

Press Release – University of Richmond

The University of Richmond has signed a partnership agreement with the Patrick County Education Foundation to provide a full package of financial assistance to any Patrick County student who meets the standards—and is admitted to – the University of Richmond. Foundation Board Chairman, former Governor Gerald L. Baliles, expressed his delight with the University of Richmond’s commitment to Patrick County. Baliles told University of Richmond president, Dr. William E. Cooper, that the University of Richmond’ commitment to Patrick County would be “well received” and that he is confident that “The county and the Foundation will do their best to send you some of the County’s brightest and best students.”

The University of Richmond is recognized as one of the top private universities in the nation. Richmond enrolls approximately 3,500 undergraduate and graduate students in liberal arts, business, leadership studies, law and continuing studies. According to the University of Richmond’s announcement, its commitment is to provide its standard financial aid package to students who are admitted to the University and that currently the University is able to meet 100% of demonstrated need of every student admitted.

The Patrick County Education Foundation’s College Access Program is designed to increase the number of Patrick County students attending college. Currently, the County ranks near the bottom of state rankings in students going to college, and the Foundation’s goal is to move within ten years from near the bottom of such rankings to one of the top five rural counties.

According to Gerald Hughes, the Foundation's Executive Director, many of the County's students test well on the SAT's, yet too few have gone to college. Hughes said that "many come from families with little if any higher education experience. Many believe that one must be wealthy to attend college." The Foundation wants to change that.

In its first two years, according to Sandra Dales, the Foundation's College Access Program Director, "The percentage of students taking the SATs has doubled. College applications have increased significantly and the Foundation has located more than \$1,000,000 in scholarship aid and financial assistance for the last two classes of students attending college."

The Foundation is also engaged in a similar program for adult citizens to attain their GED, Again the goal being one of moving the County from near the bottom of state rankings to one of the top five rural counties within a decade. The Foundation's third initiative involves Work Force Training programs aimed at upgrading work skills of the County's Citizenry.