

THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

A MONTHLY COMMUNIQUE FROM DR. SCOTT D. MILLER
PRESIDENT OF VIRGINIA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

becoming BATTEN UNIVERSITY July 1, 2026



Momentum, Recognition, and Community in Action

February 2026

Dear friends,

January opened the new year with extraordinary momentum, national affirmation, and meaningful reminders of who we are and what we value as a university. As we continue preparing for our transition to Batten University on July 1, 2026, the month offered powerful evidence that Virginia Wesleyan is advancing with purpose, confidence, and impact.

We were especially proud to be recognized once again with the Carnegie Foundation's Community Engagement Classification, one of the highest national distinctions a university can receive for the depth and quality of its partnerships. Only 80 private institutions nationwide earned this designation for 2026, and VWU stands among just three private universities in Virginia to do so. This recognition affirms what we know to be true: community engagement at VWU is not an initiative, but a way of life, woven throughout teaching, learning, service, and scholarship.

That commitment was visible across campus during our commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Our 2026 signature program, *Frames of Freedom: Norman Rockwell, Gordon Parks, and the Visual Language of Justice*, invited thoughtful reflection on dignity, equality, and social responsibility through the lens of art. We were honored to present the Mavis McKenley '11 Award to Laila Jones '26, whose compassion, leadership, and service exemplify Dr. King's ideals and the values we seek to cultivate in every Marlin.

Important milestones continued to move forward on campus. Work advanced on the integration of Sentara College of Health Sciences into the University, and visible progress continued at the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art's new home within the David R. Goode Arts Complex. As we move closer to Virginia MOCA's opening this spring, this partnership stands as a transformative moment for experiential learning, interdisciplinary collaboration, and community engagement across Coastal Virginia.

Our academic and civic mission was also reflected in the Winter 2026 Special Edition of *Virginia Wesleyan University Magazine*, which highlights campus life, institutional progress, and signature initiatives including VWU-Chesapeake (Prison Education Program) and the integration of Sentara College of Health Sciences. Complementing this work, the Robert Nusbaum Center released *Understanding: 250 Years of Freedom*, a timely publication that deepens dialogue around history, democracy, and the enduring pursuit of justice.

As we embark on the spring session, I am grateful for the students, faculty, staff, trustees, alumni, and partners who bring this institution's mission to life every day. Our name may soon change, but our commitment to service, community, and educational excellence remains unwavering.

Sincerely,



VWU Receives Prestigious 2026 Carnegie Community Engagement Classification

The University is one of 80 private universities in the nation to garner the recognition.

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Frames of Freedom: Norman Rockwell, Gordon Parks, and the Visual Language of Justice

Professors Derek Eley and John Rudel explore how art shapes understanding and inspires action.

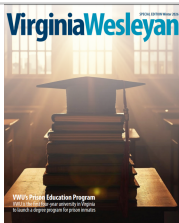
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2026 Mavis McKenley '11 Award Presented to Laila Jones '26

The annual award honors a student who embodies the ideals championed by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

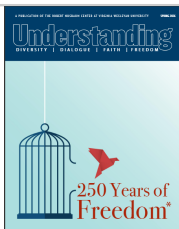
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Virginia Wesleyan University Magazine: Winter 2026 Special Edition

Read the latest issue online; Learn more about VWU's Prison Education Program and more.

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Understanding: 250 Years of Freedom

The spring 2026 publication from the Robert Nusbaum Center is available online.

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2026 Ethics Bowl Team Prepares for Statewide Competition

VWU's team will join students from 16 other VFIC colleges and universities to deliberate on Ethics and Business in February.

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LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR EXCITING NEW INITIATIVES



DR. SCOTT D. MILLER
PRESIDENT

VIRGINIA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY
5817 WESLEYAN DR., VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA 23455
757.455.3215 | PRESIDENT@VWU.EDU
WWW.VWU.EDU/PRESIDENT



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