85  
Patrick O'Leary '90  
Col. Ley Havird '90  
Col. John Young  
Col. Gary Bissell '89  
Col. Jeff Boobar '86  
Col. Bill Wyatt  
Jamaal Walton '07  
Lt. Col. Sherry Wallace  
Lt. Col. Mike McCarthy '78

John Adams called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. He turned the meeting over to Maj. Gen. Cedric Wins, VMI's superintendent, to provide an update on the strategic plan.

Maj. Gen. Wins first gave an update on next fall's recruiting class. As of Oct. 23, there are 1,321 applications at various stages in the process. This represents a significant increase over the same time last year. Teddy Gottwald asked the superintendent to provide data to help board members better understand the concept of the "enrollment cliff."

The superintendent then discussed rollout plans for the strategic plan. (The superintendent's presentation is attached as Appendix I.) He told the committee an employee event will be held on October 24, 2024, to introduce them to the strategic plan. The strategic plan website will launch on Nov. 8, 2024, while boulevard banners and strategic plan displays will appear around post while staff will have giveaways to promote awareness of the plan. Maj. Gen. Wins will also use various opportunities to promote the plan during his speaking opportunities. On social media, each of the five initiatives will be promoted in conjunction with the various milestones and events throughout the academic year.

Maj. Gen. Wins briefed the executive committee about the House settlement with the NCAA. He said the settlement covers \$2.8 billion to settle an antitrust case. VMI's share of the settlement is likely to be about \$250,000 per year for 10 years. The superintendent also



said the Southern Conference has not yet opted in to the roster limits and name, image, and likeness rules afforded in the settlement.

After the superintendent's brief, Teddy Gottwald raised the issue of a permit for the cadets involved with The Cadet newspaper. He said the issue has dragged on for too long and he received assurances from the administration that a permit would be "taken across the finish line." He said the cadets need a permit so they can recruit staff to work on the paper. Gottwald acknowledged there's no First Amendment right to a permit but the cadets could use the extra time a permit would provide. He said board members are getting "heat" on the issue and he'd like to see it resolved.

Adams acknowledged there have been conversations about the permit and he understands a solution is close. Maj. Gen. Wins said a permit for the cadets is largely complete as is a memorandum of understanding with The Cadet Foundation, the newspaper's publisher. He said a permit for the cadets will be finalized by the end of the week. Additionally, he said a very generous MOU will be sent to The Cadet Foundation. In response to a question from Damon Williams, Maj. Gen. Wins said the permit is based on old versions of the newspaper permit before it went out of business in 2016. Kate Todd asked Maj. Gen. Wins to let the board know when the permit and MOU have been transmitted.

A motion was made by Teddy Gottwald and seconded by Damon Williams to approve the minutes of the Sept. 16, 2024, Executive Committee minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Tom Watjen made a motion, seconded by Kate Todd, to adjourn. The motion passed and the Executive Committee was adjourned at 10:59 a.m.



# APPENDIX I



# Forging 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders

The Strategic Plan Rollout

# Agenda

- Stakeholders
- Rollout
- Events and activities
- Questions and closing comments



# Stakeholders

The strategic plan is intended to reach and engage with the following groups:

- Board of Visitors
- Faculty and staff
- Cadets
- Prospective cadets
- Legislators
- Alumni
- The greater community
- Families
- Media



# Employee Rollout Event

Reception – Oct. 24 at 3:30 p.m.

- Video message from John Adams '96 and Maj. Gen. Cedric T. Wins '85.
- Comments from MG Wins and introduction of initiative co-leads.
- Recognition of individuals with significant contributions to the strategic plan development and rollout.
- Renderings of new facilities available for viewing.
- Item giveaways to keep the work of the strategic plan top of mind:
  - Lapel Pins
  - Lanyards
  - Post-it Notes
  - Magnets
  - Pens
  - Car Coasters



A large marching band in dark blue uniforms with white sashes and white pants is marching on a green lawn. They are wearing black hats with plumes and holding rifles. A red flag is visible in the background. The scene is outdoors with trees and a lamp post.

# Forging 21st Century Leaders

Strategic Plan 2024-2034

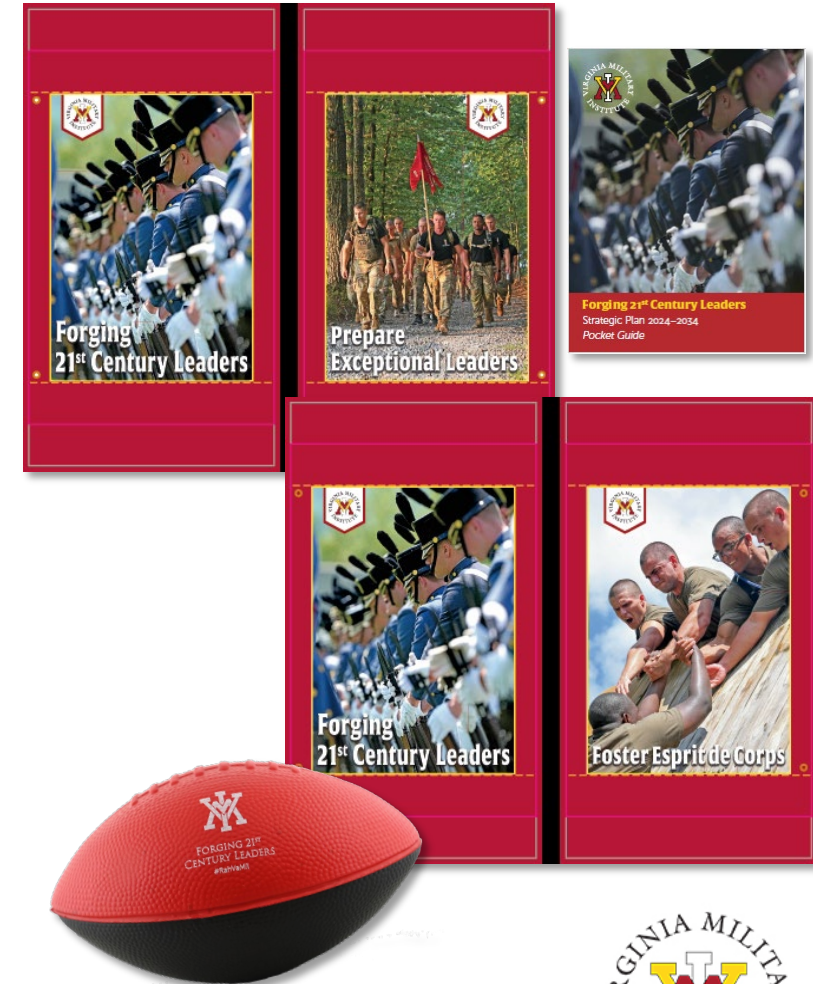
Video available on  
VMI's [YouTube Channel](#)



# Public Rollout During Founders Day Celebration

Nov. 8 and 9:

- Launch of strategic plan website [www.vmi.edu/forgingleaders](http://www.vmi.edu/forgingleaders).
- Boulevard banners representing the strategic plan placed on light poles around Parade Ground.
- Strategic plan display banners set up in Moody Hall and the Hall of Valor, along with renderings of new facilities.
- MG Wins to provide brief comments to include the strategic plan at the Founders Day parade and the Institute Society Dinner.
- Giveaways available throughout the weekend, including pocket guides of plan and mini footballs at football game.



# Sneak Peak: Strategic Plan Website





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NO ORDINARY COLLEGE. NO ORDINARY LIFE.

**Forging 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders: Strategic Plan 2024-2034**

About the Plan
Initiatives ▾
News & Updates
Timeline
Resources ▾
VMI Homepage

Forging 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders / The Plan

## The Institute's Path Forward

DEVELOPING & IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The VMI experience is a time-tested program that develops cadets into citizen soldiers. This strategic plan focuses on the initiatives, resources, and infrastructure necessary to positively mold future generations of the VMI family into strong effective leaders, be it within their communities, respective military branch, or chosen profession.

**Forging 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders** sets five strategic initiatives for the Institute:

- [prepare exceptional leaders.](#)
- strengthen academic excellence,
- foster esprit de Corps,
- recruit top cadets & boost success, and
- deliver 21<sup>st</sup> century facilities.

These five initiatives support our longstanding mission and help us move ever closer to achieving our vision. The mission and vision remain unchanged—to be an anchor in an ever-changing world.

VIDEO TITLE PLACEHOLDER





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Forging 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders / Prepare Exceptional Leaders

## Prepare Exceptional Leaders

INITIATIVE NO. 1

**GOAL:** Execute the premier leadership development program in the nation, and develop a Corps of Cadets that is mentally tough, academically astute, physically fit, and for which the Honor System, Regimental System, Class System, and Rat Line are the foundational backbone.

EMBARCKING UPON THE VMI LEADERSHIP JOURNEY IS A COURAGEOUS UNDERTAKING FOR ANY NEW CADET.

It's a challenge not meant to be easy, and our system is time tested. **Forging 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders** seeks to strengthen and supplement this leadership journey to produce strong future leaders for the nation and commonwealth.

*"I continually seek out leadership opportunities and place myself in challenging situations to grow as a leader. I think that's what VMI is all about. I think it's about pushing yourself, challenging yourself, trying to grow as a person, trying to grow as a leader, to ultimately be prepared for what faces us once we graduate."*

**MARK SHELTON II '24,**  
*class regimental commander*

**OBJECTIVES: GUIDING THE PATH FORWARD**

1

Teach, coach, mentor, guide, and direct cadets through the VMI training model to help them develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to become effective leaders.



# Public Rollout on Social Media & Website

Plan rollout will continue with video messages throughout the academic year that outline portions of the plan. Timing will be in alignment with key events:

- Founders Day – Overall Plan
- Ring Figure – Initiative 1: Prepare Exceptional Leaders
- December Commencement – Initiative 2: Strengthen Academic Excellence
- Breakout – Initiative 3: Foster Esprit de Corps
- Open House/Honors Week – Initiative 4: Recruit Top Cadets and Boost Success
- TBD: Spring alignment with facilities announcement – Initiative 5: Deliver 21<sup>st</sup> Century Facilities



# Recognition for Advancing the Work

## Superintendent Challenge Coin

As the work of the strategic plan advances, significant efforts and accomplishments will be recognized with a special challenge coin.



# Together, Forging 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders

2024 - 2034

