

Blue Ridge Community College

A History of the First 25 Years

1967- 1992



Past and Present Presidents and Chancellors (left to right) Dr. James A. Armstrong, BRCC president 1969-1985; Dr. James C. Sears, BRCC president 1985-1989; Dr. James R. Perkins, BRCC president 1989-present, Dr. Dana Hamel, BRCC founding president and chancellor of the Virginia Community College System; Dr. Arnold Oliver, current chancellor of the Virginia Community College System

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J.A. Armstrong

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original excavation of campus

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Ground breaking: (foreground left to right) Dr. Douglas M. Montgomery, President of Blue Ridge Community College, 1967-69 and Malcolm G. Jones (with shovel)

I. ON THE EASTERN KNOLL

A front page story in the August 25, 1966, Daily News-Record of Harrisonburg, Virginia, reported an unpretentious ceremony involving only a dozen or so dedicated Virginians who were assembled to dramatize the fact that something important was happening on an old farm site in northern Augusta County near Weyers Cave.

"Gathered on the eastern knoll of the tree-fringed campus - with Interstate 81 in the background - to inaugurate the \$1,500,000 educational building project were members of the College board of visitors, president, architects, contractors, and a few friends."

The event, also reported in the Waynesboro News-Virginian and the Staunton Daily News Leader, marked the physical beginning of Blue Ridge Community College; formerly known as Shenandoah Technical College.

The News-Record account continued:

"Malcolm B. Jones Sr., retired industrialist and president of the board of visitors, and College president, Dr. Douglas M Montgomery, broke ground with a gilded and ribbon-bedecked spade. There was no ceremony and no speeches."

The reporter observed that "the roar of the motors of the big earth-movers punctuated the informal conversation and greetings among small groups of men and women" Montgomery presented a gold spade pin to each of the participants.

The newspaper account went on to describe the prospects for a pleasant campus setting, noting that "The \$1,047,000 building will be located near the eastern boundary and overlooking US 11 The historic highway will afford an excellent view of the completed campus which is scheduled to open in 1967".

Reported present for the ceremony, in addition to Jones and Montgomery, were board members Joseph Early, Augusta County; George A. Heitz and William K. Monger, Harrisonburg; Everette Lam, Rockingham County; and Robert F. (Fred) Millhiser, Waynesboro. Also present were architects Marcellus Wright Jr. and D. L. Strange-Boston, Richmond; Landscape Architect Kenneth R Higgins, Richmond; and Grover F Phillips, president of Electrical Contractors Inc., Harrisonburg, Dana B. Hamel, Director of the State Department of Community Colleges, whose commitment and expertise was crucial to bringing the College project to fruition, was unable to attend.

To those people who witnessed it, to those founders for whom time now flies more quickly, the events of August 25, 1966, were only yesterday, and many of them still regard Blue Ridge as a

new college. Over 40% of the students who today commute to the attractive, maturing campus, were not yet born when those gilded spades sliced into the Valley clay. How Blue Ridge Community College came to be, and what forces determined the kind of institution it would become is a timely story to recount on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the opening of the College in 1967. The foresight, energy, and dedication of the founders of Blue Ridge deserve remembrance in the history of Virginia and the Valley region.

A quarter of a century after opening its doors at the new Weyers Cave campus, Blue Ridge is one of 23 public, two-year community colleges in the Virginia Community College System. It serves the people of the counties of Augusta, Highland, and Rockingham; and the cities of Harrisonburg, Staunton, and Waynesboro. It also enrolls students from across Virginia and neighboring states. The principal "service region" of the College is the central and upper Shenandoah Valley.

The College enrolled 908 students in the fall of 1967. Five hundred twenty-four of these students were full-time; 303 part-time; and 81 at the South campus in Fishersville. Blue Ridge Community College was built for 400 full-time students; it has grown to accommodate 2,950 total students in the 1992 fall semester. In May 1992, 286 graduates earned 306 awards in the form of associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates (some earned more than one award.)

In the 25 years since 1967 nearly 43,000 individual student personnel records have accumulated attesting to the number of individuals who have sought the instructional services of Blue Ridge credit courses. In addition, 20,000 individuals have registered in non-credit continuing education classes, seminars, and workshops.

Students come for many reasons: to prepare for a career in a technical or semi-professional field, to upgrade themselves for promotion or for qualification in a changing occupation, to gain licensure or certification in a current or new job, to satisfy personal or cultural interests, or to complete part or all of the academic requirements of the first two years of a four-year college or university. They are teenagers, senior citizens, or middling in years; the median age is 29. They are new high school graduates, youths who did not complete high school, working adults, single parents, and retired persons, all of whom seek to improve themselves through schooling.

Today, instruction is provided by 42 full-time teaching faculty, four of whom have served the College since 1967, and 18 of whom have been members of the teaching faculty for over 10 years. A number of part-time faculty members represent local professions, businesses, industries, and public service specialties. Their expertise is a valuable asset to the College. Their numbers vary from term to term; 101 part-time teachers were employed for the 1992 fall term. The administrative staff totals 14. Two of these administrators joined the College in 1967 and four have served the College for more than 10 years. A support staff of 33 persons

represent a broad array of technical, office, and maintenance specialties.

The College is governed by the State Board for Community Colleges with 15 at-large members, and by a local College Board comprising 11 members, two from each of the five original sponsoring localities, and one from Highland County. Members of the current College Board are: Donald Cromer, Emerson L. Deitz, Julia Grandle, Elizabeth H. Hefner, Dwight Houff, Timothy Hulings, Jerry K. Kerby, Darwin J. King, W. Price Lineweaver, John J. Myers, Jr., and Charles L. Ricketts.

The College President, James R. Perkins, is responsible to the Chancellor and the College Board for the administration of the College.

The official purpose of the Virginia Community Colleges is substantially the same as it was defined by the original enabling legislation in 1966 and refined by the State Board and the local college, with some allowance for changes in terminology and emphases. The 1992-94 Blue Ridge publications set forth the College mission:

The mission of Blue Ridge Community College is to serve the counties of Augusta, Highland and Rockingham and the cities of Harrisonburg, Staunton, and Waynesboro through the operation of a comprehensive program of instruction, extending not beyond the associate degree. In fulfilling this mission, the College operates within the policies of the State Board of Community Colleges and in accordance with the mandates of the Virginia General Assembly.

Blue Ridge Community College is dedicated to the belief that individuals should be afforded a continuing opportunity/or the development and extension of skills and knowledge along with an opportunity to increase their awareness of their role and responsibility in society. The College is devoted to serving the educational needs of its service area through cooperative efforts with local industry, business, professional groups, educational agencies and government.

In meeting its established goals, the College offers various post-high school programs to anyone who has a high school diploma or its equivalent, or who is at least 18 years of age and can benefit from the programs which are offered. In addition, the College maintains a counseling and testing program and other student services designed to help students make sound decisions regarding educational, occupational, and personal objectives

Because an increasingly dynamic and complex society presents new and often unforeseen demands on its members, the College provides a continuing education program to train or retrain individuals for employment or advancement and to enrich

the lives of the individuals who wish to pursue courses of study or satisfy a need for personal growth

In pursuing its mission, Blue Ridge Community College recognizes its obligation to reflect and influence the social, economic, cultural, and intellectual aspirations of the community it serves.

In keeping with the established mission, the College now offers a transfer program leading to the Associate in Arts and Sciences degree, nine technical programs leading to the Associate in Applied Science degree, three, two-year occupational programs leading to a non-degree diploma, and six occupational or special interest programs leading to the award of a certificate.

Associate in Arts & Science Degree

- College/University Transfer Program

Associate in Applied Science Degree

- Accounting
- Computer Information Systems
- Electronics
- Management
- Mechanical Design Technology Mental Health/Human Services Nursing
- Office Systems Technology
- Veterinary Technology

Diploma Program

- Automotive Analysis and Repair
- Electronics Servicing
- Industrial Technology

Certificate

- Drafting Marketing
- Microcomputer Office automation
- Office Information Processing
- Supervision

Career Studies Certificates

- Arts
- Aviation
- Child Care
- Criminal Justice
- Fire Science
- Floriculture
- Horticulture
- Industrial Practices
- Interior Design
- Legal Assisting
- Machine Design
- Medical Assisting
- Mental Health/Human Services
- Production Control

- Quality Control
- Real Estate

Other Programs

- Community Services
- Community Education
- Developmental Studies
- Industrial Training

In addition, developmental studies offer instruction in basic academic skills to prepare students for success in college level programs. Remediation in reading, English, and mathematics is a typical concern. Many courses, both credit and non-credit, are offered on request for specialized, professional, industrial, business, or institutional needs, as are a number of general and special interest seminars, workshops, and community service activities.

Classes are conducted not only at Weyers Cave, but also at the BRCC Center in Waynesboro, as well as in public schools, hospitals, factories, and in other appropriate public and private facilities as the peculiar needs of the community demand.

Blue Ridge Community College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award the associate degree. The associate degree curricula of the College have an approved by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. The College's Nursing program is accredited by the Virginia State Board for Nursing and the National League for Nursing. The Veterinary Technology program is accredited by the Virginia State Board of Veterinary Examiners and the American Veterinary Medical Association. The Automotive Analysis and Repair program has received a Master Certification from the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation

Blue Ridge, then, is about everything its founders hoped it would become. It is now esteemed in the local region and in the Commonwealth as a first-rate, accessible, comprehensive, community-oriented college, serving its constituents well.

II. HOW IT BEGAN IN VIRGINIA

The development of the community college in America can be traced back to the 1920s, and if the "junior college" can be considered part of its roots, the appearance of a less-than-baccalaureate collegiate institution can be shown to have occurred over a century and a half ago. California was one of the first states to create public junior colleges as an extension of the high school, and they were typically housed in the same buildings. By the late 1940s over 50 such "community junior colleges" were accessible to Californians.

Rapid growth of public junior colleges, community colleges, and two-year institutions occurred after World War II. New York, Florida, Texas, and Michigan followed California's lead. Some of the newly-created institutions were locally controlled and financed, some were members of statewide systems, and some were off-campus centers of large public universities.

Nearer to home, Maryland established a statewide system of public comprehensive community colleges (then officially named "junior colleges") in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and the Carolinas were expanding statewide systems of post-secondary two-year institutions. The success of accessible less-than-baccalaureate higher education was there for neighboring Virginians to witness and ponder.

Although Virginia was comparatively late in establishing a system of public comprehensive community colleges, there were ongoing concerns with the provision of higher education and occupational training. Through the first two decades following the end of World War II, the need for public community colleges was recognized in a number of statements, studies, and reports by prominent educators -both in and out of state. Governmental commissions, the State Council for Higher Education, Chambers of Commerce, professional, business, and industrial leaders, and influential individuals urged expansion and re-thinking of the Commonwealth's provision of educational opportunity.

The most convincing evidence was widespread awareness that the future prosperity of Virginia would depend on the expansion of industry. In order to foster the growth of existing enterprises and to attract new ones, a capable and available work force equipped with more sophisticated knowledge and skills was needed.

These stirrings also warned of the need to expand opportunities for traditional college-age youth in post-high school occupational training and collegiate preparation for traditional professions, as this segment of the population was expected to increase sharply during the 1960's. Furthermore, it was recognized that the existing colleges, universities, and other post-secondary occupational programs could not accommodate the demand for technical and semi-professional skills needed in the work force and vital to sustaining a prosperous economy. Thus

the call was to increase accessibility to higher education for the benefit of the individual citizen as well as for the needs of the work place.

During this post-war period, several developments took place that proposed to solve some of the state's pressing problems. All well-intentioned, some were successful within the context of their particular purpose and goals. The University of Virginia, Virginia Polytechnic Institute (VPI) and the College of William and Mary, sought to provide increased local access to their programs by establishing two-year, off campus "branch colleges" or centers. Their programs, for the most part, duplicated the freshman and sophomore years at the parent institution, and offered little in the way of what are now called "terminal" occupational programs. There was little if any interest in providing adult or evening continuing education classes for local consumption, and with few exceptions, little concern for meeting specialized needs of local businesses, industry, and professions. Yet these institutions were regarded as "community colleges" by many public officials at the time.

There were indeed exceptions and gradations of the branch college missions described above, but the provision for an accessible, comprehensive community college program as it is known today was not a feature of those institutions. Admission requirements of the parent institutions denied the "open door" access now universally accepted in the 23 community colleges in the Virginia system.

University of Virginia centers or branch colleges at Lynchburg, Eastern Shore, Roanoke, and Martinsville were later absorbed into the Virginia Community College System, as were V.P.I. centers or institutes in Roanoke, Clifton Forge, Danville, and Wytheville, but William and Mary's two-year Richard Bland College in Petersburg survives today, essentially intact. Two University of Virginia branches (George Mason and Clinch Valley) developed into independent four-year colleges, as did two of William and Mary's (Christopher Newport in Hampton and Old Dominion in Norfolk). Richmond Professional Institute (RPI), a two-year branch of William and Mary, had separated from its parent institution in 1962 and merged into Virginia Commonwealth University in 1968. Its engineering technology programs were to be absorbed by J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College in 1972.

The post-war need for occupational-technical education was most readily addressed with the creation of vocational-technical schools by local school divisions. They generally offered vocational and technical programs for in-school youth and out-of-school adults beyond high school age. There was no statewide system of these schools, and their creation depended largely on local initiative and support. Such was Augusta County's Woodrow Wilson Technical school, opened in 1947 in Fishersville. It operated in conjunction with the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center's occupational programs until 1958, when it separated from the rehabilitation center, and served out-of-school adults and some high school students. The

school was to be renamed Valley Vocational-Technical School in 1963. Its connection to Blue Ridge is discussed later.

The state's vocational-technical schools did not offer college level academic studies or terminal associate degree technical programs. However, they did provide essential educational services not offered by the "branch colleges," and were sensitive to the special training needs of local business, industry, and agriculture, and the working adult who wanted further skills.

With the provision of collegiate transfer programs for some, and vocational-technical programs for others, many regarded the post-secondary education situation adequate. But the limitations of this situation were the lack of a real statewide system providing geographical access to all residents. The necessity and convenience of living at home and commuting to classes needed to be addressed in many parts of the state where no branch college or vocational-technical programs were located.

Branch colleges, centers, and vocational-technical schools were a source of pride and usually a boost to the economy in the communities where they were located. Any proposals for establishing state-run technical colleges or community colleges were met with varying degrees of opposition if not outright hostility, as might be expected. But the growing statewide concern for more accessible higher education made more and more futile the resistance of the status quo backers.

In 1962 the General Assembly created, through House Joint Resolution #81, a "Commission on Vocational Education," chaired initially by Delegate W. Roy Smith and later by Delegate D French Slaughter, Jr. Among the 11 members appointed were two prominent citizens of the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro area, State Senator Curry Carter of Staunton, and Henry Tulloch, Manager of Employee and Community Relations for General Electric Company in Waynesboro. Other members were Mrs. Carolyn Moses-Lusardi, Howard P. Anderson, Lawrence A. Hill, William H. McFarlane, Harold H. Purcell, George I. Sandig, and Woodrow W Wilkerson. The Commission was instructed "to make a thorough study of and offer recommendations for improving the program of vocational and technical education in the public supported schools of Virginia and at the post-high school level" In November, 1963, the Commission reported to Governor Albertis Harrison, Jr and to the General Assembly.

Although other studies (most notably a 1959 study by S. V. Martorana for the Virginia State Council of Higher Education) had preceded it, the Commission report deserves attention because its recommendations resulted in a governmental agency framework paving the way for a transition to the Virginia Community College System; it seemed to bring the matters discussed earlier to a focus of feasibility

The Commission recommended strengthening and expanding high school vocational instruction

and counseling, and called for the expansion of post-high school vocational- technical programs, with the funding to improve existing programs and create five new schools. The Commission also recommended the creation of a State Board of Technical Education, as a separate agency apart from the State Department of Education. Significantly, among its other concerns, the Commission recommended:

In the long run, the state should consider the feasibility of establishing all post-high school education of less-than degree length under a system of comprehensive community colleges operated by a single state-wide board. The proposed State Board of Technical Education and the new schools founded under its sponsorship and administration should be the nucleus for this development.



Henry Tulloch (l) and Dr: Dana Hamel (r) at the 25th Anniversary Luncheon

In 1964, the General Assembly created the State Board of Technical Education, and a new state agency, the Department of Technical Education, with the authorization to develop a state-wide, state-controlled system of two-year technical colleges. Meanwhile, as interest in and support for the work of the Commission on Vocational Education was nurtured in governmental circles, Governor Harrison appointed Dr. Dana Hamel, then Director of the Roanoke Technical Institute (a VPI center) as Director of Technical Education. The position would soon evolve into “Director of the Department of Technical Education”, then to “Directory of the Department of Community Colleges”, and in 1970 to “Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System”.

The membership of the newly created State Board of Technical Education was appointed by the Governor in June 1964, and one of its members was Henry Tulloch of Waynesboro, a former member of the Commission on Vocational Education which had proposed it.

By February of 1965, Hamel and the State Board of Technical Education had published policies and criteria for the establishment of the two-year technical colleges. Some were to be built apart from existing-and potentially competing-branch colleges, centers, and local vocational-technical centers in the same community; some were scheduled to take over existing facilities.

New State Board of Technical Education (SBTE) policies and guidelines provided for the offering of the two-year Associate in Applied Science degree in terminal technical programs, as well as for diploma and certificate programs of less-than-degree level. Importantly, for the community colleges to come, the Board provided for the offering of college transfer courses where there would be no conflict with existing four- year institutions' offerings in the area. Provided, too, were programs for developmental and remedial instruction, and evening continuing education classes for adults. Furthermore, the colleges were to be responsive to the special training needs of local industry. Full-time student tuition was intended to be definitely affordable at \$135 per year statewide. Operating expenses were estimated to be \$800 per student per year and the state's share would be \$585 and the remaining \$80 to come from governmental bodies of the sponsoring local region. There was no provision for dormitories; students were expected to live at home and commute to the campus.

Although there was no stipulation as to the need for the new technical colleges to be within commuting distance to all parts of the state, the guidelines described an institution that looked very much like the comprehensive community college the nation's educational experts had been endorsing over the past decade.

Hamel arranged a meeting in Staunton on January 18, 1965 inviting local government representatives to explore the feasibility of establishing a technical college region with the participation of Harrisonburg, Staunton, Waynesboro, and the counties of Augusta and Rockingham. Those in attendance were asked to file application for designation as a candidate region. It was understood that an application at that time carried no financial commitment to the local government.

Harrisonburg, Staunton, Waynesboro, and Rockingham County submitted applications, but Augusta County did not seek participation at that time. By letter dated February, 1965, Dr. Hamel notified the four applicant localities of his intention to employ a consultant to survey the potential of the region. Seeking the cooperation of the local communities, he requested the creation of a regional steering committee "with a chairman and membership from each of the four areas, which would appear to be the best means to coordinate the four political subdivisions' efforts." The committee was promptly constituted comprising Councilman Frank L. Summers, Jr., Staunton, Councilman Benjamin Cooper, Waynesboro; Councilman Stuart P. Childress, Harrisonburg; and Supervisor Everette R. Lam, Rockingham County. Summers served as Chairman, and soon acted to encourage the participation of Augusta County. Visiting their

March 10 meeting, he invited the Board to appoint an ex officio member to the steering committee "in order that they may be informed on the subject." The Board agreed to this proposal and voted to appoint Supervisor Joseph Early to represent the county.

The committee met with Hamel several times during the spring of 1965. With a regional survey underway, they became acquainted with the plans, policies, and procedures for building and operating a technical college, and were successful in arriving at agreements to "share-and-share-alike" in local funding. In May the committee learned that as development costs were being determined, each of the four participating localities would be expected to pledge \$125,000 to be made available to the State Department of Technical Education when and if the survey demonstrated the need to establish the College. The request went back to the four localities and was approved in each case, assuring that local resources would be there.

By early July, Hamel announced that the region qualified for establishment of a technical college, and a local College board was to be established, which would, of course, supersede and abolish the steering committee. By August 2, eight Board members, two from each locality, had been appointed by Harrisonburg, Staunton, Waynesboro, and Rockingham County. At the August 11 meeting of the Augusta County Board of Supervisors a letter was read from Hamel, again encouraging the Board to participate in the College project. After some discussion over the potential competition between the proposed technical college and the county's Valley Vocational-Technical School in Fishersville, and with doubts over the accreditation potential for the College, the Board tabled the matter pending more information. In retrospect, the Board's hesitation is understandable, especially in consideration of the growing capital needs of the County's elementary and secondary schools as well as of the expenses of operating "Valley Tech" in the old buildings of Woodrow Wilson Center.

To the good fortune of Blue Ridge, however, the supervisors met again on August 24, and albeit with lingering concerns for the future of Valley Tech, voted to participate fully in the technical college project (with the proviso that financial commitment would be limited to \$100,000 capital costs and "annual operating cost of \$6,000 to 8,000 "). With that settled, Eady and Malcolm G. Jones, Sr. were appointed to the College Board.

The original College Board, as of August 24, 1965, comprised ten prominent citizens as members:

- John E Alexander (Rockingham Co), Plant Manager, Grottoes Plant, Reynolds Metals Company
- Benjamin Cooper (Waynesboro), Engineering Section Manager, General Electric Company
- Adm. W Jackson Galbraith (Staunton), Retired Naval officer; College Professor

- George Heitz (Harrisonburg), Asst. Manager, Rockingham Poultry Cooperative
- Malcolm G. Jones, Sr. (Augusta Co), Retired Industrialist; Management Consultant, Hercules Inc.
- Everette R. Lam (Rockingham Co), farmer
- Fred Millhiser (Waynesboro), Director, Bengel Laboratory, DuPont Company
- William K. Monger (Harrisonburg), President and Manager, R S. Monger and Sons
- Frank L. Summers, Jr. (Staunton), Attorney
- Joseph L. Early (Augusta County), farmer

The new College Board met in Staunton a week after appointments were complete, with all members present. The brief deliberations were recorded as "Minutes of the first meeting of the Board of Trustees Shenandoah Valley Technical College September 1, 1965". Both the name of the Board and the name of the College would be changed in the future.

With Summers as chairman pro tem, the Board elected Jones as chairman. Jones appointed Mr. Summers as secretary, and named Cooper, Early, and Lam to a Site Committee, Cooper as chairman. After discussing a few organizational questions, including terms for Board members, Jones requested the members to come to the October meeting prepared to propose a name for the College.

At the October meeting in Waynesboro, Cooper reported his committee was already searching for building sites. Hamel was present, along with Eric Rhodes and Donald Reilly, who was to serve as Hamel's project coordinator. Jones announced that Hamel would serve as Acting President of the College until a permanent President was appointed. Rhodes discussed the results of the regional survey. Staggered terms were set for the Board members: Four years, Alexander, Cooper, Early, Galbraith, and Heitz; two years, Millhiser, Jones, Summers, Lam, and Monger. Appointments thereafter would be for four years, with maximum of two full terms.

An operating budget for October 1, 1965, through June 30, 1966, was presented by Hamel and adopted by the Board. It proposed a total of \$18,596, with \$9,998 as the local share, and \$8,598 as the state expenditure. The largest item was \$3,870 for the employment of a secretary. Hamel reiterated that future operating costs based on 500 students were estimated at \$800 per student per year, with "5%-10%" as the local share.

The following committees were appointed:

- "Curricular:" Galbraith (chairman), Alexander, and Millhiser;
- "Finance:" Heitz (chairman), Summers, Early, Lam, and Cooper;
- "Construction:" Monger (chairman), Alexander, and Early

On the motion by Alexander, seconded by Galbraith, the Board voted to name the institution

"Shenandoah Technical College".

Marcellus Wright, of Marcellus Wright and Partners, architects and engineers of Richmond, met with the College Board and Hamel at the Rockingham Courthouse on November 3 Wright discussed projected building costs, pointing out that the State Department of Technical Education's "masterplan" or "prototype" (developed at state expense by Marcellus Wright) was being built at the Chesterfield area Technical College (John Tyler) at an estimated cost of \$18 50 per square foot, including air conditioning The Board agreed that the total cost for S.T.C. including land acquisition, site development, and construction should be no more than one million dollars The Board voted to hire the Marcellus Wright firm for the adaptation design of the prototype campus for Shenandoah Technical College

Cooper reported his site committee had several locations "under consideration and the problems relating thereto concerning water and sewage disposal."

The December 1 meeting in Staunton City Hall was attended by all members, Treasurer Walter S. Tweedy (of F & M Bank, Waynesboro), Reilly, and Strange-Boston (representing Marcellus Wright). Strange-Boston explained the "masterplan" or "prototype" buildings to be adapted to the local site. The "50,000 square foot plant would be built in separate units around the courtyards," and would take "about three months to modify after the site had been selected ". Construction would "require a year, perhaps 14 months."

On behalf of the Curricula Committee, Galbraith presented the following recommendations for curricula and related facilities:

Curricula	Required Facilities
Electronics	Basic and Advanced
Secretarial	Basic and Advanced
Industrial Technology	Typing, Office Machines & Advanced Shorthand
Nursing	
Graphics	One lab
Agricultural Technology	One lab Basic & Advanced Biology lab

Also one lab for Physics and one lab for Chemistry was recommended.

These recommendation were accepted by vote of the College Board.

Cooper reported that the State Site Committee had visited the several proposed sites and had selected as their number one choice 50 1/2 acres owned by Cleutus Houff. Mr. Houff had purchased the property at a public auction for \$31,500 several years earlier when discussions were first held about the possibility of locating a community college in the Weyers Cave area. Mr. Houff held the property for several years, renewing the note twice, until the water and sewage negotiations could be completed.

However, a piece of land in the Verona area had recently come to the Committee's attention and they had been asked to look it over. The local site committee was to prepare additional information for the state "in regard to availability of water and feasibility of sewage disposal and all other economic factors on a comparative basis on the two sites now under consideration".

The committee later determined that the Weyers Cave location was geographically ideal-it was the most central point for the three localities of Staunton, Waynesboro and Harrisburg and adjacent to Interstate 81. Mr. Houff, being a strong advocate for locating the college in the Weyers Cave area, sold the 50 1/2 acres to the State for \$31,500-the exact price he had paid for it several years prior.

III. A BETTER IDEA IN RICHMOND

As Hamel and the State Department of UV Technical Education became immersed in the problems of designing, organizing, and building the new technical colleges in late 1964 and 1965, another study of Virginia higher education was underway. The Higher Education Study Commission, created by the 1964 General Assembly, was to conduct a comprehensive study of practically all aspects of higher education "to be used as a basis for effective long-range planning as to objectives, needs, and resources of public and private higher education in the Commonwealth of Virginia".

The 1965 Report of the Higher Education Study Commission included a special section by A. J. Brumbaugh, of the Southern Regional Education Board, which dealt with the two-year colleges. Brumbaugh studied the role and potential of the public branch colleges, centers, private junior colleges, the emerging technical colleges, and the post-high school area vocational-technical schools. He made the most thorough argument to date for the establishment of a state-wide, state-controlled, state-supported system of comprehensive community colleges so located throughout the state that every citizen could have access to appropriate higher education by living at home and commuting to classes. He effectively stated the case for the "open door" college, and called attention to the folly of a multi-jurisdictional arrangement then developing. He pointed out the need for comprehensive programs, contending that "to provide the same educational experience for all does not thereby provide an 'equal opportunity'. Both the variations among individuals and the needs of society required diversified kinds of education ". He further cautioned that "Excellence should not be judged by comparison with prestigious institutions, but by the quality of education related to the purpose it is designed to serve."

The direction given by Brumbaugh was incorporated essentially intact in the so-called "Godwin Bill" (House Bill #333) introduced in the 1966 General Assembly. With progress already evident in the technical college project, the 1965 report provided the extra "nudge" that convinced many key people, including legislators, that a transition to a community college system was politically achievable, financially defensible, and educationally sound. With the enthusiastic leadership and support of Governors Harrison and Godwin (and of course, Hamel), an impressive array of leading legislators and educators offered support, notable among them being Senator Lloyd Bird, Delegate W. Roy Smith, Delegate]W. Cooke, Delegate French Slaughter Jr, Senator Harry F Byrd, Jr., Prince Woodward, and VP I. President, 1 Marshall Hahn.

The community college bill encountered some strong opposition from several proponents of the existing branch colleges and some of the area vocational-technical schools. It was argued that the branch colleges' affiliation with the universities endowed them with a prestige and legitimacy not likely to be enjoyed by comprehensive community colleges. The branch college

advocates doubted that the community colleges could be accredited, that their credits would be acceptable for transfer to four-year colleges and universities, that they could attract quality faculty members, and that there would be significant attraction for potential students because of the perceived "lowering of standards". To accommodate the accreditation question, the final legislation provided that the branch colleges would not be required to join the community college system until they were qualified for accreditation in their own right

The opposition had persisted into the last week of the session, when it was largely through the personal influence and intervention of Governor Godwin that the necessary compromises and assurances were accepted with a unanimous vote of the Senate; the House vote was overwhelmingly favorable as well. The "Godwin Bill" was law. Approved in that session, too, was a 3 percent statewide sales tax which would benefit all public education in the Commonwealth.

Creation of the community college system abolished the Department of Technical Education and the State Board of Technical Education, relinquishing their assets to the Department of Community Colleges. The newly created 15-member State Board for Community Colleges, appointed by Governor Godwin, included in its membership several persons from the defunct State Board of Technical Education: Eugene Sydnor, Henry Tulloch, William Kanto, S. E. Liles, Jr, and Gordon Willis. Hamel was appointed Director (later to be designated Chancellor). With the birth of the Virginia Community College System in April, 1966, with great hopes and plans astir statewide, it was business as usual in those regions already preoccupied with establishing technical college.

Architects, Prototypes, and Lagoons

In the early months of 1966, the Board of "Shenandoah Technical College" had, in today's parlance, "hit the ground running". The Cletus Houff property at Weyers Cave was purchased, a campus building plan was in the hands of the architects, attention was being given to more detailed curriculum planning, and the search was under way for a president.

By January, Hamel had rented office space and employed a secretary. The office, located at 533 West Main Street in Waynesboro, occupied the back rooms of what is today the "Fox and Hounds" restaurant. It was the first local headquarters for the acting president and his confidential secretary, Marilyn T. Barnhill, who has the distinction of being the first local employee of the College.

As the architects were making rapid progress on the preliminary campus plans, more detailed information on classroom and laboratory requirements was needed. The Board appointed R Niles of American Safety Razor Company to chair an advisory committee on Industrial and Engineering Technologies. Banington Kinnaird, Administrator of Waynesboro Community

Hospital, was selected to head an advisory committee on the two-year associate degree nursing program. Niles soon organized five subcommittees in as many technology areas, and Kinnaird had arranged for nursing professionals and other experts to study the needs for the nursing program. Agriculture, too, was to be studied as a possible curriculum. It was understood, however, that all the programs would not necessarily begin the first year, and that no final decisions on curriculum would be made until a permanent president could be appointed.

By the time the College had been proposed, Augusta County officials had considered the development of a water and sewage system, designated the Weyers Cave Sanitary District, and had sought federal grants and the commitment of the local citizens in raising a significant share of the needed funds. No doubt it was the likelihood of available water and sewer service that caused both the local College Board and the Department of Technical Education to favor the Weyers Cave site for the College, and, at the same time, the opportunity for having the College participate as a supporter and future customer of the project was certainly an incentive for the county to bring the plan to fruition. The College Board agreed to participate if there was assurance that the project would be economically feasible and if it would be completed on time for the opening of College buildings. The county assured the College officials that water and sewer service would be available for the September 1967 opening.

There were unexpected delays in the Sanitary District project, however, as Federal officials moved slowly. This created a concern by the College Board that the project would not be bid and completed in time for the opening date. Estimated costs were rising, and the College Board had begun to ponder the option of providing their own water and sewer system. Deliberations over the problem took place at practically all the College Board meetings and at many of the meetings of the County Board of Supervisors as well. The problem became crucial as time passed, and remained a "cliff-hanger" as opening day approached in the fall of 1967. The College Board had already obtained a permit to discharge sewage into a pit or "lagoon" if required, and had water wells drilled on two separate locations on the College property without getting an adequate flow in either case.

On April 27, the College Board, Hamel, and architects Marcellus Wright and Strange-Boston reviewed the locally-adapted prototype building. The Board approved the prototype plan with one of the five original units omitted. It was then understood the four-unit building plan was designed to accommodate 400 full-time students. The architects recommended that "the college be positioned on the site facing US. Interstate 81, 50 feet from the Interstate 81 right-of-way line, and 650 feet from US 11 on a slight knoll and facing almost due north." The architects said they expected to be able to advertise for bids within "the next 30 days assuming borings and other related matters are satisfactory."

At that same meeting, it was noted that the Waynesboro office would have to be vacated

because of the owners need for the space. New space was made available by the Houff Transfer Company in its Weyers Cave facility The Board had its first meeting in the new offices and boardroom at Houff Transfer in July 1966 and continued there through September 1967.

Since the 1966 community college law required the community college system to take over the post-high school programs of the area vocational-technical schools, Hamel met in mid-April with Hugh Cassell, Superintendent of Augusta County Schools, and McClelland Gray, Principal of Valley Vocational-Technical School, to discuss the disposition of the programs in question. It was agreed that Gray and the faculty teaching in the post-high school programs would, until further notice, remain and carry on their duties as before. Gray would serve as Director of the Blue Ridge programs there, in addition to his other Valley Tech duties.

In May, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in Atlanta sent Gordon Sweet to visit the new college sites, that were planned and in progress in Virginia. Sweet toured all the college sites, some only open fields at this stage, and conferred with Hamel and other officials in Richmond. On June 8, Hamel reported to the College Board that the SACS chief executive officer had "visited the (Shenandoah) College site, reviewed the budget and plans for the College, and has issued the first letter of correspondence which is the initial step in the accrediting process." It is worth noting here that the College went on to become fully accredited in the minimum time allowed by SACS procedures, as did all the other colleges in the Virginia Community College System -a monumental achievement.



Dr. Douglas M. Montgomery

Douglas M. Montgomery was appointed President of Shenandoah Technical College effective July 1, 1966. A native Californian, he was a 20 year veteran of the U S Air Force with extensive combat service as a fighter pilot in World War II and the Korean War. He was a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and Harvard law School, and had earned a Masters and PhD from Florida State University. Before being appointed to head Blue Ridge, he had served as President of East Central Junior College in Mississippi.

On July 6, the Board considered the matter of selecting a new name for the College, and an ad hoc committee recommended, in order of preference, "Blue Ridge Community College" (first) and "Valley of Virginia Community College" (second). On a final ballot, the choices that appeared were "Blue Ridge Community College" (six votes) and "Jackson Community College" (two votes). The College now had a new name, a new boss, and the promise of a new campus.

Bids on the campus construction project were opened in Richmond on July 15. S. R. Gay and Company of Lynchburg was the successful bidder at \$1,087,000 with five subtractive alternative items. With the acceptance of two alternatives on lecture room seating and mechanical system redesign, the bid price was reduced to \$1,043,000. Montgomery estimated that when the College opened in September 1967, the total cost would be about \$1,500,000 including construction and landscaping; \$50,000 for land; \$150,000 in moveable equipment; \$65,000 for "the first part of the library;" and about \$78,000 for the Weyers Cave Sanitary District. The College would have an operating budget of \$115,000 for the 1966-67 year, to include \$18,000 for rent, telephone, etc., \$70,000 for salaries, and \$17,000 for office equipment. The budget would later be adjusted upward with the appropriation of an additional \$120,000 for rent and extra instructional equipment at what was then called "South Campus" in Fishersville.

Montgomery faced some busy months ahead. Overseeing campus construction would have been a full-time job in itself, especially with the persistent concern for procuring water and sewage service. Furthermore, the College needed to acquire more land and get adequate zoning protection, (the adjacent Byers property, an 85 acre parcel, was added to the original 50 acres in August for \$18,000). Pressing, too, was the need for refining of curriculum details in preparation for hiring faculty and equipping the laboratories, as well as for broadening the academic offerings to satisfy the mandate for transfer programs. Recruiting, screening, and interviewing of faculty and support staff was a demanding process. Arrangements had to be completed for the transfer and administration of the "Valley Tech" programs to community college jurisdiction. The first steps in the process of qualifying for regional accreditation with SACS were already under way. Informing the community about the mission of the College and planning for the recruitment and admission of students were to be exercises in public relations that had to be done carefully and thoroughly. And, of course, there was the groundbreaking on the "eastern knoll".

Nathan F Schilling was appointed in September, 1966, as Director of Scientific and Technical Programs. He was involved early in the review and development of technical programs for both the Weyers Cave campus and South Campus. Schilling, formerly Associate Professor and Dean of Administration at New York Institute of Technology, had a broad background in mechanical and engineering occupations.

By November, 1966, the Administration and Board had agreed on a revised list of instructional

programs to be offered in the fall of 1967, resources and space permitting. Drawing on the work of Galbraith's Curriculum Committee and preliminary information from the Rhodes survey, the Board approved twelve, two-year Associate degree programs for the Weyers Cave Campus:

Associate in Applied Science (AAS)

- Agricultural Business Technology
- Business Administration
- Business Technology
- Chemical Technology
- Drafting Technology
- Data Processing
- Electronics Technology
- Industrial Technology
- Mechanical Technology
- Secretarial Science

Programs offering the Associate in Arts degree (AA)

- Liberal Arts (transfer)
- Associate in Science (AS)

later to be designated for four transfer programs:

- Business Administration
- Pre-Engineering
- Pre-Teacher Education
- Science

Programs from the earlier (December 1965) Technical College list which were omitted from the above list were Nursing and Graphics. Chemical Technology was scheduled in the fall term of 1967; however, no students enrolled, and it was discontinued. In addition, other diploma and certificate programs already in place and to be taught at South Campus were: Automobile Body Repair, Automobile Mechanics, Cosmetology, Machine Shop, Radio and Television Repair, Drafting, Clerk-Stenographer, and Welding.

The new State Board for Community Colleges developed its basic operating policies in 1966. The College presidents and boards, along with the public, learned that tuition was to be \$135 per academic year, or \$45 per quarter for a full-time student or \$4.00 per credit hour for part-time study. The colleges would all be operated on a quarter system, four quarters per year (this

requirement proved impractical and unpopular, and was not enforced although some programs operated four quarters per year).

It was made clear to the local College Boards and Presidents that the State would not support dormitories, varsity athletics, or the construction of physical education facilities. Furthermore, recreational and cultural activities requiring the use of playing fields, theaters, gymnasias, etc., would be expected to make use of available facilities at nearby schools and other community resources.

The colleges were not to compete with established fund-raising programs of other institutions or agencies except for scholarships and grants for students. The establishment of permanent off-campus centers would not be allowed except in the cases of multi-campus colleges or where vocational-technical instruction was offered in compliance with the mandated take-over of pre-existing post-secondary programs.

Many of these early taboos were gradually lifted, however, as the community colleges matured. By the 1980s the move toward making the "college region its campus" had gained momentum throughout the VCCS. The colleges soon began to establish independent educational foundations as the prohibition of private fund-raising was retracted by the State Board.

As 1966 came to a close, the construction project was progressing smoothly, and the contractor predicted the buildings would be under roof by January 31, 1967; and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools had approved the admission of Blue Ridge to membership as soon as requirements were met.

The chief concerns of the College Board and President Montgomery in the early part of 1967 apparently were monitoring the construction project and recruiting faculty, staff, and students.

However, Augusta County's anguish with the Sanitary District project continued and centered mainly on raising adequate funds from the Federal Government (FHA), the Weyers Cave community, and the College. Minutes of both the College Board and the Board of Supervisors reflect a near preoccupation with the problem which at times seemed to defy resolution. On more than one occasion the College Board considered withdrawing its support for the project and developing its own on-campus water and sewage system, but never came to the point of actually doing so. By persevering, the College helped to assure the ultimate success of the project for the greater Weyers Cave area.

The need to complete administrative staffing in advance of the arrival of faculty members led to several early appointments.

Donald K. Wilson was appointed in February, 1967, as Coordinator of Library Services. Books

and other library materials would need to be ordered, processed, and made ready for the opening of the new campus. Douglas Pence, former personnel director at Western State Hospital in Staunton, was appointed Business Manager at the College on March 1, 1967. Until his appointment, College business affairs were managed by Fred O'Connell in the Richmond offices of the Department of Community Colleges. Emerson Hibbard was appointed as Dean of Instruction in June, 1967. He was a native of Massachusetts, and had broad experience in law, business, and college administration. He earned his doctorate in Higher Education Administration from Columbia University. W. Robert Waybright was appointed Building and Grounds Supervisor on July 1, 1967. He served the College in this position until his retirement in 1986.

In April 1967, Montgomery reported that the College had mailed 2,000 student application forms in March, and had already received 331 completed applications; he anticipated another 150 for South Campus.

During the 1966-67 school year, the first instruction was offered in post-high school vocational-technical programs under the administration of Blue Ridge at Valley Vocational-Technical School in Fishersville. The classes were taught by the South Campus faculty members who had been in the service of Valley Tech when the mandated transfer of those programs to Blue Ridge occurred in 1966. Montgomery was present at the June 1967 graduation exercises in Fishersville to award the newly designed Blue Ridge diplomas. As there is no record as to who was the first graduate at that ceremony, it is fitting that the whole class should enjoy the honor.

According to Montgomery, the recruitment of the faculty, assisted by the VCCS central office, had generated 1,200 applications by late spring, and from these 26 of the required 33 positions had been approved and filled for Blue Ridge. His goal was to have all faculty members under contract and on duty by July 1, 1967, to prepare course materials, schedules, and other resources necessary to teaching prior to the beginning of fall classes.

Because there was an urgent need to house the faculty and support staff before the campus was complete, the College rented the abandoned elementary school in Mount Sidney, about two miles south of Weyers Cave. Here the assembled faculty spent the summer in what was considered somewhat primitive conditions by some of the occupants.

The building was remembered as "Fort Sidney" by those who today recall the details of the experience. With the exception of a few latecomers, the members of the administrative, teaching, and support staff endured the inconveniences through July, August, and most of September.

During "Fort Sidney" times, the student personnel services staff dealt with prospective students in temporary offices located in the old farmhouse of the "Byers Place... The property consisted of the house, shed, and bam situated on what is now the southern end of the present College arboretum along U. S Route 11. These temporary student personnel services headquarters were occupied by Mary Frances Suter, Coordinator of Admissions and Records; Counselors E. B. Cox and Thomas Carroll; and secretary Mildred Warner.

Hibbard, Schilling, Pence, and secretary, Janice Moyers, were in temporary offices, along with President Montgomery, at the Houff Transfer building in Weyers Cave. One of the latecomers in September was Donald Frye, appointed as Dean of Student Services. His arrival would complete the staffing for the administrative team.

Eight of the original "Fort Sidney" pioneers are still full-time employees of Blue Ridge: Metro Lazorack, Edward I. Harlow, E. Houston Lynch, Darrell Hurst, John Calabria, E. B. Cox, Sharon McAllister Hudson, and Janice Moyers. Hurst has the distinction of being the first faculty member hired by Montgomery.



Charter Employees: (left to right) John P Calabria, Edward L. Harlow, Sharon Hudson, Metro Lazorack, and Darrell W. Hurst, not shown: E. B. Cox, E. Houston Lynch, and Janice Moyers

As the contractor hurried to add the last-minute finishing touches to the new campus buildings and grounds in late September, the move was quickly completed from the temporary offices at Houff Transfer from Mount Sidney, and from the Byers house to the shiny new accommodations, awaiting the anticipated onslaught of students. September 27, 28, and 29, were scheduled for orientation and registration of students. The College doors would open for classes on October 2, 1967.

IV. THE STUDENTS ARRIVE

Monday, October 2, 1967, at 8:00 a.m. –the time for traditional day classes to begin- - had arrived. As with the low key groundbreaking a year earlier, there were no ceremonies or speeches

They came in surprising numbers, and kept coming all that week. The parking lot overflowed. They parked on the roadways and on the new turf. Many classrooms were occupied at capacity or overflow. The narrow hallways were full of milling students, library carrels, and miscellaneous classroom equipment. And the water and sanitary system was connected and in operation.

When the preliminary registration figures were completed at the end of the first week, about 524 full-time students were reported enrolled in day classes, and 303 part-time on the main campus, with 81 at the Fishersville South Campus. Then as now, early enrollment data were hard to "pin down ". The official fall "headcount" was recorded as 908 students.

Local newspapers proclaimed the kudos appropriate to the occasion of the College opening. An editorial in the Harrisonburg Daily News-Record headed "Godspeed, Blue Ridge" noted the need for the new community college:

"Blue Ridge's opening fills a void in the area's educational scheme. We have long enjoyed fine public schools and we also have had, within the area served by Blue Ridge, four major colleges. Yet swiftly changing educational patterns and sky-rocketing costs have left hundreds of area high school graduates without hope both for those who want technical, vocational training and for liberal arts students who wish to transfer to senior colleges after a Blue Ridge diploma.

Blue Ridge is enormously important in the Valley's educational system. Its graduates should play important roles in the region's progressive economy. We hail its opening as a significant event in the Valley's illustrious history and as a sign of an even greater future."

A front page story in the Waynesboro News-Virginian reported that:

"The commuter aspect of the embryonic college was clearly illustrated today (Oct 2) as automobiles more than filled the spacious parking areas adjacent to the new buildings.

As young men and women converged on the campus today, workmen continued to apply finishing touches to the buildings and grounds. But things appeared to be running smoothly. Already, for example, professors had computerized lists of students in their

classes."

In the News-Virginian's "The Old Armchair" column, Louis Spilman commented:

"Dr. Montgomery has skillfully and patiently guided the 'college-on-the-drawing-board to a well-oiled operation. Initiating a new college is a complex and demanding task. Dr. Montgomery and his advisory board has seemingly taken it in stride. There have been obstacles that would discourage ordinary men, but not this group. Blue Ridge has emerged in magnificent fashion. "

The October 1 Staunton News Leader was equally congratulatory:

"Prospects for this area's Blue Ridge Community College as it opens its first session justify the conviction that this new institution is going to fill a demonstrated need now, and that it will continue over the years ahead to make a solid contribution to higher education in Virginia. That a need for the college existed has been demonstrated by its enrollment of high school graduates eager to further their education, and by the satisfaction of local industrialists in the promise that a good proportion of the graduates will be trained in the skills they require."

The College Board met on October 11 and directed Montgomery to seek bids on a parking lot expansion. The contractor, Tri-City Paving Company, laid a base that served through the 1967-68 winter and surface paving was finished in the spring.

The press for faculty office space resulted in the acquisition of a converted mobile home to be located east of the main (D and E) classroom buildings. The English faculty and bookstore were housed there for the next two years.

The most crucial shortage of space was in the library which occupied about 1,100 square feet in a large classroom (now D100 and D100A) with seating for only 25 students. The learning laboratory was confined in a small classroom. There was no planned area for indoor physical education activity. The student "lounge" was a single room of about 1,600 square feet (now the nursing lab) providing food and drink vending machines with seating capacity for about 60 persons. Facing this situation, the College Board was pressing for additional buildings within three months after opening.

An Open House observance was successfully conducted on Saturday, November 11, 1967, with College Board members, administrators, and faculty members present to greet and escort the visitors. An estimated 1,000 persons toured the new campus that day.

The new State Board for Community Colleges had asked the original Shenandoah Technical College Board to continue to serve as the local Community College Board from July 1966 to fall

1967 until new policies and procedures could be established. The new State Board policies prohibited elected public officials from serving on the local Community College Board. Consequently, City Councilmen Summers of Staunton and Cooper of Waynesboro, along with County Supervisors Lam of Rockingham and Early of Augusta were replaced on the College Board by Fred T. Prufer of Staunton, Thomas L. Lyall of Waynesboro, Edward S. Long, Jr. of Rockingham, and P. W. Moore of Augusta.

On the resignation of Eckman from the College Board in December, 1967, Waynesboro appointed Louis Rader, Vice- President and General Manager of the Industrial Process Control Division of General Electric Company.

With the implementation of new State Board policies, funding of the Community Colleges became more favorable to the local participating governmental bodies. Henceforth, the state would be responsible for the cost of construction and operation. The site acquisition and development and a minor pardon of architectural and engineering fees would be the principal expenses for the localities. The localities would also be expected to support certain community services and projects of local choice not approved for state funding.

As the operation of the College settled down from the stress of construction and opening, the remainder of Montgomery's tenure was as productive, if not quite as eventful, as the hectic days of 1966-67.

The 1968 year saw the first visit of a committee from the Southern Association of Colleges & Schools (SACS) as a further step toward full accreditation. The College Board moved ahead with plans for campus expansion by engaging Marcellus Wright to prepare a campus master site plan, and agreeing to continue with the "prototype" building concept. The Board agreed to a combination library and student center building as its first priority for new construction.

Some program changes were deemed in order and were addressed. A two-year program in Marketing Technology was approved for 1968-69. As experience in judging student interest and employer needs progressed, many modifications were to be made in curriculum offerings; only major changes will be noted in this work from this point forward.

Diplomas and Certificates were awarded to the 1968 graduates at South Campus. Since this marked the end of the first year for practically all freshman, no graduation exercises were held on the main campus.

In September, 1968, Lyman Van Winkle, Jr. succeeded Frye as Dean of Student Services; John S. Hudson was appointed Coordinator of Humanities and Schilling was designated Coordinator of Business Science and Engineering Technology Divisions. The instructional services were under the direction of two full-time coordinators responsible to the Dean of Instruction.

Two important curriculum decisions were made in 1969. An AAS degree program in Police Science was approved for the 1969-70 year. The Data Processing Unit Records curriculum was to be phased out through the 1970-71 year, and a new AAS degree program in Data Processing Technology/Computer Programming was to be introduced in 1970. The latter program was not initially approved by the State Council of Higher Education, so the State Board for Community Colleges approved it as a diploma program.

In April, 1969, Hamel notified Montgomery that the State Board had recommended to the Governor and the General Assembly a capital outlay of \$1,300,000 for approximately 43,300 additional square feet of construction at Blue Ridge for the 1970-72 biennium. The project was to include:

“specialized occupational laboratories and shops to replace programs currently offered at Valley Vocational Technical School and to establish new occupational- technical programs. A permanent learning resources center including a library and the learning laboratory, a permanent student center including vending machines or snack area, student lounge, bookstore and student activity rooms”

Montgomery engaged Associated Consultants in Education, Inc. to prepare specifications for a long-range plan for educational and campus development. The plan was ready for local, State Board, and architects' review in April, 1969.

The College completed a "Status Study Report" for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and a SACS evaluation committee visited the campus on May 11-14, 1969. This process would be a critical stage in assuring Blue Ridge's hopes of being accredited by SACS in the minimum time possible. The visiting committee's report was received by both Montgomery and Hamel in July, 1969.

Overall, the report was favorable and complimentary with regard to the College's personnel, programs, and management. To be expected, the committee was critical of the space shortage and recommended an immediate program of expansion in line with the capital outlay the College had requested and with which the committee was already acquainted.

In early 1969, the Board acquired an additional 4.1 acres from Clayborne Shreckhise to complete a straight property line on the south border of the Campus. This acquisition brought the campus to its current 62 acres.

In June 1969, Blue Ridge held its first commencement exercises on the main campus, graduating its first associate degree candidates. U. S. Congressman and later Secretary of the

Army John Marsh was the guest speaker. A total of 133 graduates received degrees, diplomas and certificates, including those awarded to South Campus graduates who came to the Main Campus to participate in the ceremony.

In the summer of 1969, Fred T. Prufer retired from the College Board and died shortly thereafter. He was succeeded by John Chiles, a Staunton dentist, and the first African-American to serve on the Blue Ridge Community College Board.

After three years of building and managing Blue Ridge, Montgomery was appointed to the presidency of the new Tidewater Community College. There he would begin the development of a multi-campus institution serving the people of Norfolk, Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, and Portsmouth.

V. A TIME FOR NEW GROWTH

James A. Armstrong was appointed President of Blue Ridge effective September 22, 1969. He had been Dean of Harford Junior College (now Community College) at Bel Air Maryland from 1965 to 1969. He had been a member of the teaching faculty and a division chairman at the State University of New York Agricultural and Technical College at Delhi, N. Y. He earned his bachelor's degree at East Stroudsburg (Pa) State Teachers College, master's degree at SUNY, Albany, N. Y., and his doctorate from Teachers College, Columbia University.

Early in his tenure, Armstrong had the pleasant duty to report that Blue Ridge Community College was accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award the associate degree at its December, 1969, annual meeting.



Dr. James A. Armstrong

In Board matters, Galbraith succeeded Jones as Chairman. Edgar R Coiner, Vice-President and Manager, First and Merchants Bank, Waynesboro, succeeded Lyall.

An important step in curriculum development work was the establishment of 12 citizens' Curriculum committees with the aim of improving community, employer, and faculty effort in determining workplace needs in program design.

In compliance with VCCS policies, the College Board approved the recommendation for tenure for 21 administrative and teaching faculty members in early 1970. The tenure system was discontinued by the State Board in 1972 and a system of multiple year appointments was adopted in its place.

In other faculty matters, Schilling transferred to Lord Fairfax Community College in January, 1970, to a position similar to that he had held at Blue Ridge. The vacancy at Blue Ridge would be filled later that spring by Roland Macher. Other administrative staffing changes in 1970 were the promotion of Gary Zick, counselor, to succeed retiring Frances Suter as Coordinator of Admissions and Records, the appointment of Kenneth Bishop to succeed Eric Campbell as Coordinator of Library Services, and the appointment of J. Coulson Phillips to Director of Continuing Education.

The 1970 session of the Virginia General Assembly was unexpectedly tight-fisted with VCCS capital outlay requests. The \$1,300,000 requested for Blue Ridge was not appropriated. The disappointed College Board immediately pursued several alternative approaches for finding the critically needed library and instructional space. The Board proposed a smaller unit to be added to the prototype buildings to be located in line with A Building about east of E building. In looking for funds, the Board even considered solutions such as a combination of local loans, residual state construction funds, and projected operating fund savings on South Campus rental costs. There was also a proposal to enclose the patio area between A and D Buildings as an interim space for library expansion.

There was a serious effort to find a way to remove the Automotive, Machine Shop, and Cosmetology programs from the insufficient facilities at South Campus. The College staff scouted the Weyers Cave area without success in the search for temporary quarters nearer to the main campus. A decisive outcome of this problem was the agreement to phase out the Cosmetology program effective June, 1970.

Further, a mobile unit was located on the campus to provide more office and classroom space in 1970, and later, an additional two mobile units were added to house an accounting classroom, a business machines room, and learning laboratory space; these were removed from the campus in 1972-73 to accommodate construction activity.

After seriously considering a move to the old Augusta County firehouse on Greenville Avenue, temporary shop space was finally rented in the vacant Lawrence Transfer Company building in Staunton in early 1972.

At the same time a construction project at Valley Tech required abandoning the two buildings housing what was left of the Blue Ridge presence at South Campus. The Automotive and Machine Shop programs were moved to the Staunton site in the summer of 1972 and operated there until June 1974. The Blue Ridge South Campus was no more.

From 1968 to 1972 the instructional programs functioned under the direction of two full-time coordinators responsible to the Dean of Instruction. The actual assignment of leadership for disciplines or programs varied from year to year in an effort to balance the coordinator's responsibilities. In 1972, six instructional divisions were created, each having a designated chairman with part-time teaching duties. In 1973, the number of divisions and chairmen was reduced to five: Business and Secretarial, Roland Macher; Humanities, Louise Adams; Social and Behavioral Sciences, Michael Bunis; Mathematics and Sciences, Metro Lazorack; and Engineering/Industrial Programs, Jack Songer.

Good news came from the 1972 session of the Virginia General Assembly with the appropriation of \$2,001,778 for the construction of a library and student center, Business

Technology building, and Engineering and shop building.

The new project began in late 1972 with a separate contract to Echols Brothers of Staunton for grading and site preparation, including preparation for extending the north parking lot. The 1971 master site plan prepared by Marcellus Wright and Associates, Architects, first conceived the central "mall" approach existing in the campus plan today. The library- student center building was to break from the box like plan of the prototype layout, and was to dominate the "head" or south end of the "mall" (the existing west parking lot).

The new buildings, designed by D'Earcy Davis and Associates, Architects, of Harrisonburg, would more than double the original prototype space of 39,400 gross square feet (GSF). The library-student center (G) building would be 30,287 GSF with two stories, the engineering and shop (B) building 13,956 GSF, and business technology (F) building 12,420 GSF. In all, the total campus space would exceed 95,000 GSF. The F and G buildings were built and used essentially as planned; the B building was slightly modified and equipped to house the new Animal Technology program and the automotive shops. The space intended for Machine Shop would house instead a Diesel Mechanics program when the building was completed in 1974, since the Machine Shop program was terminated because of low enrollment.

The "phase II" building construction project bids were opened in December, 1972, with Nielsen Construction Company the successful bidder at \$1,302,650. The remainder of the appropriation was for equipment and renovation. Work was underway early in 1973. After some delays by bad weather, labor shortages, and late materials deliveries, the construction was completed in the summer of 1974 in time for occupation by the faculty and staff before the fall term began. BRCC faculty members Brian Delaney and Michael Bunis found summer employment on the project.

Although the rise of the new buildings was the center of attention, some other noteworthy events occurred during that period. Two new AAS degree programs, Mental Health Technology and Animal Science, were launched in 1971-72. The Animal Science curriculum comprised two options, Animal Husbandry and Animal Technology (now Veterinary Technology). The appointment of William Allison, a veterinarian, started the Animal Technology program on a full- time basis. Allison moved the program from makeshift quarters in the A building to new laboratory facilities he had specified and designed in the B building, which had been originally intended to house facilities for the Engineering program. The second-year of the Engineering program had by 1973 been discontinued for lack of enrollment.

The opening of the new buildings was observed with a dedication ceremony on October 16, 1974. Governor Godwin accepted an invitation to be the principal speaker, but he was taken ill and sent State Secretary of Administration Maurice Rowe in his place. The event was attended

by many local government officials, prominent educators, industrialists, area political leaders, College faculty and staff, student representatives, and College Board members.

As a follow-up to the 1969 accreditation by the Southern Association for Colleges and Schools, the first BRCC institutional self-study program was begun in 1971 and completed in 1973 with a SACS visiting committee on campus in May, 1973. The Blue Ridge membership was reaffirmed and accreditation was extended for ten years. Again Blue Ridge's mission, organization, resources, personnel, and programs were favorably reviewed, and the visiting committee witnessed the process of campus growth first hand.

VI. THE MIDDLE YEARS

As the Phase II construction project was completed at Blue Ridge, and as the establishment of new community colleges were completed by 1973, the halcyon days of public largesse for the VCCS were apparently past. The climate for support for the higher education boom in the Commonwealth was described in the Virginia Plan for Higher Education 1974 by the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV):

"The future development of Virginia's institutions of higher education must be viewed within the context of state and national population statistics, college attendance rates; economic pressures, and increased uneasiness with the idea that college is necessarily the pathway to a better livelihood. Viewed within this context it is apparent that higher education in Virginia and across the nation has entered into a period which is, compared to the past 25 years, one of consolidation with relatively modest and very cautious growth."

The prediction was generally on the mark as far as Virginia and the nation were concerned. The community colleges, including Blue Ridge, experienced overall rapid enrollment increases until the 1975-76 year, when growth slowed significantly and even declined from 1981-82 to 1984-85. Full-time equivalent student enrollment decreased as full-time students declined in numbers in proportion to part time. This phenomenon decreased state general fund operating appropriations and reduced revenue from tuition, which, as could be anticipated, resulted in tuition rate increases. From an annual full-time tuition of \$135 in 1967, the charge to students had increased to \$765.00 by 1986.

As a consequence of increased student costs, Blue Ridge officials have striven to find new and more abundant sources of student financial aid. Increased support from federal and state sources, along with growing private commitments, have eased but not solved the problem of financial accessibility for many students. But regardless of the conservative posture of SCHEV, Blue Ridge and the VCCS have continued to grow overall, and at times exceeded the national growth rate for community colleges during the so-called leveling-off period from 1975 to 1985.

The College Board was pleased to see the return of two of its original members who ended their City Council duties and were again eligible for College Board service. Cooper served on the Board from 1971 to 1980, and Summers served from 1975 to 1979; both men served as chairman during their tenures on the Blue Ridge Board. Others serving as chairman during the first 25 years of the College's operation were Malcolm Jones Sr., W. Jackson Galbraith, W. K. Monger, Edward S. Long, Jr., George A. Heitz, James A. Bundy V., John F. Miller, Jr., Elizabeth Lindsey, Harold C. Cook, John J. Myers, Jr., and W. Price Lineweaver. Other citizens who have

served on the Blue Ridge Board are acknowledged elsewhere in this work.

Chiefly through the interest and effort of Coulson Phillips, Director of Continuing Education, the College in 1974 established a program of ROTC instruction on the Blue Ridge Campus in a cooperative arrangement with Virginia Military Institute. Army personnel reductions caused the VMI arrangement to be discontinued in 1982, but Blue Ridge students could continue to participate in ROTC on the James Madison University Campus.

One of the more publicized community service activities of BRCC was its cooperation in the establishment of the Regional Police Academy which was founded in 1971 and housed at the College. It evolved into the Central Shenandoah Criminal Justice Training Center in 1974 under the joint sponsorship of 24 law enforcement agencies across five regional planning districts. The CSCJC was under the full-time direction of Walter E. Brown from 1974-76. It outgrew its BRCC space in 1977 and moved to its own permanent quarters in Waynesboro.

Even as the new buildings were being occupied in 1974, it was evident that more space was needed if the College were to continue growing. The Animal Technology program required housing for both large and small animals. A small animal house with temporary cover and runs was constructed as an attachment to B building, and served minimum requirements for several years. In 1974 the College Board approved the concept of an animal study facility - a specialized barn and treatment center -and authorized the President to proceed with the project.

Lack of money was again the problem. With support of the local animal industry and cognizant approving agencies in Richmond, the 1978 session of the General Assembly appropriated \$144,095 for the project. Designed by Dwight Miller, Architect, of Harrisonburg, the building was built by Adorn Inc. and was completed in 1980. The need for a proper facility for small animals persisted, however, and the request for further funds continued. An appropriation of \$83,000 in 1984 was realized, but it proved to be inadequate for construction of a suitable facility. After two redesigns and bid rejections, the appropriation was increased and the present small animal house was completed in 1987.

As part of a continuing effort to further college-industry cooperation, the College employed Henry Tulloch as a special Assistant to the President during the 1977-78 year for the task of completing a study of Blue Ridge's graduates in the workforce and how they were regarded by employers. Results of the project indicated that, overall, BRCC graduates were well received and that employers were ready to share information on the personnel needs of business and industry.

Dean of Instruction, John S. Hudson, retired in 1979 and Frances Turnage was promoted to succeed him. Hudson had served the College as Division Coordinator from 1968-71, and as

Dean since 1971. Turnage had served since 1967 as Director of the Learning Laboratory, Division Coordinator, and Director of Educational Development.

Turnage, as Dean, took leadership for the establishment of an associate degree nursing program. In addition, he obtained the interest and support of the R. R. Donnelley and Sons Company, and other local printers, in establishing the AAS degree program in Graphic Arts/Printing Technology, introduced in 1981 and phased out in 1984.

The AAS degree nursing program, after thorough planning and several delays, was introduced in 1984 in cooperation with the established program at Germanna Community College. The program admitted graduates of the licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) programs at Valley Vocational Technical Center and Massanutten Vocational Technical Center with the requirement for at least one year's successful employment as an LPN. On completion of the one-year program at Blue Ridge qualified graduates earned the AAS degree and were eligible to sit for the state R.N. examination.

In 1979, Dana Hamel, VCCS Chancellor, was succeeded by Richard Ernst as interim Chancellor, who, in turn was succeeded by James Hinson as Chancellor in 1980. Hamel had guided and championed the development of the technical colleges during 1964-66, and the system of 23 Community Colleges from 1966 to 1979. His stewardship in creating these 23 institutions with 34 campuses in less than 10 years is a success story worthy of note in the history of the American community college movement.

Beginning in the late 1970's there was slow but sure progress in the College data processing system from batch processing to interactive terminals and microcomputers for both instructional and administrative use. Elvin Fawley and Scott Langhorst assisted in developing an interactive campus system for registration, student records, and other student personnel applications. By 1982, word processing computers and 18 new interactive terminals had been installed to bring classroom technology up to the standards then required for effective instruction. In the Engineering Technology programs, a Computer Assisted Drafting and Design (CADD) system was acquired in 1984.

Highland County became the sixth regional sponsoring locality in 1982. The county had been a part of the Dabney S. Lancaster Community College region, but the people of Highland County had traditionally nurtured closer ties to the Staunton-Augusta area and requested the change in their support for and participation in the community college regional system. Because of its smaller population, the county share in local College expenses was reduced proportionately and it was agreed that Highland would be represented by one College Board member. Austin Shepherd represented Highland County on the Blue Ridge Board until 1988.

The College underwent another SACS institutional self-study in 1982-84, and, as expected, it

was accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award the associate degree.

During the 1984-85 year, Craig Wiedemann, BRCC Director of Continuing Education, organized the Center for Human Resource Development in cooperation with local business and industry with a 10 member board composed of managers of local production and service organizations.

The 1984-85 President's Annual Report noted that the Center played an "active role in the increased number of organizations utilizing the College for on-site and tailored programs" and predicted that "with proper nurturing the Center can play a vital role in insuring that the College is visible and responsive to the needs of business and industry in the Valley" That year, the Continuing Education office increased the number of off campus sites, with new services offered in Elkton, Waynesboro, and Highland County.

In 1985, the College completed the organization and approval of the Blue Ridge Community College Educational Foundation, Inc., an autonomous, non-profit corporate body committed to seeking funds and allocating them to activities for the advancement of the College and its students. The foundation was intended primarily to provide student loans and scholarships and to support other worthy projects such as faculty grants and equipment acquisition.

In early 1985, Armstrong announced his intent to retire and did so effective July 1, 1985. He had served as President of Blue Ridge for 16 years. He continues his residence in Staunton.

VII. NEW LEADERSHIP AND OUTREACH

James C. Sears was appointed as the third President of Blue Ridge July 1, 1985. Sears had been Provost of the Portsmouth Campus of Tidewater Community College from 1981 to 1985. Prior to that he served in several administrative positions at Tidewater, including Dean of Instruction and Student Services. He had also served at Virginia Highlands Community College and Virginia Western Community College. He earned his baccalaureate degree from Roanoke College, and his masters and doctorate from the University of Virginia.



Dr. James C. Sears

Sears made a number of changes and innovations during his four year presidential tenure. "It was time," he said in his 1985-86 annual report, "to seek new linkages and partnerships as old assumptions, stereo-types, and former thinking patterns gave way to new ideas and opportunities."

He established a Blue Ridge Center in Waynesboro which opened in the winter quarter of 1985-86 with Malcolm Livick as Director. In Sears' first semester as President, Blue Ridge recovered from a two-year decline in enrollment with a 15% increase. Two thousand three hundred and seventy-four students enrolled in fall 1985.

Sears was successful in obtaining an appropriation of \$155,100 in 1986 for the completion of the small animal facility, \$49,400 for a storage building, and \$50,000 for parking lot improvements. He also raised \$50,000 in local funds for the construction of four tennis courts. In a significant administrative reorganization, two full-time academic division chairmen replaced the five division designation established in 1973. Mrs. Pamela Driscoll was appointed

as Dean of Financial and Administrative Services; the first female to hold that title in the Virginia Community College System. This new position brought data processing and administrative services together. Douglas Pence retired in 1986 after nearly 20 years of service as Business Manager. Two new positions were created in Student Services: Director of Student Services, and Coordinator of Recruitment and Retention.

Dean Turnage resigned in 1986 to accept an appointment as President of Germanna Community College. Metro Lazorack succeeded him as Dean of Instruction and Student Services.

A major campus-wide and system-wide project in the conversion of the college academic calendar from a quarter system to a semester system was begun in 1987 and completed in 1988.

Sears' commitment to greater outreach and increased college/industry cooperation resulted in the expansion of the Center for Business and Human Resource Development.

The success of the Center for Business and Human Resource Development under the direction of Janice Moyers resulted in a rapid expansion of programs designed for client organizations including special training programs for production, supervisory, and management personnel. A series of American Management Association seminars was especially well received.

Several important campus improvements began during the 1987-88 year and were completed over the next three years. Funding in the amount of \$700,000 was received for: replacement of an outdated boiler, new roofs on four buildings, laboratory ventilation improvements, new parking lot lighting, structural and restroom repairs, and cooling tower modifications. The General Assembly appropriated \$100,000 per year for three year for new instructional equipment, a large portion of which was used to purchase computers for instruction and administrative use. In addition, eight grants totaling \$250,000 were received from various sources for program innovation and development.

VIII. A BRIDGE TO TOMORROW

James R. Perkins accepted the office of President of Blue Ridge on July 1, 1989, and was inaugurated on October 19, 1989. Prior to coming to Blue Ridge, he was Dean of Instruction at Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) from 1987 to 1989. He had earlier served as Division Chairman of Natural Sciences and Engineering Technologies at PVCC. A native of upstate New York, he began his college teaching career at Genesee Community College in Batavia, N. Y. He earned his baccalaureate and masters degree at State University of New York, Albany, and his PhD from Florida State University.



Dr. James R. Perkins

Many new plans and improvements in campus and program growth were underway as Perkins began his term. He immediately saw plans completed for a number of campus improvements ranging from aesthetics to mechanical systems infrastructure. The overall appearance and ambience of faculty and administrative offices, and instructional buildings were tastefully renovated and redecorated. The library, student center lobby, and lounge received new carpeting and furniture in 1991-92, a completely renovated food service area was designed to serve hot meals and fast food service. The new food service was paid for with private donations and local funds.

An important curriculum decision in fall 1990 established the option for students in Nursing to begin a full two-year Associate degree program without the LPN requirements, but continuing both options. In 1992 a further milestone was achieved by establishing the Blue Ridge Nursing program as independent from the control and participation of Germanna Community College.

Blue Ridge's increased cooperation with other agencies has benefited all concerned. The

Center for Training and Development (formerly the Center for Business and Human Resource Development) has enhanced the reputation of the College as a "can-do" institution in providing special personnel development services to both private and public agencies. These organizations in turn have benefited the College with financial assistance and other resources which would have been unavailable if the College had depended on public funds alone. The introduction of a successful tractor-trailer driving school in 1991 is a case in point. The efforts and influences of the Center for Training and Development were instrumental in getting significant gifts of equipment for that program.

A full-time position in the nursing faculty was underwritten by Rockingham Memorial Hospital beginning in 1989, and a second position was funded by Augusta Hospital Corporation in 1991 through the BRCC Educational Foundation. The Valley poultry industry likewise subsidized the salary of a faculty member to teach Spanish to plant personnel at the workplace as well as at the College. The Coors Brewing Company provides partial support for a Coordinator of Minority Recruitment and Retention.

Approval for a new science and technology building reached the early design stage. With the passage of the bond issue referendum in November 1992, BRCC will receive over \$3.4 million for the 12,100 square foot facility, renovations and improvements to existing facilities and replacement of the College's heating and cooling system.

A tour of the campus buildings today amazes the returning old-timer. There is not a faculty or administrative office or laboratory without computer equipment. And it is being well used by personnel skilled in its application. The atmosphere is that of business-like high technology. The College now requires computer literacy for graduates with the associate degree and most diploma programs and makes available the means of acquiring that skill to all who seek it, regardless of student status.

The 1990-91 and 1991-92 years saw a 22 percent reduction in State general funds for Blue Ridge. Yet the College, faced by tuition increases, was able to sustain record enrollment growth, accommodating 2,836 students in the fall term 1990, to 2,950 in fall, 1992. At the same time, there was an increase in income from private gifts and grants through the BRCC Educational Foundation and other non-general fund sources.

The Foundation income grew from gifts to the value of about \$100,000 in its 1990-91 fund drive to more than \$200,000 in 1991-92. As a new feature of this campaign, an annual concert was initiated in 1991 and a second was held in 1992, resulting in both increased cash and public interest in the Foundation's activities. The Foundation resources continue to grow in defiance of the current economic recession, receiving cash, equipment, and in-kind contributions which have supported a number of student financial aid projects, campus improvements, faculty mini-

grants and staff development at an increasing pace.

In the first year of Perkins' tenure, he organized a college- wide effort to prepare a "strategic plan" as a guide for positioning the College community to manage change over the next decade, providing a "framework for the development of action plans which will guide us into the twenty-first century"

The development of the plan, called Bridges to the Future was initiated in September, 1989, as Perkins "challenged the College community to use the next 15 months to develop a strategic plan ... to help the College determine its future". The resulting document affirmed the appropriateness of the undertaking:

"In many ways, the timing was perfect for BRCC to contemplate its future. First, the College faculty had charted a course for change. The document, BRCC in the 1990's, endorsed by the Faculty Senate in May, 1989, provided an excellent foundation for the planning process. Second, the College was beginning to think about an institutional self-study for reaffirmation of its accreditation by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). This study would begin in less than three years. Third, the College is part of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) which, itself, had just completed a statewide process of long-range planning. Importantly, the College had begun its 22nd year with record enrollments, several exciting new initiatives, and a new President. The College demanded a vision for the future and a blueprint for achieving that future."

As part of this planning procedure, a college-wide retreat was held November 17-18, 1989, to discuss institutional goals and objectives for the next decade. The completed plan contained no listing of proposed curriculum changes, financial projections, or tables of space requirements. "Bridges to the Future states College values, describes challenges facing the College and suggests general directions in which we should move. It is also designed to provide a framework for more detailed planning throughout the College." The document contains the "BRCC Statement of Values" and a challenging, thoughtful list of goals and objectives.

As an outgrowth of the strategic plan project, a College- wide involvement produced the BRCC Governance Model designed to "ensure participatory decision making. Its fundamental premise rests upon active and responsible involvement of all segments of the College community- faculty, staff, administration, and students." The model sets forth in adequate detail the "purpose, procedures and membership of the four major constituency groups (Faculty Senate, Administrative Council, Support Staff Association, Student Government Association), nine standing committees, College Assembly, and College Council ".

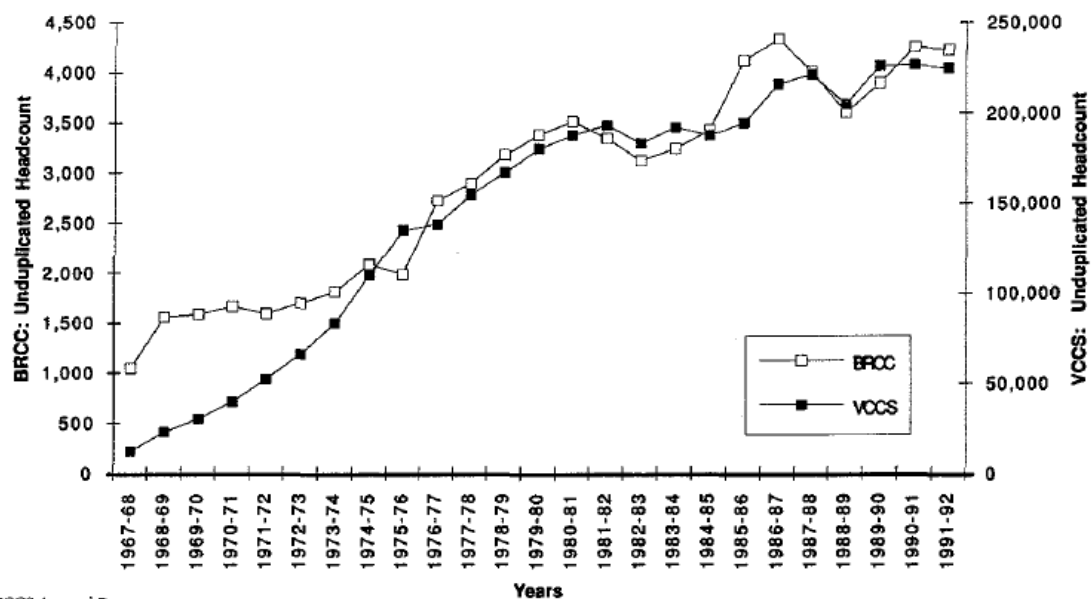
Blue Ridge has, in a quarter century of progress, become all its founders could have hoped for

in that time. The earlier critics of the budding community college system saw, in 1966, these institutions as having little promise or integrity: they would not be accredited, would not attract students or quality faculty and their academic credits would not be transferable. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools along with many specialized accrediting, certifying and licensing agencies attest to the high quality of the Virginia Community Colleges, Blue Ridge included.

Even a superficial perusal of the enrollment data graphed reveals that student interest in attending Blue Ridge has generally paralleled that experienced throughout the Virginia Community College System. BRCC faculty members have been recognized and honored by their colleagues statewide and nationwide, and hundreds of former students have distinguished themselves as citizens and achieved success in the careers launched at Blue Ridge.

The foresight of the founders of BRCC has indeed been generously rewarded. As was said in 1967, "Godspeed, Blue Ridge".

VCCS and BRCC Enrollment 1967-1992



Sources:

1967-1980: VCCS Annual Reports

1980-1992: VCCS Trends in Credit Enrollment

1980-81 through 1990-1991 Research and Planning, VCCS, Richmond VA, August 1991

CREDITS

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