

## 2024 Points of Pride

Virginia State University was approved to offer a new Master of Science (MS) in Data Analytics. By offering this new degree program, VSU can address the underrepresentation of Blacks/African Americans in the data science community. Students began enrolling in the Master of Science (MS) in Data Analytics degree program in Fall 2024. Virginia State University became the first Historically Black College or University (HBCU) in the nation to offer a CSWE-accredited Master of Social Work (MSW) program specializing in trauma-informed care.

The MSW program specializes in preparing graduates to systematically and strategically address the well-being of individuals who have experienced trauma. The accreditation is retroactively effective from Fall 2022, when the program first launched.

Virginia State University became the first public Historically Black College or University (HBCU) in Virginia to offer a Masters (MBA) in Business Administration. The new MBA program allows VSU to address the underrepresentation of Blacks/African Americans in the business management and leadership profession. Students began enrolling in the program in Fall 2024.

Virginia State University announced that its College of Engineering and Technology was approved to offer a BS in Mechanical Engineering. Mechanical Engineers ranked first in best engineering jobs, according to U.S. News and World Report, with a mean salary exceeding \$96,000. Students began enrolling in this new bachelor's degree program in Fall 2024.

Virginia State University received a pledge of \$100,000 over five years from HII's Newport News Shipbuilding division to establish the Newport News Shipbuilding Scholars Program. The program will provide financial assistance, mentorships to underrepresented students, and access to career advancement opportunities for students pursuing engineering and related degrees at VSU.

Virginia State University was named a Fulbright HBCU Institutional Leader for the third consecutive year. This esteemed honor recognized VSU's unwavering support for global education and diversity during the 2023-24 academic year. Fulbright HBCU Institutional Leaders consistently demonstrate outstanding support for Fulbright exchange participants and effectively promote Fulbright program opportunities on campus.

Virginia State University earned the Military Friendly School designation for the 2024-25 academic year. This recognition is a testament to the University's commitment to supporting military-affiliated students and their families.

Virginia State University partnered with Workforce Edge, a full-service education administration provider powered by Strategic Education, Inc. The partnership will grant Workforce Edge partner employees increased access to a wide range of degree programs while expanding the University's accessible education efforts.

Virginia State University announced a transformative partnership with MedCerts, a leading provider of entry-level training programs. This partnership allows VSU students to acquire industry-recognized professional certifications in high-demand fields such as healthcare and information technology.

Virginia State University partnered with Coursera, a global online learning platform. The partnership allows VSU students, faculty, and staff to earn industry-branded micro-credentials in high-demand fields, including software engineering, information technology, business, marketing, data science, and analytics from the world's top companies. Enrolling in these courses is free of charge for the VSU community.

Virginia State University became a founding partner for Micron Technology, Inc.'s Minority Serving Institution (MSI) Semiconductor Network. The MSI Semiconductor Network consists of 16 HBCUs, Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), and Asian American, Native American, and Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs) aiming to increase access to equitable education and develop the next generation of a diverse, semiconductor-ready STEM workforce.

Virginia State University announced that its online Registered Nurse (RN) to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program earned a five-year accreditation from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). This historic milestone marks the first time in the University's history that its nursing program has been nationally accredited.

Virginia State University became the first HBCU to host the FIRST Chesapeake District Robotics Championship, featuring top high school teams competing to advance to the World Championship. Thousands attended the three-day event held at the VSU Multi-Purpose Center.

Virginia State University ranked in the top 27% of Best Value Universities for International Students, according to Study Abroad Aide, the most comprehensive database of universities in the world. The rankings are based on the University's commitment to offering high-quality and affordable education to students from different countries.

Virginia State University Biology Assistant Professor Dr. Matthew Whalen began a research project that studies the temperature and air quality in the Petersburg area. Using PurpleAir air quality monitors, Dr. Whalen is teaching value data skills to his students and also studying hyper-focused data that can be used to benefit the local community.

Virginia State University partnered with EduTutorVA to offer education majors field credit hours and a competitive honorarium for online tutoring K-12 students. VSU is the first HBCU and the first of EduTutorVA's 14 partner institutions to provide field credit for this intensive tutoring program.

Virginia State University received a \$150,000 grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation's African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund to conserve Azurest South, also known as the Alumni House. Built in 1939 by alumna Amaza Lee Meredith, this historic University landmark will benefit from essential preservation efforts.

Virginia State University was awarded \$3 million from the National Science Foundation to establish the Trojan Center for Emerging Engineering Research. The center will enhance the academic journey of VSU undergraduate engineering/computer science students and better prepare them for the Engineering-Computer Science (ENG-CS) workforce.

Virginia State University was awarded \$800,000 from the US Department of Defense (DOD) to acquire advanced heterogeneous computing instrumentation. The new equipment will allow VSU faculty and students to conduct groundbreaking research to address some of today's most pressing technological challenges.

The Virginia State University Women's LeadHERship Institute held a two-day national summit in June to refresh, applaud, and unite women leaders at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Through collaboration, celebration, and candid dialogue, the summit was successful at inspiring new leaders and elevating the legacy of excellence and resilience in the HBCU community.