



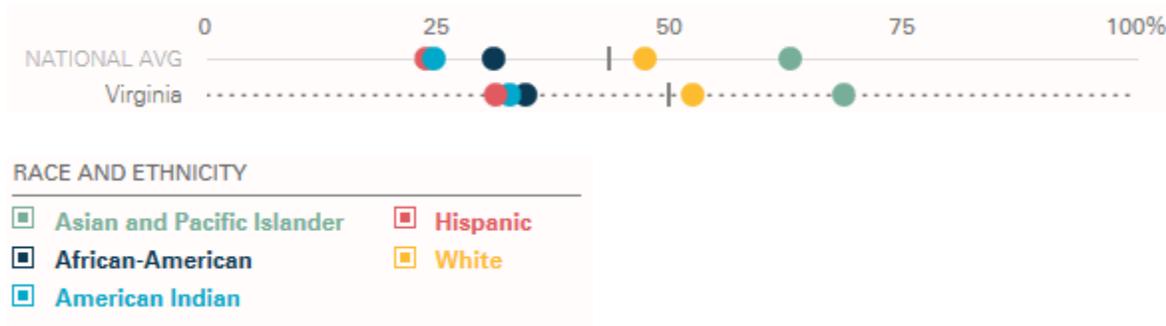
Measuring and Promoting Social Mobility in the Commonwealth of Virginia

With the increased demand for college completion, higher education leaders in Virginia must develop systems to facilitate success for every college student, particularly historically disadvantaged students. Social mobility is the movement of individuals or groups from one socioeconomic status to another. By analyzing social mobility data, SCHEV, in partnership with Virginia higher education institutions, can develop strategies that improve access and close equity gaps for underrepresented students.

Institutions that excel at providing opportunities and mobility often are not the ones that are highly ranked externally (e.g. by U.S. News & World Report). The Commonwealth's current funding formula does not take into account the additional resources and time needed to provide opportunities and mobility to Virginians in greatest need. The state has the opportunity to better support institutions that excel at providing opportunities and mobility.

Expanding college access for low-income and first-generation students is a tangible way to promote social mobility. Higher education must be accessible to students across the economic spectrum. We need to develop intentional strategies to retain economically disadvantaged students, improve college completion, and graduate these students into productive jobs. To advance economic mobility for low-income, underrepresented students, research shows that student support, academic resources, and financial assistance must work together. Providing a combination of financial assistance and support programs for low-income students is of paramount importance (Executive Office of the President, 2014; Kruger, 2018). This combination gives students the most traction to overcome disadvantages and propel them to degree attainment.

When measuring social mobility in Virginia, it is important to define Underrepresented Minority (URM) which includes Black, Latinx, and Native American learners. According to the Commonwealth of Virginia's attainment data, there are persistent gaps in degree attainment among URM learners. Currently, all groups that make up URM have an attainment gap of 15% or more in Virginia compared with the state average. The overall state attainment average for associate degree holders or above is 49% in Virginia (residents ages 25-64), compared with Blacks (34%), Native Americans (33%), and Latinos (31%) (Lumina, 2018). Asians are not included in the URM because Asian (68%) attainment is the highest for any ethnic group in the Commonwealth. This definition of Underrepresented Minorities is widely utilized in higher education by groups such as the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) and The Education Trust.



To measure and promote social mobility in Virginia, the Old Dominion University Center for Social Mobility scholars recommend three measures:

1. Virginia Enrollment Representation Index
 - This index characterizes how well Underrepresented Minority enrollment at each 4-year public institution reflects the racial and ethnic composition of Virginia.
 - The index is modeled after The Education Trust State Equity Report Cards.
2. Virginia Opportunity Index
 - The index measures an institution’s impact on enrolling and graduating Pell Grant recipients.
 - “Federal Pell Grant usually are awarded only to undergraduate students who display exceptional financial need” (U.S. Department of Education, 2019, p. 1).
3. Family Income Distribution
 - Using Opportunity Insights data, the largest national social mobility data set, we provide family income distribution data (a measure of access) for each of the 15 four-year public institutions. Data includes percentage of students coming from the bottom income quintile and the lower 60% of the income distribution.
4. Virginia Mobility Index
 - a. The Virginia Mobility Index uses Opportunity Insights data. This measure incorporates both access and outcomes, representing the percentage of students at Virginia 4-year public institutions who moved up two or more income quintiles.

Advancing Social Mobility in the Commonwealth of Virginia

As leaders of public institutions in Virginia, we have a responsibility to boost educational attainment for all learners, especially the most disadvantaged and marginalized (URM & low-



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income) groups. We must develop strategies to close the attainment gap in the Commonwealth. Focusing attainment interventions to support these populations is critical; the data indicates that educational attainment impacts income.

Commonwealth budget allocations can support social mobility by:

- Providing needed resources to institutions serving greater numbers of low-income (Pell-eligible) and underrepresented (Black, Latino, & Native American) students. Recognizing financial constraints, the Commonwealth's funding model must provide additional financial support to institutions who are providing the greatest opportunity and mobility for students in the Commonwealth. Funding strategies employed over the last decade have disadvantaged institutions who have intentionally kept tuition costs low. It is important to establish a flexible funding model that can recognize our changing demographics and better support institutions who are serving large populations of Pell and underrepresented minority students.
- Providing more aid dollars to institutions that serve more low-income students. The number of Pell students in public higher education institutions in Virginia varies greatly, from 263 at VMI (least in the Commonwealth) to more than 8,000 at ODU and GMU (greatest in the Commonwealth) (SCHEV, 2018).
- Align aid to ensure equitable provision to low-income, URM, first-generation, and non-traditional-pathway and/or adult students. Examining the three financial aid allocation models currently under review, the EFC-Based model best supports social mobility efforts.
- Hire and retain more URM faculty so the faculty composition better reflects the diverse population of students in the Commonwealth. Recommend allocating at least one-half of funding for URM faculty to institutions with the greatest percent of URM students. Institutions who are serving a larger number of URM students and providing the greatest opportunity and mobility in the Commonwealth should be rewarded.
- A college educated workforce offers Virginia employers a talented pool of career ready and highly qualified employees. College graduates earn more, pay more in taxes, and use fewer government services than those who did not go to college or did not finish. A college degree or credential unlocks access to productive jobs and translates to \$1 million in extra earnings over a person's career (Complete College America, 2017).



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1. Virginia Enrollment Representation Index

- 30% of Virginia’s population are Underrepresented Minorities (URM) (Census, 2010).
- URM includes Black, Latino, and Native American.
- 37% of Virginia’s elementary and secondary school students are URM (The Education Trust, 2015).

In the table below, representation is measured by the percentage of URM students attending an institution minus the percentage of underrepresented minorities in the Commonwealth.

How well does URM enrollment reflect the racial/ethnic composition of the Commonwealth?

Institution	Virginia URM Representative Index	% of Underrepresented Minorities Fall 2018	Number of Underrepresented Minorities (URM) Fall 2018
VA Elementary & Secondary Schools	--	37%	--
Virginia Community Colleges (VCCS)	--	31%	--
Commonwealth of Virginia	--	30%	--
Christopher Newport University	-17%	13%	606
George Mason University	-2%	28%	6,832
James Madison University	-18%	12%	2,318
Longwood University	-14%	16%	689
Norfolk State University	59%	89%	4,112
Old Dominion University	11%	41%	8,651
Radford University	-6%	24%	1,911
University of Mary Washington	-12%	18%	769
University of Virginia	-16%	14%	2,231
University of Virginia - Wise	-17%	13%	266
Virginia Commonwealth University	0%	30%	6,951
Virginia Military Institute	-16%	14%	239
Virginia Tech	-13%	17%	2,996
William & Mary	-12%	18%	1,064
Virginia State University	Complete data were not available. 74% of class did not report race/ethnicity.		

* Data were derived from State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) and U.S. Census and modeled after The Education Trust State Equity Report Cards



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Virginia Enrollment Representation Index Continued

- Institutions with a positive score, zero, or within 5 percentage points of Virginia's average are taking a greater responsibility in serving the most underrepresented groups. These institutions are social mobility drivers in the Commonwealth providing opportunities for underrepresented minority students.
- Institutions with negative scores greater than 5 percentage points are underserving these racial and ethnic groups and can work to be more reflective of Virginia's population.
- To promote social mobility, it is important that as diversity grows in the Commonwealth (i.e. 37% URM in Virginia elementary & secondary schools), our four-year public universities also become more diverse.



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2. Virginia Opportunity Index

- The index measures an institution’s impact on enrolling and graduating Pell Grant recipients.
- Opportunity is measured by multiplying the percentage of Pell Grant recipients by Pell Grant recipients’ graduation rates (access X outcomes).
- In Virginia, there are public institutions that are doing heavy lifting in terms of serving many Pell students, while other institutions have a small population of Pell students.

Institution	Virginia Opportunity Index	# of Pell Grant Recipients (2017-2018)	% of Pell Grant Recipients (2017-2018)	Pell 6-Year Graduation Rates (2011-2017)
Christopher Newport University	10.5	741	15.0	70.1
George Mason University	21.9	8,296	32.8	66.8
James Madison University	11.7	3,132	15.7	74.7
Longwood University	16.2	1,161	26.0	62.4
Norfolk State University	20.6	3,219	68.7	30.0
Old Dominion University	20.1	8,242	42.2	47.6
Radford University	18.0	3,134	37.2	48.4
University of Mary Washington	13.7	951	21.6	63.2
University of Virginia	12.1	2,211	13.3	90.9
University of Virginia - Wise	15.3	762	36.4	42.1
Virginia Commonwealth University	17.6	7,066	29.4	59.9
Virginia Military Institute	11.0	263	15.3	67.6
Virginia Tech	12.4	4,339	16.0	77.7
Virginia State University	28.2	3,061	71.2	39.6
William & Mary	11.2	785	12.5	89.2



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3. Family Income Distribution (Opportunity Insights data)

Institution	% of Students from the Bottom Quintile	% of Students from the Bottom 60% of the Income Distribution
Christopher Newport University	5.0	33.1
George Mason University	6.1	31.5
James Madison University	1.9	16.3
Longwood University	3.1	25.2
Norfolk State University	20.6	71.9
Old Dominion University	8.5	43.5
Radford University	4.4	30.5
University of Mary Washington	1.3	14.6
University of Virginia	2.8	16.1
University of Virginia - Wise	13.1	53.1
Virginia Commonwealth University	7.1	37.9
Virginia Military Institute	4.6	24.9
Virginia Tech	2.8	20.3
Virginia State University	19.2	69.1
William & Mary	1.3	13.6

The first column shows the percentage of students from the bottom income quintile (\$13,258) and the second column by which the table is sorted, shows the percentage of the student body that comes from families in the lower 60% of the income distribution (\$61,564) (Tax Policy Center used for Quintile means, 2017).



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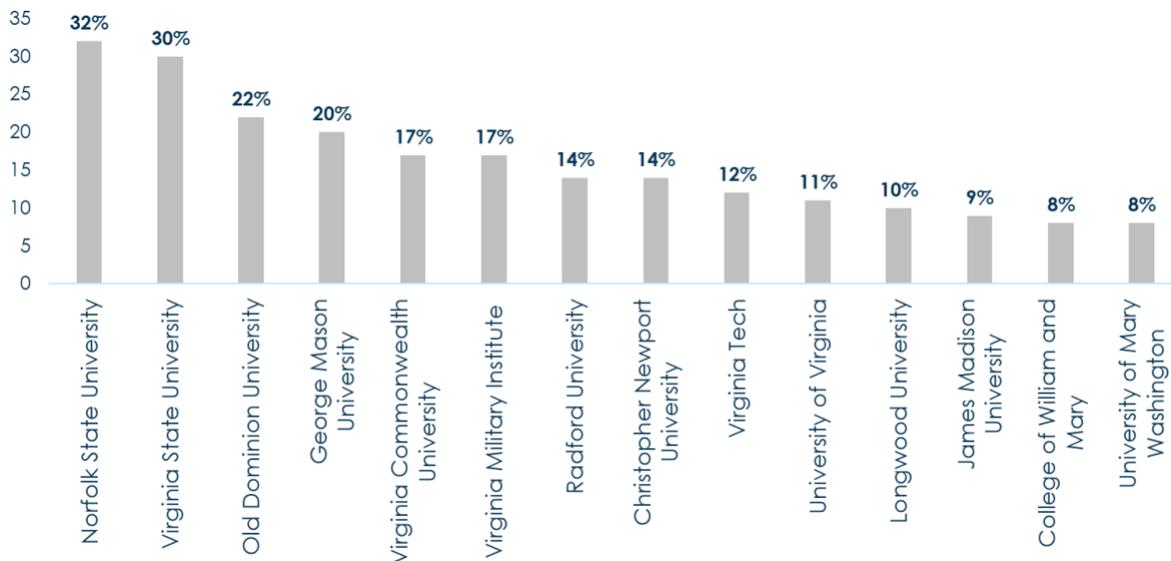
4. Virginia Mobility Index

This measure reflects both access and outcomes, representing the likelihood that a student at a 4-year public institution moved up two or more income quintiles.

Share of institution’s students who moved up two or more income quintiles

Institution	Share of institution’s students who moved up two or more income quintiles
Christopher Newport University	14%
George Mason University	20%
James Madison University	9%
Longwood University	10%
Norfolk State University	32%
Old Dominion University	22%
Radford University	14%
University of Mary Washington	8%
University of Virginia	11%
University of Virginia - Wise	*
Virginia Commonwealth University	17%
Virginia Military Institute	17%
Virginia Tech	12%
Virginia State University	30%
William & Mary	8%

Share of institution’s students who moved up two or more income quintiles



Source: Opportunity Insights: Mobility Report Cards: The Role of Colleges in Intergenerational Mobility, 2017

*UVA Wise is not included given the unavailability of data provided by the Opportunity Insights dataset



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It is essential for the Commonwealth to tie funding to performance and reward institutions who are providing the greatest opportunity and mobility. Institutions doing the heavy lifting in terms of social mobility and serving large populations of Pell and URM students need additional state support to fund the institution and specifically URM faculty members. We urge the Commonwealth to adjust financial aid funding to better support URM and Pell students. Current funding procedures do not sufficiently take account of and reward the institutions that excel at providing opportunities and mobility and there is an opportunity to make adjustments that can enhance access and attainment in the Commonwealth.

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