

2001

# A Bridge to the Future: Cultivating Academic Leadership Today for Better Communities Tomorrow

The Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute at Virginia Commonwealth University  
*Virginia Commonwealth University, gehli@vcu.edu*

Ralph Clark

Jill Fox

Diane Reynolds

Elizabeth Waterhouse

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/gehli\\_pubs](https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/gehli_pubs)

Part of the [Education Commons](#), and the [Public Affairs, Public Policy and Public Administration Commons](#)

---

Downloaded from

[https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/gehli\\_pubs/42](https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/gehli_pubs/42)

This Research Report is brought to you for free and open access by the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at VCU Scholars Compass. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute Publications by an authorized administrator of VCU Scholars Compass. For more information, please contact [libcompass@vcu.edu](mailto:libcompass@vcu.edu).

## **PROJECT TITLE**

### ***A Bridge to the Future: Cultivating Academic Leadership Today for Better Communities Tomorrow***

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of this project is to develop a plan for expanding and funding the Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute (GEHLI). Currently, teams of leadership scholars selected from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) develop projects relating to the academic community in addition to studying the dynamics of effective leadership. Consistent with VCU's vision of partnering with and service to metropolitan Richmond, we propose that future teams of leadership scholars develop outreach projects that involve and benefit the local community. The training in which scholars would participate would include learning about the Richmond community, its needs and goals, as well as the dynamics of leadership. Project teams would collaborate with community groups or leaders, thereby strengthening the bonds between VCU and the community, and providing public service, in accordance with VCU's mission. Projects might include education, outreach, fundraising, mentoring, or research that would benefit Richmond and provide scholars with opportunities to network with local leaders. Financial and philanthropic resources will be investigated and a list of potential funding organizations will be generated.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION/STATEMENT OF ISSUES/PROBLEM**

In 1968, the Richmond Professional Institute merged with the Medical College of Virginia to form Virginia Commonwealth University. Currently VCU is a state-supported institution with an enrollment of more than 24,000 undergraduate, graduate, and health professions students studying on its two campuses in Richmond, Virginia (VCU Facts, 2000-2001).

Long before the merger between RPI and MCV, both campuses had a history of service in the Richmond community. Within RPI, the School of Social Work and the School of Allied Health demonstrated a strong community service orientation. Likewise, faculty in the School of Education were closely involved in collaborative projects with the Richmond Public Schools. Service to the community has also been a priority on the MCV campus. MCV has historically provided the majority of indigent care in the Commonwealth of Virginia and various programs operate in the nearby Carver community to serve the health care needs of community residents.

The arrival of a new president in the early 1990's gave new energy to VCU's service orientation. President Eugene P. Trani initiated the development of the *Strategic Plan for the Future of Virginia Commonwealth University (1993)*, which outlined a series of guiding principles for the University's future including, "...The University, inseparable from its urban environment, will use its partnership with the Richmond community to exercise VCU's expertise in addressing urban issues in the nation and the world." The Strategic Plan identified a unified vision for the future of VCU. This document supported the VCU tradition of service, declaring that VCU "is inseparable from the urban environment in which it resides" (p. 2). The university as a whole recommitted itself to involvement in and service to the Richmond community by articulating its goal to "use the urban environment as a laboratory for studying and developing new approaches to problems pertaining to the public and private sector" (VCU Mission and Goals Statement, 1990, p. 9).

Building on the success of Phase I of the *Strategic Plan*, the University launched Phase II in early 1998. The focus on public service was retained and the Plan specifically called for, "...expansion of service-learning opportunities to better connect students' education with community needs and the service mission of academic departments." Central to the success of this objective will be university leaders who embrace the mission of the university and are committed to achieving its vision. These leaders must be knowledgeable about the issues facing our urban environment and the resources within the university that can address community needs.

On January 11, 2001, VCU enrolled its inaugural group of scholars in the VCU Leadership Development Program (VCULDP), a project of the Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute. The goal of this program is to develop future leaders by enhancing participants' leadership skills and knowledge of the university.

President Trani, in his address at the opening session of the VCU Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute, clearly articulated his belief that many of the future leaders of the university would be drawn from the participating scholars of this and future classes. The inaugural class of the GEHLI has had many opportunities to study effective leadership and to meet with effective leaders at the university, state, and national levels. Further, they have explored their own strengths as leaders and identified areas in which to further build their skills. But, as Birnbaum (1992) states, "...if leaders wish to influence their institution's culture, they must first carefully study and understand it" (p. 10). VCU's future leaders then, will need not only to develop leadership skills and abilities, but also to acquaint themselves with the culture and community in which VCU resides, its leaders, its goals and its needs. Additionally, the continued success of the VCU Leadership Development Program is contingent upon an identified funding source to provide ongoing funding support of the programs' operations.

## **PROJECT DETAILS**

### **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**Goal #1** - To develop a proposal to obtain general operating funding support, ensuring the continued success of the VCU Leadership Development Program of the Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute.

**Objective #1.1**- To identify foundations, with available funding resources, whose interest and goals mirror those of the VCU Leadership Development Program.

**Objective #1.2**- To develop a grant application seeking funding from resources whose goals are consistent with those of the GEHLI.

**Goal #2** - To present a plan that describes program expansion opportunities for the GEHLI.

**Objective #2.1** - To identify future initiatives for the VCU Leadership Development Program that support VCU's Strategic Plan.

**Objective #2.2** – Foster leadership development of GEHLI scholars through community outreach programs.

**Objective #2.3** – Foster alliances between project teams and community groups or leaders.

### **TARGET POPULATION/AUDIENCE**

1. Future participants in the Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute.
2. Community leaders in Richmond and Central Virginia.
3. Funding sources (i.e., foundations).
4. Citizens of Central Virginia who would benefit from the collaborative relationships.

### **METHODS**

Team members will interview current leadership of the university, GEHLI, and central Virginia. Based on these interviews, the team will craft a vision statement for the future of the GEHLI. The team will search for foundations that might provide financial support for the GEHLI based on the vision the team develops. The team will develop grant applications to two such foundations for submission by GEHLI administration.

## **AVAILABLE RESOURCES WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY/HEALTH SYSTEM**

The roles and responsibilities of team members were identified at each step of the proposal development process. Collectively, team members met with Dr. Julie Williams, Director of the VCU Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute, to determine feasibility of the project. Additionally, all members met with Ms. Samantha Marrs, Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations for VCU, and discussed the process of identifying potential foundations as funding resources and tips in developing grant proposals. Members of the team conducted individual research for the project and shared findings with the team during scheduled meetings. Each member composed various portions of the proposal as indicated below resulting in a comprehensive and insightful proposal.

- ◆ Project Title: Collaborative effort of all team members.
- ◆ Project Description: Elizabeth Waterhouse
- ◆ Background Information/Statement of Issues/Problem: Jill Fox and Ron Clark
- ◆ Project Details/Goals and Objectives: Ron Clark and Diane Reynolds
- ◆ Target Population/Audience: Collaborative effort of all team members.
- ◆ Methods: Ron Clark
- ◆ Implementation Plan: Diane Reynolds and Jill Fox
- ◆ Evaluation Plan: Collaborative effort of all team members.
- ◆ Proposal Composition: Diane Reynolds

## **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

### **March 2001**

- Identify Team Project
- Interview Samantha Marrs, Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations for VCU, and investigate the process for obtaining grant funding for the project.

### **April 2001**

- Interview Dr. Julie E. Williams, Director of the VCU Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute, to determine the feasibility of the project.

### **May 2001**

- Research and identify potential grant funding sources.

### **June 2001**

- Compose Proposal.

### **July 2001**

- Develop evaluation plan.
- Develop evaluation instrument.
- Submit proposal to GEHLI.

### **August 2001**

- Present proposal to GEHLI scholars and mentors.
- Distribute evaluation instrument.
- Summarize data and analyze responses.
- Revise proposal, if necessary.

### **September 2001**

- Present project to GEHLI administrators.

## **EVALUATION PLAN**

- ◆ Develop evaluation instrument.
- ◆ Distribute evaluation instrument to:
  - Margaret F. Price, Mentor
  - Dr. Francis Macrina, Mentor
  - Other VCU Leadership Development Scholars
  - GEHLI administrators: Dr. Julie E. Williams and Dr. Grace E. Harris
- ◆ Summarize data.
- ◆ Analyze responses.
- ◆ Modify project, if necessary.
- ◆ Present project to GEHLI Administrators for consideration.





## **APPENDIX A**

### **Vitae of Ralph R. “Ron” Clark, M.D.**

**Title:**

Chief Medical Officer  
VCU Health System  
Virginia Commonwealth University

**Experience:**

Dr. Clark’s responsibilities include providing clinical input and physician leadership to the senior management team to facilitate the development of clinical protocols, practice guidelines, and other initiatives to improve efficiency and appropriate delivery of care and to ensure compliance with regulatory standards. He works with senior management to ensure operational efficiency and production in the clinical enterprise environment.

**Education:**

Dr. Clark earned his undergraduate degree in Biology at the College of William & Mary and completed his medical training at Virginia Commonwealth University.

### **Vitae of Jill E. Fox, Ph.D.**

**Title:**

Associate Professor in Early Childhood Education  
School of Education  
Virginia Commonwealth University

**Experience:**

Dr. Fox has taught courses in curriculum and methods for young children, working with families, child development, and the arts in primary education. She serves as the VCU School of Education Professional Development School liaison to Mary Munford Elementary School and as a member of the Virginia Department of Education’s Advisory Board for Teacher Education and Licensure. Her writing and research reflect her teaching and service activities, including play and learning for young children, aesthetic development in young children, and professional development schools.

**Education:**

Dr. Fox earned an undergraduate degree in Elementary Education from Western Kentucky University and completed a master’s degree in Early Childhood Education at Texas Woman’s University. She earned her doctorate in Early Childhood Education from the University of North Texas.

## **Vitae of Diane L. Reynolds**

Title:

Director of Business Services  
Department of Business Services  
Virginia Commonwealth University

Experience:

As a proven leader and innovator, Ms. Reynolds is responsible for providing administrative direction and leadership to a team of six managers and seventy-six staff members and directs auxiliary business units for the University including: Parking and Transportation Services, Retail Operations, Dining Services, as well as Printing and Mail Services. These units generate approximately \$24 million in annual revenue and 5% of the University's total revenue budget.

Education:

Ms. Reynolds holds an undergraduate degree in Marketing from Virginia Commonwealth University.

## **Vitae of Elizabeth J. Waterhouse, M.D.**

Title:

Associate Professor  
Department of Neurology  
Virginia Commonwealth University

Experience:

Dr. Waterhouse provides direct patient and inpatient care for neurology patients, teaches residents and third year medical students. She also directs the EEG Laboratory for MCV Hospitals, serves as coordinator of the EEG portion of the Clinical Neurophysiology Fellowship, and directs the Neurology Residency Program.

Education:

Dr. Waterhouse earned her undergraduate degree in English and American Literature and Language from Harvard University and earned a medical degree from Harvard Medical School.