



Virginia Union University
Sydney Lewis School of Business (SLSB) – Pickford Hall
1500 North Lombardy Street Richmond, VA 23220-1170
“Raising the Bar for the 21st Century Millennial”

www.vuu.edu

Contact Numbers for Additional Information.: (301) 275-5347 - (804) 257-5801

Date:

Dear Sponsors and Donors:

On behalf of the Virginia Union University Sydney Lewis School of Business, I write you this letter to share with you information about the historic Virginia Union University Sydney Lewis School of Business (VUU SLSB), and request for your support in our efforts to develop the VUU SLSB into one of the premier Business Schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the country.

About Virginia Union University the Sydney Lewis School of Business



Virginia Union University (VUU), a Historical Black College and University, was founded in 1865 and currently has a total enrollment of 1,295 undergraduate students. It is located in the City of Richmond, Virginia, an urban setting. The campus sits on 100 acres. The school utilizes a semester-based academic calendar year. Virginia Union University's ranking is noted in the 2019 edition of Best Colleges as a National Liberal Arts Colleges, Tier 2. VUU, an academic institution of higher learning has historically deep and long-standing roots in both the faith based community and the larger Richmond Metropolitan Area (RMA). Both as community members and academicians, VUU has consistently served as an advocate for those fellow community members that have been marginalized and disenfranchised, unseen, and unheard. Historically, it has stood as a beacon and activist for social justice, equality, and civil rights. Noted for educating scholars, leaders and practitioners who have played a major role in shaping the political and economic environment in the City of Richmond, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the nation, VUU has in some ways, created opportunities and chances for those who want to improve their own condition and in other ways been a voice for those disempowered to transform themselves.

The Virginia Union University Sydney Lewis School of Business (VUU SLSB), one of four Schools at Virginia Union University was established 45 years ago in November of 1973. Over this time, a total of 15,750 students have enrolled in the SLSB. There are four majors offered in the SLSB: *Accounting, Finance and Banking, Entrepreneurial Management and Marketing*. The VUU SLSB is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). ACBSP is a leading specialized accreditation association for business education supporting, celebrating and rewarding teaching excellence. The founding Dean Emeritus of the VUU SLSB is Dr. Ruth Coles Harris. In her honor, the Ruth Coles Harris Leadership Institute (RCHLI) was established to celebrate Dr. Harris' contributions to the VUU SLSB, the professions of business and accounting, and to the community at large. The RCHLI offers leadership lecture series to students, workshops for professionals, and certificate programs for professionals to include:



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(Project Management, Church Administration, Organizational Change and Leadership Development, and Entrepreneurship), and seminars to individuals and organizations within the community. It is intended to deepen participants understanding of leadership, administration, business, entrepreneurship, and to strengthen leadership skills which embrace service to others. Additionally, the RCHLI will:

- Host visiting scholars, organize conferences to share new research, and create opportunities for collaborations across disciplines;
- Integrate SLSB with other VUU Schools to create an inter-disciplined business application techniques for conducting a successful profit or non-profit corporation;
- Develop partnerships and outreach through offering of seminars for the community;
- Develop partnerships with Alumni to support the RCHLI;
- Collaborate with the corporate community to provide the RCHLI Certification Program for their employees; and
- Organize workshops for professionals across disciplines to share cutting edge techniques in solving current business problems.

The VUUSLSB is poised to be one of the most fascinating and cutting edge Business Schools in the country. This success is due in large part to the extensive knowledge of the faculty with over 200 years of collective experience, in which some faculty are published, cutting edge majors, small classroom sizes, and the school's access to the former Governor Lawrence Douglass Wilder's world class library located on the campus.

Among the business school's top priority, Dr. Delta R. Bowers the current Dean - has created an aggressive and dynamic fundraising campaign by which the VUU SLSB and its current active Business Advisory Committee (comprised of successful business owners and current and former student alumni) are ensuring that VUU SLSB is positioned to offer a premier education to the 21st Century millennial students in a proactive and meaningful way that will support many of your organizations' ever changing business service or product offerings, research, and any other professional needs required by your customers.

Justification for Virginia Union University Sydney Lewis School of Business Financial Sponsorship, Donation and Involvement:

The VUU SLSB as part of its vision, mission, priorities and goals desires to **“Raise the Bar for the 21st Century Millennial”, our students on the whole.** In an effort to address their financial needs to support their academic matriculation at VUU, an upcoming scholarship fundraising ***Luncheon is scheduled for Saturday, February 16, 2019, from 11:30am -2:00pm*** at *Claude G. Perkins Living and Learning Center located at 1500 North Lombardy Street, Richmond, Virginia 23220 (On the Campus of VUU).*

When the VUU SLSB envisions the 21st century Millennial and its students as a whole, they see them as the Gen Y, Gen X, Me Generation and Digital natives. Currently, millennials comprise of some 80 million people within the US population. The U.S. Department of



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Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts within the next two years that millennials will make up 50% of the workforce and by 2030, and the hyper-connected, tech savvy generation will make up 75% of the workforce. Millennials are vastly different from the Gen Xers who preceded them and are changing the way in which the VUU SLSB does business, provide education, communicate with students, buy materials and offer other required opportunities. While many industries have quickly adapted to this group as a force to be reckoned with, it is the VUU SLSB's desire not to lag behind and be underprepared in its ability to cater to this new and growing generation.

VUU SLSB realizes that it cannot manage the School of Business as usual and that this new wave of students coming through the SLSB are not just tech literate, but accustomed to being connected anywhere, at any time. They are a generation that cannot recall life before the Internet. They have always had a cell phone, and share their photos via Instagram, communicate with friends and family via Facebook and Twitter, and other social media outlets. Thanks to the rise of mobile, cloud and social media, millennials are used to flexibility, openness and instantly connecting with people regardless of their location. What they are not accustomed to are constraints and being restricted by an IT department when it comes to using technology or in a Business School that lacks the latest technology to support this ever changing group.

Having grown up with technology at their fingertips, millennials or students on the whole are not accustomed to a technological infrastructure that is not leading edge. Legacy systems that have been rolled out by businesses, more often than not, mirror the hierarchical structure of traditional organizations, which the millennial generation simply will not accept. Rather than being able to communicate, share and work on files, and contend with everyone involved in a project, they could find themselves working in silos. VUU SLSB realizes that long gone are the days when educators could stand in the front of a classroom and pontificate expecting students to hang on to their every word. Although the VUU SLSB has some of the best instructors in the country, millennial students and all students will disengage quickly if they are not actively engaged in the education process. Two areas for which Millennials are often vilified are their (a) connection to social media, and (b) their lack of soft skills.

The VUU SLSB believes that the solution to this is quite simple. Millennials praise social media outlets because it gives them connections and ties them to social referent powers. Therefore, students are engaged in using social media, as well as providing Millennials with referent powers in the form of truly engaged faculty members and experts in the field, which they are pursuing.

Benefits for Supporting and Investing in the VUU SLSB for Your Organization:

As we continue to develop the VUU SLSB into one of the premier Business Schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the country, it is our goal to strengthen our partnership with your organization. It is our desire to engage our millennial students and all students in the VUU SLSB in the classroom and learning process by first and foremost, facilitating curriculums which focus on problem solving initiatives that address needs to be resolved by many of your very organizations and assume a role. By using this problem solving strategy over the course of a term, our students build skills in team building,



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collaboration, leadership, presentation and problem solving that will meet your organizations needs internally and externally. Over the course of time, this becomes a technique that each student can incorporate into their thought and decision making processes, thereby building a new skill set that readily prepares them for a place among your organization.

Additionally, the VUU SLSB consciously prepares students for real-life employment skills. This includes: specialized knowledge in their majors, developing strong written and verbal communication skills, decision making skills, a good work ethic, technical Skills, initiative, digital literacy skills, professionalism, honesty, integrity, accountability, self-regulation, and a healthy self-image. Core to millennials are (a) their ability to work as part of a team, (b) their ability to quickly acquire technical skills, (c) digital literacy skills and (d) a healthy self-image. The areas of leadership, work ethic/initiative, communication skills and professionalism are the missing pieces that employers refer to as lack of soft skills within the Millennial demographic. Other strategies to meet the needs of our students and prepare them for the workforce are found in three key areas which include **Personal, Academic and Life Skills:**

Personal: We implement team-based exercises, speech requirements and collaborative tasks within the curricula to help build leadership and formulate great interpersonal skills.

- Ensure the millennial students utilize a hands-on methodology that includes new materials and books that are favorable to their growth;
- Ensure that that they have the necessary funding support for many come from low economic-enterprise wide environments where they are unable to raise or have the funds to sustain them through graduation;
- Ensure there are mentors in the subject matter area that can be the instructor but include also guest speakers and other industry experts who can give students valuable information not found in the textbook, as well as personal anecdotes and feedback about their own life and work experiences; and
- Allow millennial students to bring their own experiences into the learning process thereby actively engaging their prior learning in the process.

Academic: The VUU SLSB engage the millennials and our entire student body in the use of adaptive learning techniques and technology with apps, blogs, social media and other gamification into the millennial learning environment. Additionally, strategies like flipping the classroom gives students the ability to demonstrate their knowledge and communication/presentation skills by having the faculty member focus on problem solving skills within a classroom rather than focusing on content acquisition.

- Allow Millennials to use their naturally collaborative skill-set to work in teams to reinforce and accomplish learning goals.
- Encourage social responsibility in their projects as a way for millennial students to bring their personal experience and philosophies into the learning process. Millennials value experiences and so they like to travel, volunteer and do things



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that make them feel better about their actions and even teach themselves. This helps them to serve a greater purpose than themselves.

Life Skills: We recognize them for growing, meeting goals and targets.

In closing, the Sydney Lewis School of Business challenges your organization to support the VUU SLSB to make a difference by leaving a legacy for our students through Tuition/Scholarships assistance. Although we will continue to carry out the priorities of the school and stay current on the latest and greatest technological advances within our learning infrastructure and environment, to ensure that the VUU SLSB students achieve academic success to be successful in the the 21st Century workforce, the VUU SLSB needs your support.

Many of VUU schools infrastructures/buildings need renovations to include the Sydney Lewis School of the Business - which needs to be brought up to date as a state of the art Business School that many of our students could respect. This will help us further **“Raise the Bar for the 21st Century Millennial”** so the school can effectively train the future business leaders of tomorrow to become 21st Century interns, knowledge workers, and productive employees hired by you. For all donations of a million dollars or more, the university will acknowledge your contributions through naming a program, classroom, or building in your honor. Additionally, in collaboration with the President, Provost, and Vice President of Academic Affairs, honorary degrees may be a consideration. Also, we invite you to participate in helping us make a difference by being a part of the VUU SLSB Business Advisory Committee. Please see opportunities below for your consideration as an investor or sponsor for the VUU SLSB's upcoming Scholarship Luncheon. Your consideration is greatly appreciated.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Delta R. Bowers".

Dr. Delta R. Bowers, Dean,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brenda A. Campbell".

Brenda Campbell, MSW/MBA, VUU SLSB Business Advisory Committee Fundraising Chairperson,

Gloria Foote, VUU SLSB Business Advisory Committee Fundraising Committee Member, VUU Professor
Mike Newsome, President, Virginia Union University National Alumni Association and VUU SLSB Business Advisory Committee Fundraising Committee member