

**Report on the Response of Virginia Military Institute
to the Impact of the Aging of Virginia's Population**

3 December 2014

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

Name, title, and phone and email contact information for the designated agency official responsible for reviewing policy and programs and accommodating the interests of older adults and adults with disabilities under Code of Virginia § 2.2-604.1.

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/ Original Signed /

Robert L. Green
Deputy Superintendent for Finance, Administration and Support

3 December 2014

Executive Summary

Because VMI's cadets are all full-time students, there are limited classroom educational opportunities for senior citizens. VMI includes in the Cost and Payment Schedule of its catalog the following provision:

Senior Citizens

Pursuant to Virginia Senior Citizen's Higher Education Act, any individual over the age of 60, who is a Virginia domiciliary and earns less than \$15,000 annually, and who otherwise meets the admission criteria of the Virginia Military Institute may attend free of tuition and fees. The admission criteria for summer session are substantially more lenient than the criteria for VMI's full time, academic year program. VMI does not offer a part-time enrollment option during the regular academic year.

VMI offers cultural and educational programs throughout the academic year, featuring distinguished speakers, theatre productions and musical groups. The weekly cadet review parades also attract many senior citizens. VMI has a close relationship with the local retirement community and many residents attend VMI events.

VMI's Museum programs include the VMI Museum on the VMI Post, the Virginia Museum of the Civil War at the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park and the Stonewall Jackson House in Lexington. Approximately fifty percent of the visitors to the museums are senior citizens.

VMI has recently renovated the VMI museum to make it accessible to individuals with disabilities. The Museum program also supports the Elderhostel program offered through the VCU Continuing Education Department.

The George C. Marshall Foundation Museum and Library is on the VMI Post. This museum and its programs attract significant numbers of senior citizens.

VMI has a memorandum of understanding with the regional tourism agency.

VMI's Preston Library is extensively used by seniors for its services, especially the extensive historical research facilities in the VMI archives.

VMI's facilities are used for many community events, such as the 4th of July Balloon Rally, Civil War Roundtable (over 75% of its membership is seniors), American Legion meetings, and others.

Turnover at VMI has been historically low. Most employees remain well past the normal retirement age.

Agency Description

Mission:

The Virginia Military Institute believes that the measure of a college lies in the quality and performance of its graduates and their contributions to society.

Therefore, *it is the mission of the Virginia Military Institute* to produce educated, honorable men and women, prepared for the varied work of civil life, imbued with love of learning, confident in the functions and attitudes of leadership, possessing a high sense of public service, advocates of the American Democracy and free enterprise system, and ready as citizen-soldiers to defend their country in time of national peril.

To accomplish this result, the Virginia Military Institute shall provide to qualified young men and women undergraduate education of highest quality -- embracing engineering, science, and the arts -- conducted in, and facilitated by, the unique VMI system of military discipline.

Roles and Responsibilities:

VMI combines the academic work of a rigorous college curriculum and the exacting regimen of military discipline in the firm conviction that education should be a disciplining of the individual as well as the mind. The essential and mutual purpose of the Institute's combined educational programs (academic studies, barracks life, the military system, and athletics) is to cultivate and develop in each cadet the following seven educational factors:

1. Mastery of a major field of study and commitment to life-long learning.
2. Ability to think critically and creatively
3. Ability to communicate effectively
4. Skill in interpersonal relations
5. Ability to succeed in an organizational setting
6. Commitment to ethical inquiry and standards of integrity
7. Commitment to life-long physical health and vigor.

VMI believes these seven factors represent the requisite characteristics of leaders for the 21st century. VMI believes that academic excellence is best maintained at a small college when the number of disciplines offering degrees is restricted. A cadet may be awarded the degree of bachelor of science in applied mathematics, biology, chemistry, civil engineering, computer and information sciences, electrical and computer engineering, mechanical engineering, physics, and psychology; the bachelor of arts degree may be awarded in biology, chemistry, economics and business, English, history, international studies and political science, modern languages and cultures, physics, and psychology. Either a Bachelor of Science degree or a bachelor of arts degree may be awarded in biology or chemistry.

VMI also serves the citizens of the Commonwealth through its museum programs, including the VMI Museum on the VMI Post, the Stonewall Jackson House and the three-hundred acre New Market Battlefield State Historical Park, site of an 1864 Civil War battle.

Information Requested

1. *If your agency has undertaken any actions to respond to the current and future impact of an aging population, such as needs assessment, 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.*

Because VMI's mission does not directly affect older citizens of the Commonwealth, VMI has not taken any actions to respond to 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 actions. 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.*

VMI offers programs and services that are accessible to and used by older Virginians, but no programs are used primarily by older Virginians.

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

VMI does not have any programs specifically designed to serve older Virginians. Some of VMI's programs are attractive to seniors. Education: museum programs distinguished speakers, and lectures. Recreation: cultural/music programs.

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.*

Services or programs offered by VMI that attract senior citizens include cultural events, distinguished speakers, community theatre productions, musical events, tours of the VMI Post, the museum, and athletic events. The weekly cadet review parades attract many senior citizens. VMI provides seating for senior citizens and individuals with disabilities. All events, with the exception of some athletic events, are free of charge. VMI provides curbside drop off for buses of senior citizens attending athletic events. VMI's library and archives are

also open to the general public and are used extensively by seniors. Many seniors use the VMI Archives and its extensive web site for historical research. VMI's facilities are used for many community events, such as the 4th of July Balloon Rally, Civil War Roundtable (over 75% of its membership is seniors), American Legion meetings, and others. The VMI Museum and the George C. Marshall Foundation Museum and Library are located on the VMI Post; the Stonewall Jackson House is located next to the Lexington Visitors' Center. The museums attract significant numbers of senior citizens. Marshall Hall, which houses the Center for Leadership and Ethics, provides a venue for a number of public events, including cultural programs and conferences, sponsored by VMI and by outside agencies. Marshall Hall is in compliance with ADA requirements, including handicapped access to the stage and seating. The Gillis Theater in the Center is an outstanding venue for music and lectures. The Center is easily accessible and provides close-by parking. Buses from senior centers in the area are easily accommodated. There is no indication that the demand for any of these programs by senior citizens exceeds VMI's capacity.

- 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 (FY2010 through FY 2014) 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.*

VMI operates the VMI Museum on the VMI Post, the Stonewall Jackson House Museum in Lexington and the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park in New Market. All three facilities provided services this year to a total of 17,000 Virginians over age 60. The VMI Museum tells the story of VMI's cadets, faculty, alumni and the school through the display of artifacts and static displays. The newly renovated facility provides elevator access and new and improved displays accessible to visitors in wheelchairs or with limited mobility. The Stonewall Jackson House is 1850s period home of GEN Jackson, VMI professor, 1851-1861. The site consists of accessible gardens and two levels of the historic home. The New Market Battlefield State Historical Park's recently renovated facilities provide handicapped access to the museum theatre and museum displays and a new wheelchair accessible visitor trail on the battlefield. The Museum program also supports the Elderhostel program offered through the VCU Continuing Education Department. The local Natural Bridge chapter offers the most programs of any chapter in the Commonwealth. The Museum Director lectures to 500 older citizens each year through various programs offered by the Elderhostel program.

Older Virginians from the local community and area retirement communities regularly attend cultural and educational events at the Center for Leadership and Ethics.

- 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 considerable in different parts of the Commonwealth.*

Not applicable

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 costs of services, changes in type of services or the manner or service delivery, or modifications to agency policies, staffing needs or procedures.*

Not applicable

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.*

9. *Identify the extent to which your agency provide "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.*

VMI provides information on its website on upcoming events that are open to the public. VMI also provides this information to the local newspaper and the Lexington Visitors' Center. VMI has a memorandum of understanding with the regional tourism agency. The Library Archives has introduced many on-line exhibits and publications.

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.*

VMI plans to continue improvements in its Museum Programs to make these programs more accessible and informative for all citizens. Renovations at the VMI Museum have made the exhibits more accessible for mobility impaired citizens.

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.*

VMI's close-knit community and Lexington's small-town environment cause many employees to stay long beyond their retirement eligibility dates. Consequently, turnover at VMI is low and employees anticipating retirement typically provide many months' notice of their departure. Approximately 21 percent (28) VMI's teaching faculty are age 60 or older. Of this number, 13 are age 65 or older. VMI expects the turnover rate for teaching faculty remain at about four or five faculty members per year. Usually, there is adequate notice to conduct national searches for replacements. Approximately seventeen percent (23) of VMI's senior and middle managers (administrative faculty members) are age 60 or older. Losses will be replaced through promotions and recruitments. Finally, approximately 20 percent of VMI's support staff employees are age 60 or older. These employees are distributed across the VMI Post, so the losses can be replaced through promotions and recruitments. Because the local area offers few opportunities for part-time work more employees are remaining

beyond normal retirement age and service (age 65 and/or with 30 or more years of service). The small town environment also means employees are not faced with long commutes or parking difficulties common to urban environments. VMI has devoted more attention to succession planning with more employees identified for deputy or senior staff roles to provide training and to serve as back-ups.