Emerging from Resistance: Origins of the Virginia Community College System

Scott A. Langhorst, Ph.D.
Richard A. Hodges, Ed.D.

Welcome back!

- Quick review of Massive Resistance in Virginia from last week
- Today - a look at educational, economic, and social forces moving Virginia forward
- Formation of the Virginia Technical College System
- Transition to the Virginia Community College System
Higher education in Virginia - 1950s

- Consisted of the “big three” --- UVA, VPI, W&M
- ...but only a 25% college going rate in Virginia
- 1950 Gregory Swanson first African-American to enter UVA-Law
- 1951 Hulon Willis, Sr. (School of Ed) and Edward Travis (Law School) first African-Americans admitted to W&M
- 1953 Irving L. Peddrew III admitted to Virginia Tech (first African-American undergrad admitted to an all-white Southern school)

Higher education events - 1950s

- 1952 Hurlburt Report (North Carolina)
- 1955 Thompson Report “Crisis in Higher Education”
- 1956 State Council of Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) established
- 1957 Soviets Launch Sputnik
- 1958 Passage of federal “Higher Education Defense Act”
- 1959 “Needs, Policies and Plans for Two-Year Colleges in Virginia” (SCHEV)
State Council of Higher Education

- State Council of Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) established in 1956 as an independent State agency
- Original mandate to coordinate Virginia’s higher education institutions
- Authority to approve/disapprove degree programs at institutions
- Conduct research to improve higher education operations
- Oversight by, and periodic reports to, the General Assembly
- Played a key role (via research and proposed policy) in establishing the need for expanded higher education options for Virginia’s citizens

Junior colleges

- Junior College “movement” in America in the early 1900’s
- Response to creation of first (elite) research universities in 1880’s (Johns Hopkins, University of Michigan, University of Chicago, etc.)
- Joliet Junior College (1901) [William Rainey Harper]
- Provide first two years of university education separate from the actual University setting
- Lower level and upper level course distinctions
- Served as a way to “weed out” marginal academic students before advancing to upper level (university) courses
- American Association of Junior Colleges (AAJC) established in 1920
Junior colleges in Virginia

- 1936 - Eleven Junior Colleges in Virginia (none publicly supported)
  Enrollment: 102 Men - 984 women - White only

- Early branch college(s):
  - Norfolk Division of William & Mary (276 Men, 123 Women)
- Non-classified schools:
  - Fairfax Hall - Waynesboro (0 Men, 15 Women)
  - Eastern Mennonite School - Harrisonburg (18 men, 22 Women)
  - St. Paul Junior College (Negro) - Lawrenceville (59 men, 128 women)


Virginia branch campuses – 1950’s

- 1955 Legislative Report recognizes the need for expansion of higher education system (because of demographic forces)
- Proposes branch campuses as a potential solution (and also noted a disdain for community colleges)
- At UVA - Eastern Shore, Northern Virginia (George Mason), Wise (Clinch Valley), Mary Washington
- At VPI - Roanoke, Danville, Wytheville, Clifton-Forge
- At W&M - Richard Bland, Christopher Newport, Old Dominion, RPI
Community college movement

- Natural progression of junior college movement of early 1900's
- Heavily influenced by Morrill Act of 1862 (Land-Grant Universities) and Servicemen's Readjustment Act (GI Bill) of 1944 by popularizing the notions of “practical education” and “education for all” instead of just liberal arts for the elite
- The 1947 “President's Commission on Higher Education for American Democracy” (Truman Report) calls for more “community colleges” to expand educational opportunities for all citizens
- Community colleges enter a “golden era” of expansion in the 1960's

Community college movement

- State support for expanded educational opportunities grows in the 1950's and 1960's, e.g., California, Texas, Florida, Virginia
- Federal government passes student aid legislation = financial aid for lower socioeconomic status students = fiscal access
- “Student services” (admissions, counseling, testing, placement services, etc.) become a cornerstone of community college operations
- Part-time enrollment becomes a real, popular, and necessary option for many working adult students
Higher education forces in the 1960s

- Federal and State legislation stimulate education changes:
  - Higher Education Defense Act (1958)
  - Higher Education Facilities Act (1963)
  - Higher Education Act (1963)
  - Vocational Education Act (1963)
  - Civil Rights Act (1964)
- Virginia legislative reports suggest higher education alternatives:
  - Slaughter Commission Report (1963)
  - Brumbaugh Report (1965)

Albertis Harrison

- Virginia State Senator (1948-1958)
- Governor of Virginia (1962-1966)
- Realized that massive resistance could not stand legal scrutiny
- Became a Justice of the Virginia Supreme Court (1968-1981)
- Understood the need for better educated Virginia citizenry and workforce
Albertis Harrison

- Strong proponent of industrialization
- Richard Holmquist transitioned to Harrison administration to oversee industrial development
- Holmquist later replaced by Joseph Hamrick
- Hamrick and SCHEV President William MacFarlane recommend Dr. Dana B. Hamel
- Worked with Lt. Gov. Godwin to introduce a 1% sales tax and higher education improvements

Virginia Industrialization Group

- Formed in 1958
  - Meant to “exist in the background”
  - Primary focus: to dismantle Massive Resistance
  - Lobbied for expansion of industrialization in Virginia
  - Essential in establishment of Virginia Technical College System
- Leadership
  - Lewis Powell, Jr. (corporate attorney)
  - Stuart Saunders (CEO, Norfolk & Western Railroad)
  - Frank Batten (Editor in Chief, Virginian-Pilot Newspaper)
- Meeting at Rotunda Club at Jefferson Hotel, Richmond - Dec. 1958
  - Guests were, Governor Lindsay Almond and Attn. Gen. Albertis Harrison
Virginia Technical College System

- Establishment of a “series of technical colleges” necessary to prepare a modern industrial workforce
- 1961 Richard Holmquist joins Governor Almond’s administration
  - Salary paid by Virginia Industrialization Group
  - Task: Revitalize Virginia Division of Industrial Development
  - Serves in this role 1961-1964 (Governors Almond and Harrison)
  - Replaced by Joseph Hamrick (1964)
- 1964 - Dana Hamel hired as Director, Roanoke Technical Institute
- Dana Hamel hired as Director, Virginia Department of Technical Education

The watchmaker’s son

- Dana B. Hamel (1923 - pres.)
- Born in Maine, grew up in Johnstown, PA
- Son of a watchmaker
- Ed.D. degree from University of Cincinnati
- Founding Director - Virginia Department of Technical Education and Department of Community Colleges
- Founding Chancellor of the VCCS
Virginia Technical College System

- 1961-1964 - Holmquist and later Hamrick travel the state promoting industrialization
  - Constantly emphasized the need to educate the citizenry
- 1963 - Dr. Dana Hamel Director, Roanoke Technical Institute joins Holmquist at speeches to explain technical education
- 1964 - Bill McFarlane and Joseph Hamrick recommend to Governor Harrison that Dr. Hamel serve as inaugural Director of soon to be formed Virginia Department of Technical Education
- 1965 - First colleges open in Roanoke and Bailey’s Crossroads

Political winds shift

- 1966 General Assembly passes a 1% sales tax bill
- Gov. Godwin pushes the notion of combining branch campuses and vocational schools into a “community college system”
- Political patrons Gov. Godwin, Senator Bird, Delegate Slaughter
- Resistance from politicians who favor keeping some branch campuses and some vocational schools in local hands
- Strong support from President Hahn at VPI, only minimal opposition from UVA and W&M Presidents
- Passes House and Senate unanimously after closed-door deals
Mills E. Godwin

- Governor of Virginia (1966-70) and (1974-78)
- Only governor to serve first as a Democrat, then as a Republican
- Establishes first state sales tax to help support public education
- Oversees legislation establishing the Virginia Community College System
- Appoints Dana Hamel as first Chancellor of the VCCS

VTCS to VCCS

- 1966 Department of Technical Education becomes Department of Community Colleges
- 1966 Technical Board becomes State Board for Community Colleges
- Dana Hamel continues as Director
- 1968 Dana Hamel named Chancellor
- VCCS Retains Master Plans created under VTCS
  - Curriculum Plan
  - Physical Campus Plan
- Regions concept borrowed from 1959 SCHEV report
Governor Mills Godwin, Senator Lloyd Bird, and Delegate French Slaughter examine the campus master plan.

Legislation creating VCCS

- 1966 General Assembly session (Gov. Godwin)
- Establishes State Board for Community Colleges as the governing board
- Appoints Chancellor as chief executive officer of the System
- College Presidents (all) report to the Chancellor (local boards advise)
- Statewide policy manual, curriculum, tuition and fee structure, budget
- Establishes VCCS System Office and staff to support the Chancellor and coordinate statewide operations
- (VCCS has always been a “statewide system”)}
VCCS campus expansion chronology

• 1966-67 - Northern Virginia CC and Virginia Western CC
• 1967-68 - Blue Ridge CC, Dabney S. Lancaster CC, Central Virginia CC, Danville CC, Wytheville CC, and John Tyler CC
• 1968-69 - Tidewater CC, Thomas Nelson CC, and Southwest Virginia CC
• 1969-70 - Virginia Highlands CC and New River CC
• 1970-71 - Lord Fairfax CC, Germanna CC, and Southside Virginia CC
• 1971-72 - Patrick Henry CC, Rappahannock CC, Paul D. Camp CC, and Eastern Shore CC
• 1972-73 - Mountain Empire CC, Piedmont Virginia CC, and J. Sargeant Reynolds CC

Thanks for coming!

Next week: “Comprehensive” Community Colleges and impacts

Contact information:
Scott Langhorst
757-345-3656
slanghorst@cox.net

Richard Hodges
757-825-2871
hodgesr@tncc.edu