

Report on the Response of  
Christopher Newport University  
to the Impact of the  
Aging of Virginia's Population

Christopher Newport University  
November 14, 2014

Pursuant to the *Code of Virginia* §2.2-5510 and §51.5-136, Christopher Newport University submits this report of its progress in addressing the impact of the aging of Virginia's population.

**Signature Attached in separate file**

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Paul S. Tribble, President  
Christopher Newport University

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES  
Dr. Kevin M. Hughes, Dean of Students  
David Student Union 3142  
(757) 594-7160 Fax: (757) 594-7505  
dosa@cnu.edu

## Executive Summary

The mission of Christopher Newport University is to provide educational and cultural opportunities that benefit CNU students, the residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the nation. CNU has approximately 5,000 students of which 3,750 are residential students and approximately 94% are between the ages of 18 and 22 years old. While the University offers opportunities for senior citizens they are not the primary user of our services.

One of the University's most successful programs for senior citizens is our LifeLong Learning Society, which continues to grow and to serve the aging population of the Virginia Peninsula and the surrounding areas. The 2013-2014 year saw a growth in the membership of this program of 6% from the prior year and an expansion of the course offerings, field trips and afternoon lectures. In addition, the membership of this program also contributed greatly to our programs at the Ferguson Center for the Arts. Of the 246 volunteers at the Ferguson Center, 82 or 33% are senior citizens and many of these are also a part of the LifeLong Learning Society. The University is committed to these two very successful programs.

The University will face many new challenges as its workforce reaches retirement age in record numbers. The University has been successful in adding new instructional faculty positions over the past several years, however we have not been as successful with the administrative positions due to several years of budget reductions. In many areas succession planning is in place and the University continues to strive for cross training of employees. We are also experiencing the cost increase as the University hires new employees and this is becoming more of a challenge with the budget reductions.

## Mission Statement

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

Our primary focus is excellence in teaching, inspired by sound scholarship. At CNU, 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 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. CNU 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.

1. If your agency has undertaken any actions to respond to the current and future impact of an aging population, such as needs assessments, strategic planning, or use of best practices, please briefly describe those actions. Please indicate what assistance from DARS could help your agency as it prepares to serve an aging Virginia population.

**The University has a strategic plan that addresses the Vision and Mission of the University. There is no separate assessment or strategic plan on the current and future impact of an aging population.**

2. Briefly describe your agency's services that are used primarily by older Virginians and the funding streams (types and amounts) that support those services. If these particular services or funding streams are provided in conjunction with other state or local agencies or other for profit or non-profit organizations, please list them.

**a. Life Long Learning Society**

**The LifeLong Learning Society (LLS) of Christopher Newport University is a membership organization dedicated to persons of retirement age who seek opportunities for learning in an environment of sharing and fellowship. There are no requirements as to previous educational experience; intellectual curiosity is the only admission requirement. Managed by and for its members, LLS is a program of the Office of University Advancement and is an affiliate of the Elderhostel Institute Network. Through a variety of activities – including lectures, courses, study and discussion groups, lunches, dinners and field trips, persons of diverse backgrounds come together to share a common interest in learning. There are no exams or grades in the courses, although some courses include assigned readings and the possible purchase of a textbook. In excess of 125 courses will be offered during the 2014-2015 year (largely taught by CNU Professors) and 7 trips to include daytrips, overnight trips and international trips. The LLS shares its program with the community by participating in joint learning efforts with other educational and research institutions, retirement groups, industries and museums to include Mariners' Museum, VIMS, Jefferson Lab, NASA and the Virginia Air and Space Museum and by co-sponsoring three annual conferences, "The Forum on Aging, The Writers Conference and the Gardening Conference." The LLS members are also invited to attend campus lectures, recitals and programs offered by the academic departments. LLS's annual budget is approximately \$250,000, with the majority of the funding coming from membership dues, registration fees, sponsorships and the remainder of the support from the University's Educational and General funds.**

b. Senior Citizens Tuition and Fee Waivers

In accordance with the Code of Virginia, Section 23-38.54, Senior Citizens Higher Education Act, senior citizens are permitted to register and enroll in courses as full-time or part-time students for academic credit, without charge, providing their taxable income for federal income tax purposes did not exceed \$15,000 for the year preceding the enrollment year. Senior citizens may also, without charge, enroll in academic credit courses for audit purposes, without regard to income. In 2013-14, the University waived tuition and fees for 14 Senior Citizens, taking 99 credit hours of instruction at a cost of \$45,650. The University absorbs the cost of this program.

c. Ferguson Center for the Arts Programs

The University's Ferguson Center for the Arts hosts in excess of 150 events each year. During the 2013-2014 Season, the concert hall hosted 59 professional series events and many University and Community events. The University has several programs that have been embraced by senior citizens, as noted below:

Usher Program – We have 246 volunteers (82 are Senior Citizens or 33%) who work for the Ferguson Center serving as greeters, ticket takers, door attendants, ushers and coat check attendants for over 150 events per year. In addition, volunteers are utilized to assist in the preparation of mass mailings and occasionally serve as a receptionist in their administrative office. The volunteers are afforded the opportunity to see some of the finest artists in the world for free. This program is advertised on the Ferguson Center website for all who are interested.

Arts for All Program – *Arts for All* provides discounted and complimentary tickets to schools, senior citizens and not-for-profit organizations serving families, children and at-risk communities throughout Hampton Roads.

“Free at the Ferguson” Performance Series – A series of free performances for the community (attended primarily by senior citizens) featuring CNU Faculty, Staff and Students and some of the finest community performing groups in Hampton Roads. Since the Concert Hall opened, we have offered two free holiday performances (CNU Home for the Holidays) featuring

several CNU performing ensembles and performing groups from the community. Some of the performances have included Williamsburg Presbyterian Church Chancel Choir, Zion Baptist Church Choir of Hampton, Western Branch High School Concert Choir and the Williamsburg United Methodist Church Children's Choir, various military bands and local high school choirs and bands.

In addition to providing the Lifelong Learning Center with multiple discounts throughout the year, they also offer a variety of discounted tickets to Senior Citizens groups.

d. VITA Program – Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program

The VITA program is an IRS and Commonwealth of Virginia sanctioned program. Sixteen accounting students from the Luter School of Business were trained and certified to prepare basic tax returns for low-income taxpayers. In 2014, 263 federal and 200 state tax returns were prepared and filed under the supervision of the Accounting Faculty, which represents an increase from the prior year of 18%. It is estimated that 56% of these returns were for senior citizens. The IRS provides the software and tax reference manuals and the University's Educational and General funds absorb the remainder of the cost of this program.

3. Identify current agency programs specifically designed to serve older Virginians that fall into any of the following eight categories:

- Health Care/Wellness
- Education
- Public Safety (including Adult Abuse Prevention)
- Recreation
- Housing
- Accessibility (including Livable Communities <http://www.vadrs.org/vblc/>)
- Financial Security
- Transportation

LifeLong Learning Society offers lectures, courses, study and discussion groups, lunches, dinners, field trips and conferences that touch on many of the categories listed above. A variety of classes are offered in Health Care/Wellness to include wellness classes for Yoga, Tai Chi, Body Fusion and Strength and Stretch to informational healthcare classes to include "Nutrition and Aging" and "Mind and Memory." The ever increasing variety of programs include the following: Practicing Poetry, Beginning Spanish, Civil War 1864, History of Comics, NASA, Understanding Opera, Watercolor Painting, Internet and E-mail and iPads, iPhones and Androids and many more.

**The Commonwealth's Senior Citizens Waiver Program allows senior citizens to take any courses offered by the University. Each year the University offers in excess of 2,650 courses in a wide variety of areas to include all the areas mentioned above.**

**The Ferguson Center programs provide cultural and recreational opportunities for senior citizens, while the VITA program provides financial security to senior citizens.**

4. Is your agency able to meet all of the service demands of older Virginians for the services listed above? If there are any instances where the demand for services exceeds your agency's ability to meet the demand, please indicate the service and the extent of the unmet demand. Also, if your agency maintains waiting lists for services, please provide this information, including the waiting list numbers for each service.

**Yes, the University is able to meet the demands of the programs noted.**

5. Provide the number of persons, by gender if available, who received services from the agency in each of the past five state fiscal years (FY 2010 through FY2014) who fell into the following age ranges: 60-64; 65-74; 75-84; and 85 and older. If your agency lacks specific information about the numbers of older Virginians it serves but has other evidence indicating that it is serving more or fewer older Virginians than it has in the past, please describe the basis for that estimation.

**LifeLong Learning – 608 members in 2013-14, which is an increase of 6% from 2012-13 when we had 576 members. Members range in age from 50 to 95.**

**Tuition waivers - Total 14 participants:  
(age 60-69 - 4, age 70-79 – 6, age 80 and over - 4)**

**VITA Program - filed 147 federal tax returns and 112 state tax returns for senior citizens 60 years and older.**

**The Ferguson Center for the Arts Volunteer Program has 82 senior citizens out of the 246 annual volunteers or 33%.**

6. Referring to the services or funding you described in item two, describe any services or funding provided to older Virginians for which the accessibility or availability varies considerably in different parts of the Commonwealth.

**We are not aware of any services or funding provided to older Virginians for which accessibility or availability varies considerably in different parts of the Commonwealth.**

7. Over the next five to 10 years, in what ways do you anticipate that an aging population will impact your agency's services, funding streams, or policies? Consider the impact from an increase in the number of older Virginians and whether the needs of older Virginians will differ from those of today's older adults. Please include any anticipated impacts upon the cost of services, changes in type of services or the manner of service delivery, or modifications to agency policies, staffing needs, or procedures.

**The students at CNU are primarily between 18 and 22 years old (94%), consequently, we do not anticipate that there will be a significant impact.**

8. Please describe the primary steps that should be taken at the federal, state, or local levels to meet the future demands of older Virginians and to make services delivery more effective and efficient.

**CNU primarily serves the 18 to 22 year old population; consequently, we are not in a position to respond to this question.**

9. Identify the extent to which your agency provides "customer-oriented" publications and websites that are designed to be "senior-friendly." If the information you currently provide is not readily accessible to older Virginians, please identify any steps your agency is taking to improve their access to this information.

**The University utilizes numerous methods to communicate information to the public to include the University's website, e-mails, direct mailings, newspaper press releases and advertising and distribution through community agencies.**

**The University maintains a user friendly website that contains pertinent information about all of the University's offices and services. The front page of the University's website provides the ability to search the entire CNU website from key words or phrases, which makes locating information very user friendly. In addition, names, addresses and telephone numbers of personnel in each of the offices is included to assist individuals who would like to speak to an individual within a designated area to obtain additional information or clarification.**

**In addition, our LifeLong Learning Society sends three direct mailings to its current members, in excess of 4,000 Tidewater residents and any other individual who asks to be placed on our mailing list. Information is placed in the local newspapers about events occurring at the University and each year the LLS holds an Open House at the Yoder Barn in August to inform senior citizens of our program. Each year for the past three years we have had in excess of 300 attendees.**

**Also, the LifeLong Learning Society distributes over 1,000 brochures on its offering at libraries, museums, wellness centers, senior centers, churches, etc. in Newport News, Hampton and York County areas.**

10. Describe any other services or programs that your agency plans to implement in the future to address the impact of the aging of Virginia's population.

**The University will continue to build on the strong programs we currently offer. Our goal is to continually evaluate our programs to insure we strengthen and adapt these programs to provide the best services possible for the benefit of the CNU students and the residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia.**

11. Please indicate if your agency is experiencing an increase in employees retiring later and describe any actions your agency is taking or plans to take to accommodate its aging workforce with innovative practices.

**Yes, there has been a slight increase in employee retirements, as noted below:**

<b>CY2009</b>	<b>9</b>	
<b>CY2010</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>111% increase</b>
<b>CY2011</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>11% increase</b>
<b>CY2012</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>33% decrease</b>
<b>CY2013</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>21% increase</b>

**As of January 1, 2015, 183 full time employees of the University's 908 full time employees (20%) will be eligible for some type of retirement (age 50 or above with 10 years or more of service). While we do not anticipate all of these employees retiring, it has certainly made succession planning and cross training a priority.**