

Valdosta State University
2004-2005 Annual Report of Institutional Progress
November, 2005

Section A: Summary of Major Institutional Accomplishments

During 2004-2005, Valdosta State University demonstrated its strong commitment to the University System's strategic goal to "seek the most efficient, effective and technologically sound business and service best practices, and regularly compare ourselves to national peers." This report documents the remarkable successes that were achieved through the dedication and collaborative efforts of faculty, staff, students, and administrators who worked diligently in pursuit of that strategic goal throughout the past year. Their accomplishments touched the entire campus from classrooms to the residence halls and from administrative offices to the athletic fields. We are pleased to highlight these activities in the pages that follow.

Several VSU programs earned national distinction during this period. The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) recognized VSU's Learning through Integrated Science and Technology (LIST) project with the prestigious national Christa McAuliffe Award for Excellence in Teacher Education in November 2004. The LIST project focuses on increasing student achievement in science through research-based professional development. It has produced documented gains in science learning with K-12 students in South Georgia and North Florida, helping VSU fulfill its important mission as a regional university.

The award of SciTrek to Valdosta State University in February 2005 created an exceptional opportunity to enhance this focus on science and mathematics education. As a result of the agreement with the former SciTrek board, VSU enjoys sole use of all intellectual property associated with its science education model and materials from the Thomas Edison exhibit, including a prototype phonograph, kinoscope (motion picture viewer), and early fluoroscope (x-ray machine). The powerful synergy generated by the combination of SciTrek and LIST will help transform science instruction throughout the region and state.

Also during February, the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) honored VSU with two national best practice awards. The "Best Practice Award for Innovative Use of Technology" highlighted the use of video-streamed, web-based instruction and video-conferencing technology to help prepare teachers and interpreters of deaf and hard-of-hearing students. The "Best Practice Award for Collaboration with Community Colleges" recognized a program combination of Special Education and Early Childhood Education to attend to students with and without disabilities offered in conjunction with two-year colleges in the region. VSU was the only university to receive two of these national awards from AACTE in the same year.

VSU was especially honored to receive its second statewide Best Practice award from the Board of Regents during 2004. This first place award cited a partnership that promotes student success: "From Silos to Circles: Collaboration Between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs at Valdosta State University." The collaborative efforts of these two divisions involve such crucial programs as LeaderQuest and the Freshman Year Experience. The Board of Regents also presented Valdosta State University with Best Practice in International Education awards for "Degree Programs with an Integrated Study Abroad Component" (first place) and "Most Internationalized Academic Unit" (second place). The University received a special Award of Excellence from the Board of Regents recognizing the Public/Private Partnership for the Centennial residence hall construction project.

Multiple renovation and construction projects were evident across Valdosta State University's campus throughout 2004-2005, including completion of a \$35.6 million dollar residence hall complex and renovation program. Ground was broken for two new residence halls in June 2004, and the 348 beds of Centennial Hall East were filled with students in January 2005. This was the University's first new residence hall in nearly 40 years. The 170 additional beds of Centennial Hall West were occupied in August 2005. Centennial Hall East also includes a new convenience store to better serve students' needs. These new residence halls are key to helping VSU reach its goal of housing a greater percentage of students on campus. In addition, Brown and Lowndes Halls both received extensive renovation, with upgrades to the major mechanical systems and an enhanced living-learning environment produced through the integration of study areas, classroom space, and music practice areas. With the reopening of these halls and Centennial West, Patterson Hall was closed for renovation beginning in mid-August 2005. Remodeling of the Fine Arts building created additional room for theatre production facilities and faculty offices. On the North Campus, the baseball field pressbox was remodeled to provide updated space for media production and storage.

Total student enrollment for Fall semester 2004 was 10,400, representing a slight (1.4%) decline from the previous year's record enrollment of 10,547. However, undergraduate enrollment continued its steady upward trend, with 212 (2.4%) more undergraduate students enrolled in Fall 2004 than in Fall 2003. The University's six-year institutional graduation rate also experienced a healthy increase, reaching an all-time high of 38.6% from 33.4% in 2003-2004. The six-year system-wide graduation rate showed a corresponding rise from 43.2% to 48.3%. One-year institution-specific retention of first-time freshmen increased from 74.3% to 75.7%.

VSU focused significant attention on graduation and retention issues throughout the year as a participant in AASCU's national study of Graduation Rate Outcomes. This involved an intense self assessment conducted through campus meetings with faculty and staff during January and providing a study team member/lead report writer for the visit to Murray State University in Kentucky. The University has remained actively engaged in this effort through participation in follow up presentations across the state.

The quality of existing academic programs was affirmed by the continued accreditation of the Master's degree in Sociology following a visit by the Commission on Applied and Clinical Sociology. The Sports Medicine program received an outstanding exit interview from the Commission on the Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE). Several additional programs successfully fulfilled re-accreditation requirements: the department of Chemistry successfully completed the five-year evaluation of its American Chemical Society-approved chemistry program, the College of Arts' Theatre program was successfully re-accredited by the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST), and the College of Arts' Music program was re-accredited in good standing by National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) in January 2005. The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) Commission on Accreditation granted final program approval for all art programs in December of 2004. The new web-based hybrid Master of Social Work program change was approved by both the USG Board of Regents and the Council on Social Work Education in 2004. The College of Nursing underwent a site visit by the Georgia State Board of Nursing in March 2005 and received Conditional Approval. As a result of declining pass rates on the NCLEX licensure examination in 2003-2004, the College implemented the Student Success Program and standardized testing. Subsequent NCLEX pass rates have been above the national average (89.18%), and continued approval of the program has been affirmed.

The University also broadened its graduate-level offerings. Students enrolled in the new Master of Music Performance degree for the first time in Fall 2004, and the Board of Regents approved the Master's degree in Biology which has begun to accept students as of Fall 2005.

Valdosta State University's athletic teams achieved unparalleled success in 2004-2005 as the Blazer football team won the Gulf South Conference championship and went on to become the 2004 NCAA Division II National Champions. The women's tennis team also earned a Gulf South Conference championship, and women's basketball won the GSC East Division regular season title. Seven sports teams participated in NCAA National Championship tournaments: football, men's cross country, women's cross country, men's basketball, golf, women's tennis, and men's tennis.

All of VSU's colleges were involved in special outreach activities and extensive service to the region and state. A committee of faculty members in the College of Arts and Sciences drafted a proposed structure and organization for a Center for Applied Research designed to facilitate faculty community-based research throughout VSU's service area. This Center received administrative approval during 2004-2005. Subsequently, a faculty member has been selected to coordinate this effort, and research projects conducted during 2005-2006 are expected to generate seed money that can assist faculty in undertaking additional applied research.

The College of the Arts welcomed Peach State Summer Theatre, formerly known as Jekyll Island Summer Theatre, to its new home on VSU's main campus in May 2005. This season offered three musicals, including the very special premiere of "The Tuesday Afternoon Regulars," a musical written to accompany the "Education: Go Get It" program which encourages potentially at-risk students to finish high school and seriously pursue postsecondary education. The College also served the South Georgia region through numerous other cultural events in 2004, including eight exhibitions in the Fine Arts Gallery; presentation of "The Mikado," a fully staged dinner opera; 392 performances (both on and off campus) by Music department faculty and students; and an additional 197 non-VSU related performances undertaken by faculty. Ten members of the Wind Ensemble were selected as members of the Georgia All-College Band which performed at the 2004 Georgia Music Educator's Conference in Savannah.

Langdale College of Business Administration faculty and staff participated in 452 regional service activities as well as 53 service activities to professional organizations. The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) exceeded most contract deliverables for continuing education and consulting throughout the region: 1,800 hours consulting with 243 existing or pre-venture firms. The SBDC taught 35 continuing education courses with 498 participants and assisted 13 firms in acquiring almost \$2 million in financing.

VSU's College of Nursing was awarded ICAPP funding to begin an accelerated Baccalaureate Nursing Program for Second Degree Students in collaboration with partners South Georgia Medical Center, Smith-Northview Hospital, and Archbold Medical Center. The VSU project, budgeted at \$657,239, addresses the nursing shortage in South Georgia by offering an expedited Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree for students who already hold a bachelor's degree in a field other than nursing. The VSU program is expected to produce 36 graduates and the three South Georgia hospitals plan to hire 12 graduates each. The program was implemented in Summer 2005 and enrolled 11 students in the first cohort. This group of students will graduate in August of 2006. The second cohort will begin in May 2006 and is expected to have 30 students enrolled. Thus far, retention has been 100%.

The College of Education formalized agreements with South Georgia College, Waycross College, and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College to provide preparation programs for full

undergraduate and graduate degrees in Special Education: General Curriculum/Early Childhood Education. Thirty classes were conducted during 2004-2005 (five classes per semester at each of the two-year schools with 25 students per class). The number of classes has doubled this year, and there will be 90 classes each year thereafter. In addition, the College of Education received a grant award to develop 10 new online teacher education courses. These fully online courses will help in-service special education teachers achieve "highly qualified" certification in mathematics and reading as required under No Child Left Behind.

VSU proudly hosted the Governor's Honors Program during the summer of 2005. This highly successful six-week program enjoyed its twenty-sixth year on the campus and enrolled 675 of the best and brightest high school students from throughout the state. An even greater number of students will have the opportunity to participate in this exceptional program in 2006.

Off campus programs, offered through Public Services, taught a total of 41 courses with 550 students at the Moody Air Force Base location, 21 courses with 235 students at Albany Marine Corps Logistics Base, and 27 courses with 433 students at Waycross College.

Valdosta State University is committed to the development and support of new online initiatives that will expand access to educational programs and enhance student recruitment, progress, and graduation. VSU provides students with over 100 different courses online each semester through eCore and institutional offerings and continues to expand its strong presence on the Internet. The use of advanced learning technologies, including the Internet, to provide graduate offerings increased during 2004-2005. Graduate degree programs delivered exclusively online include the MPA (the first such program to be accredited by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration), the WebMBA, MLIS, Ed.S. degree in Instructional Technology, and a web-based Social Work program. VSU is also continuing in the collaborative online Certificate Program in European Union Studies and will participate in the expansion of this program into an online baccalaureate degree program. VSU faculty and students have expressed the desire for additional online graduate and undergraduate programs. Initial development of online courses in the RN to BSN program and the MSN program is currently underway in the College of Nursing.

Students also are engaged in approximately 250 additional web-enhanced courses. With the only individual installation of WebCT Vista in the University System of Georgia, VSU continues to work cooperatively with USG Advanced Learning Technologies (ALT) in the deployment and integration of the course management system. VSU was the pioneer institution for the installation of Vista 3.x in the state, and VSU IT is progressing toward the first implementation of Luminis Data Integration in the University System. This will achieve the first full integration of Luminis Portal (BlazeNet), WebCT Vista, and the Banner Student Information System in the state.

VSU has made the transition from GSAMS to IP video to support videoconferencing courses and initiatives via the Internet. In this new Internet-based mode, VSU continues to participate in the French Foreign Language Collaborative. This distance learning program expands access to advanced undergraduate language courses for students at VSU, North Georgia College and State University, and Columbus State University. Another innovative Internet-based videoconferencing initiative is bringing undergraduate students in the College of Education together in live videoconferencing interactions with students at Palacky University in the Czech Republic and Abant Izzet Baysal University in Turkey. Through a U.S. Department of Education grant, the Department of Special Education is continuing to develop a highly innovative program utilizing Internet videoconferencing technology to train in-service special education teachers in Georgia and Florida in American Sign Language interpretation.

Continuing Education experienced an active year, generating 5001 CEUs. The number of Category I CEU programs (representing professional development training) reported to the Board of Regents rose from 292 to 382, a 30% increase. The Learning in Retirement program, which provides learning and social activities for area senior citizens, had over 2899 registrations in 155 courses from 345 individuals during 2004-2005.

VSU faculty and students enjoyed numerous opportunities for involvement in international programs and activities. The University served as host institution for three highly selective federally funded programs that sponsor year-long exchange visits by foreign scholars and students: The Russia-U.S. Young Leadership Fellows for Public Service Program, the Eurasian Undergraduate Exchange Program, and the Junior Faculty Development Program. A total of 150 VSU students studied abroad during 2004-2005. In addition, continued leadership of the USG's European Council included coordination of system-wide study abroad programs in London (118 students/14 faculty), Paris (44 students/6 faculty), Madrid (47 students/6 faculty), Germany (36 students/5 faculty), and St. Petersburg (31 students/4 faculty). The Center for International Programs (CIP) also implemented a Faculty Associate Program, which allows faculty to be assigned to the Center on a quarter-time basis. This division of faculty assignment time facilitates interaction between International Programs and the faculty, builds capacity among faculty members in international activity, and increases CIP sensitivity to faculty interests and needs.

Additional significant accomplishments by Valdosta State University's talented faculty, staff, and students during 2004-2005, include the following:

- The University received \$392,826 in federal funds to begin the design of the \$37.6 million Health Sciences and Business Administration Facility which was placed on the University System's Capital Projects list in June of 2004 and is currently ranked 22nd.
- VSU's total economic impact on the Valdosta Metropolitan Statistical Area was \$304.7 million, and 4,906 jobs were created either directly or indirectly as a result of the University's presence.
- VSU's academic viewbook won the bronze prize in the search piece category for institutions with enrollments of 10,000 to 19,999 from Admissions Marketing Report.
- The University again achieved the highest audit rating of 1.
- The hard work and dedication of VSU's faculty and staff were recognized through longevity salary increases, and the minimum wage was raised to \$6.15 per hour for permanent employees.
- This year's Connell Lecture, "Origins of Humankind: The View from Africa" presented by renowned paleoanthropologist Dr. Donald Johanson, set a record attendance for this annual series. A true collaborative effort, the lecture was sponsored by the Biology Department in conjunction with the departments of Physics, Astronomy and Geosciences; History; Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice; the College of Arts and Sciences; the Office of Grants and Contracts; and the Office of Planned Giving.
- Valdosta State University's Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) presentation team finished third out of over 850 SIFE teams nationwide during national competition in May. The SIFE team implemented a total of 46-community service learning projects. Highlights include the creation and opening of after-school programs for underprivileged children, teaching 250 children about great American entrepreneurs, reaching the Latino population by teaching basic business skills, and aiding 5th grade students in starting a

business and earning money for savings accounts. VSU SIFE students volunteered over 12,000 hours in their service-learning projects.

- VSU's College Bowl team ranked second in the region and went on to place sixth out of 16 nationally ranked teams at the National College Bowl tournament in Seattle, Washington.
- The University's Society for Human Resource Management Student Chapter received Superior Merit Award status from the National Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) for the 2004-2005 academic year. The Superior Merit Award status is an upgrade for the VSU chapter, which last year obtained its first Merit Award.
- Valdosta State University's Mass Media Department won first place for Best Newscast at the national convention of the National Broadcasting Society (NBS) in Los Angeles in early March. In addition, mass media students won several awards from the Society of Collegiate Journalists (SCJ).
- Student Government Association members received five awards at the state's Model Senate, including awards for the Best Committee Chair, Best Senator, and Best Committee.
- Special Education and Communication Disorders received a \$1.1 million Office of Special Education Programs Personnel Preparation Grant to support and expand the Deaf Interpreting program. The grant will support student tuition, assist in the development of online modules, and create partners in training.
- The Division of Social Work was awarded three substantial grants by the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) to support training for new child welfare workers (\$368,720), the development of a new curriculum for state child welfare workers (\$141,000), and the graduate education of DFCS personnel (\$175,000).
- The Marriage and Family Therapy Program received a grant for \$64,420 for the Homeward Bound Program with Lowndes Associated Ministries for People (LAMP).
- Dr. Eric Brevik, Dr. Can Denizman, and Dr. Judy Grable, with faculty from the Biology Department, are involved in the administration of a \$43,000 EPA grant to study water quality of the Alapaha River drainage.
- Modern and Classical Languages, in conjunction with Early Childhood Education and Reading, received a Quality Teacher Award grant of \$40,000 to provide teachers in-service training through graduate credit hours toward the Georgia ESOL Endorsement.
- The Mathematics and Computer Science Department sponsored the tenth annual VSU Mathematics Technology Conference.
- Early Childhood and Reading Education hosted the first annual Southern Regional Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl on March 19th for over 150 4th through 12th grade students from nine counties in South Georgia.
- The College of Arts and Sciences offered the eighth annual African American Lecture Series and the ninth annual Women's Studies Conference, both of which again attracted large, diversified audiences.

- The weekly Science Lecture series continued each semester, including presentations on such timely topics as the origins of tsunamis.
- Music students had numerous accomplishments, most notably Chris Coleman's performance in the National Wind Ensemble at Carnegie Hall.
- The Valdosta Symphony Orchestra concluded its 15th season with eleven performances. This season featured local and international artists.
- Valdosta State University Professor and Valdosta Symphony Orchestra Principal Timpanist, Dr. J. David Morris, also is a member of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) and Chorus that recently won a Grammy for Best Choral Performance at the 47th Annual Grammy Awards.
- The Theatre program's Children's Theatre Tour completed its 23rd year.
- The "If I Had a Hammer Project" resulted in over 1500 fifth graders visiting VSU's campus last year.
- Dr. L. Wayne Plumly, Jr., a Sam Walton Fellow for Valdosta State University's Students in Free Enterprise, recently received the 2005 Jack Kahl Entrepreneurial Leadership Award.
- Dr. Matthew Richards won the Outstanding Teacher in Anthropology Award from the American Anthropological Association.
- Mrs. Tommye Miller, Bookstore Director, was awarded the Order of the Eagle by the National Association of College Stores (the highest honor given by NACS recognizing outstanding contributions by a member-volunteer in the college store industry).
- Dr. George Gaumont, University Librarian, was elected President of the Georgia Library Association for 2004.
- Dr. James A. Muncy was appointed Executive Director of the Association for Consumer Research.
- Mr. Mike Savoie, Assistant Professor in Communication Arts, was named director of the University System of Georgia Regents' London Program.
- The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) appointed Valdosta State University President Ronald M. Zaccari as one of twelve members of its Commission on Public University Renewal charged with producing a report that defines and describes the public university needed in the 21st Century.
- Dr. Diane Holliman was the invited keynote speaker for the Japanese Society of Social Workers in Health at Bunkyo Gakuin University in Tokyo in September 2004, and she also was named Social Worker of the Year by the South Georgia Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers in March 2005.
- VSU head football coach Chris Hatcher, who led the Blazers to the University's first national championship in 2004, was named Division II national coach of the year by the American Football Coaches Association.

- Valdosta State's Russ Hoff was named head athletic trainer of the year for NCAA Division II by the College/University Athletic Trainers Committee.
- Mass Media Professor Frank Barnas received a Sasakawa Fellowship titled "Incorporating Japanese Studies into the Undergraduate Curriculum." Barnas was one of 20 professors nationwide awarded the summer fellowship which was held in San Diego.
- Secretary of State Cathy Cox presented the Georgia Historical Records Advisory Board Award for Excellence to Dr. David Williams and Mrs. Teresa Crisp Williams, who collaborated with another individual, to publish *Plain Folk in a Rich Man's War: Class and Dissent in Confederate Georgia*.

Section B: Annual Progress in Institutional Strategic Planning

Valdosta State University maintained a clear focus on the eight goals outlined in the University's Strategic Plan and further refined the five interwoven components of the model: the Strategic Plan, the Budget Plan, the Master Plan for the campus, the Facilities Plan for maintenance of the physical plant, and the External Plan for fund-raising. The direct linkage between the University's Strategic Plan and the Budget Plan ensures that resources will be targeted to the highest priorities and needs of the campus as expressed by departments, deans, and cabinet officers. The web-based system continued to evolve over the past year, and it has supplied the President's Budget Advisory Council with key information that has been critical to decision-making.

Each of VSU's eight strategic goals is closely aligned with one of the strategic goals of the University System of Georgia, enabling the University to simultaneously address and support System goals. VSU also was a solid partner in system-wide planning efforts through participation on the USG Master Planning Guidelines Committee. This committee produced detailed recommendations that are expected to lead to an updated master plan template for the system, outlining the importance of a direct connection with the institution's strategic plan and specific data that must be considered as part of the process.

The University Planning Advisory Council continued to carry out its work through special task forces. Separate task forces concentrated on action steps related to diversity, communications, efficiencies, and student issues (specifically, advising and the potential for a new student union). The Diversity Task Force developed a charter and by-laws for a University-wide Diversity Council. President Zaccari accepted the recommendations of this Task Force and has appointed and charged the new twenty-member Council to serve as ambassadors for this crucial value across campus. The Communications Task Force focused on ways to enhance communication among various groups throughout the growing University. The members developed a web-based survey for all personnel (with paper copies available for those who do not have immediate access to a computer). This instrument is being administered during Fall 2005, and the results will be summarized and reviewed for potential action steps. The Student Government Association enjoyed solid response rates by students to its web-based surveys on advising and plans for a new student union. The Efficiencies Task Force continued its critical work, reviewing a variety of recommendations to help the University operate even more efficiently and effectively. Actions that were implemented include consolidating telephone lines based on a telecommunications audit, streamlining the budget approval process by designating one individual per department to authorize the expenditure of funds, and reducing print cost by offering the VSU undergraduate and graduate bulletins on CD.

In addition, the University Planning Advisory Council enjoyed a presentation by Dr. Cyndi Tori of the Langdale College of Business Administration on the University's significant economic impact (\$304.7 million and 4,906 jobs) in the four-county metropolitan region. The

Council contributed to VSU's self assessment of student graduation outcomes as part of the national AASCU study, identifying critical factors that affect the University's graduation and retention rates as well as specific programs and practices that support student success.

With the Strategic Plan in place, solidly supported by the Budget Plan and accepted Master Plan, the University devoted special attention to development of the Facilities Plan and External Plan during 2004-2005. Dr. Zaccari constituted and charged a Facilities Planning Advisory Council to effectively plan for and manage change in University facilities and monitor anticipated needs. External strategies began to take shape with initial planning directed toward VSU's centennial celebration which begins in 2006. This ultimately will evolve into the University's broader External Plan. An official centennial logo was designed and employed by departments across the campus.

The opening of Centennial Halls East and West fulfilled the first stage of the plan to provide contemporary student housing, the University's highest strategic priority identified at the initial strategic planning retreat in March 2002. Additional progress toward VSU's eight strategic goals is evidenced in the following illustrative accomplishments:

- Awarded \$392,826 in federal funds to initiate planning and basic design of the new Health Sciences and Business Administration facility. (VSU Goal 1: Effective Planning and Resource Utilization)
- Active planning to implement elements of the Master Plan, including additional parking and landscaping of the University's entrance, the pedestrian mall, and the student union. (VSU Goal 1)
- Intensive work on development of the data warehouse, beginning with the financial area, in conjunction with the University System and the Office of Information and Instructional Technology (OIIT). (VSU Goal 1)
- Enhancement of internal data systems to increase access and availability of information to departments across campus, including comparative data and benchmarks. (VSU Goal 1)
- Continued strategic allocation of resources to the institution's highest priorities as identified through the strategic planning process. (VSU Goal 1)
- Initial planning for the University's centennial, including appointment of a steering committee and design of a special centennial logo. (VSU Goal 2: Successful Outreach)
- Receipt of \$5,542,550 through external grants in FY 2005, representing a 54.8% increase from FY 2004. These funds encompass 62 separate grant awards. (VSU Goal 2)
- Adoption of a new indirect cost allocation formula to better support all offices and individuals involved in the grants process. (VSU Goal 2)
- Participation in the National Survey of Student Engagement, with one of the highest overall response rates in the University System (31%). (VSU Goal 3: Excellence in Student Learning and Retention)
- Expansion of the Freshman Year Experience into the Freshman Year Connections program which offers students in all majors a living-learning environment through the opportunity to live in Brown residence hall and take classes with other students in their

- cohort group. Special learning community experiences also benefited non-traditional and international students. (VSU Goal 3)
- Realization of a highly successful Student Leadership Conference completely designed and implemented by the participants in VSU's LeaderQuest initiative. One hundred twenty-five VSU students took part in this Saturday workshop that combined keynote and concurrent sessions focusing on leadership topics. The second annual Student Leadership Conference scheduled for February 2006 will be open to college and university students from throughout the state. (VSU Goal 3)
 - Separate awards, based on peer nominations, were presented to faculty for demonstrated Excellence in Teaching, Research, and Service and a new Excellence in Advising award was initiated. An outstanding staff member also was recognized for Excellence in Service. (VSU Goal 3)
 - Appointment of a special task force to study and recommend improvements in the faculty evaluation process. (VSU Goal 3)
 - Formal opening of the HUB space in Odum Library to encourage interdisciplinary cooperation among faculty and staff through connecting individuals with similar research interests or particular areas of expertise. The grand opening included a live videoconference link to welcome our international partners, including the College Rector and Education faculty at Eszterhazy Karoly College in Eger, Hungary. (VSU Goal 3)
 - Continued development and enhancement of the "Education: Go Get It" program, including the world premiere production of a specially-commissioned play, "The Tuesday Afternoon Regulars," which opened on Friday, May 27, 2005. This musical for young audiences is by Joseph Robinette (book and lyrics) and Thomas Tierney (music and lyrics). (VSU Goal 4: Access and Participation)
 - Collaboration with Lowndes County elementary and middle schools on an invited presentation and follow-up workshops leading to implementation of the "Future Problem-Solving Program" developed at the Torrance Center for Creativity at the University of Georgia. (VSU Goal 5: Student Preparation)
 - Expanded opportunity for South Georgia teachers to work with linguistically and culturally diverse students and to earn ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) endorsement through a \$40,664 United States Department of Education grant titled, "Quality Teaching Through Building English Language Learners' Success: The BELLS Project."
 - Continued involvement in the Delaware Study of Faculty Productivity. This initiative was expanded to include participation by all academic departments in the separate survey of non-instructional activity. (VSU Goal 6: High Quality Personnel)
 - Organization of a formal diversity training workshop for administrators and train-the-trainer sessions for selected students, staff, and faculty; appointment of a Diversity Task Force which formulated a vision, mission, and set of by-laws for a new Diversity Council. (VSU Goal 6)
 - Hosted 20 graduate students who are part of Florida State University's "Preparing Future Faculty" program designed specifically for individuals interested in pursuing careers in higher education. (VSU Goal 6)

- Implemented Friday afternoon seminars for new faculty to acquaint them with various aspects of Valdosta State University such as advancement, student affairs, budgeting, grants, and planning. (VSU Goal 6)
- Collaboration with the local and regional medical communities and the Medical College of Georgia to create expanded opportunities for health professions education throughout South Georgia and help meet the critical need for health care professionals in areas such as nursing. (VSU Goal 7)
- Close collaboration with representatives of city and county government, Valdosta Technical College, the public schools, local Chambers of Commerce, business, industry, and the medical community as members of the Partnership for Metropolitan Development and its Targeted Business Clusters Task Force. (VSU Goal 7: Engagement in the Community and Region)
- Continued communication with the local legislative delegation as well as with our Senators and Congressmen in Washington, DC, concerning VSU's vision and Strategic Plan. (VSU Goal 8: Strategic Alliances)

Detailed information, including minutes, materials from the University Planning Advisory Council meetings and task forces, and comprehensive documentation of accomplishments for 2004-2005 are located at: <http://www.valdosta.edu/planning/archive>.

In addition, each academic and support department submitted an extensive annual report that contained the unit's progress toward the strategic institutional goals. The reports included examples of departmental goals/activities, the status of each activity (percent complete), and evidence supporting the success of the activity.

Section C: Annual Progress in Assessing Institutional Effectiveness

Valdosta State University is committed to planning, evaluating, and ensuring that all academic departments use assessment results to improve programs. In addition, the institution is committed to ensuring that systematic, across-the-board, documented evidence demonstrates this use. Each department/unit has been required to present evidence that steps are taken to use evaluation results to improve effectiveness. A special study of assessment methods employed by each academic department was conducted during Fall 2004. The findings indicated that all departments engaged in multiple methods of assessment. The highest number of different assessment methods used by a single department was 15, and the lowest number was two. Final examinations represented the most frequently used assessment method. The other most commonly used methods were evaluation of course presentations, performance in capstone courses, and pre-test/post-test examinations. The majority of changes made by the departments based on sound assessment results were reflected in their curricula and methods of pedagogy. Sixteen undergraduate programs made curricular changes, and an equal number of programs made pedagogical changes in courses as a result of assessment findings. In addition, over half of the departments indicated at least one instance in which assessment results led them to institute or enhance professional experiences (internships, practica, etc.) or portfolios.

Student performance on professional licensure examinations offers a clear example of quantitative program assessment data:

- Students demonstrated success on the Praxis II examination with an overall institutional pass rate of 93.2%. Students in the Communication Disorders, Deaf Education, Educational Leadership, Media Specialist, Chemistry, Spanish, and School Counseling programs had 100% passing rates on the Praxis II examination. Students in two of the

Middle Grades areas (Language Arts and Mathematics) also had 100% pass rates. Students in Special Education had 100% pass rates on two of the three Praxis II tests required for that area. Early Childhood and English majors each had a 100% pass rate on one of the two tests required in those respective areas.

- The graduates of the Master's in Social Work Program scored a 90% pass rate on the LMSW national examination for beginning social work practitioners.
- The average pass rate on the NCLEX RN licensure examination increased substantially during 2004-2005. Instituting techniques to help improve these scores was among the highest priorities for the University's Dean of Nursing. Following implementation of the Student Success Program in Spring 2004, pass rates on the NCLEX were 92.31% for Spring 2005 and 90.63% for Summer 2005, both above the national average of 89.18%.

The Annual Reports from academic and support units help to monitor the institution's on-going improvements in effectiveness. Illustrations of changes made based on systematic feedback include:

- Implementation of the Total Testing Program in the College of Nursing involving the administration of standardized testing and the adoption of new criteria for admission, progression, and graduation that require successful test performance. The less-than-optimal performance of students on the NCLEX examination in previous years along with analysis of student grades led to the adoption of an external measure of student performance and to the review of existing curricula for consistency and quality.
- Creation of a range of theme-based interdisciplinary cohort clusters for first-year students majoring in Criminal Justice and Political Science. The cohorts aim to build a sense of community among freshman students, improve retention rates, and facilitate interdisciplinary learning in the core curriculum. Interviews with students and faculty along with a review of best practices at other universities prompted this change within the College of Arts and Sciences.
- Incorporation of dedicated music practice space in newly constructed and renovated residence halls based on feedback from music students and faculty in the College of the Arts.
- Creation of two one-hour mandatory groups courses for all incoming MSW students as a result of verbal and written feedback from Social Work graduates indicating that they needed more content in running social work groups. The new sequence has proved to be successful.
- Dedication of greater time and intensity to the preparation of students for the LMSW professional examination in the Social Work 7630 course. Feedback from graduates and alumni prompted this change. Consequently, students have expressed a greater sense of confidence about taking this examination.
- Implementation of LIVETEXT as an individual student, program, department, and unit assessment tool. This tool will be introduced in a new College of Education course required of all students in teacher education programs based on NCATE and Georgia PSC Standards requiring an assessment system that allows aggregation and disaggregation of student performance data across programs, departments, and the unit.

The annual senior exit survey for 2004-2005 indicated a high degree of satisfaction with VSU. Eighty-six percent of the responding seniors would choose to attend VSU again; ninety-

five percent would recommend VSU to others. In addition, VSU has continued to follow its approved plan for cyclical review of academic programs. The program review process started in 2001-2002 with several programs in the College of Arts and Sciences (Mathematics, Computer Science, and Philosophy), Social Work, and all programs in the College of Education. Programs reviewed in 2004-2005 include English (BA and MA), Criminal Justice (BA and MS), History (BA and MA), Marriage and Family Therapy (MS), and the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree programs in Mass Media, Speech Communication, and Theatre Arts. Positive changes and enhanced effectiveness have resulted from these evaluations as well as from student and alumni feedback.

Section D: Improving Student Retention and Graduation

Retaining students through graduation is a core value at Valdosta State University, and student retention and graduation are inherent in Valdosta State University's strategic plan. Strategic Goal 3 encourages continuous enhancement of curricula and research opportunities, resulting in informed graduates and increased student retention and graduation rates. VSU's collaborative efforts with system personnel at USG Strategic Research and Analysis, OIIT, and representatives from other state colleges and universities have resulted in a data system for tracking and disaggregating retention and graduation data for the entire university system. This system is accessible to all USG institutions and is especially useful for obtaining accurate official retention, graduation, and enrollment information for decision-making.

The University has applied valuable lessons from institutions highlighted in AASCU's national study, including the importance of focusing student expectations on graduation at the outset of their college careers, effective use of data, congratulatory letters to freshmen upon successful completion of their first year, and a powerful institution-wide desire to keep "moving to the next level." Data from the National Survey of Student Engagement which was administered in Spring 2005 will inform the campus about the types of activities in which our students are involved and offer deeper insights into possibilities for enhancing student success. Specific action steps that are expected to foster increased student success include: the completion of two new and two renovated student residence halls designed to support learning communities through integrating classrooms, computer laboratories, and music practice rooms with traditional residential space; the diversity training workshops intended to lead to greater understanding among all types of individuals; and the close collaboration between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs in such programs as Freshman Year Experience and LeaderQuest that resulted in the USG "Best Practice" award. In particular, studies of the Freshman Year Experience program participants indicate that these students have substantially higher persistence rates and grade point averages when compared with their non-Freshman Year Experience counterparts.

In the longer term, Strategic Goal 5 will increase the University's student retention and graduation rates by increasing the academic skill level of high school students across the region. This approach toward improving retention and graduation rates keys on helping local K-12 students become better prepared for college and therefore more likely to attend college, be retained, and graduate. VSU is engaged in numerous collaborations with the city and county schools to increase college readiness and attendance, including feedback to school districts regarding enrolled graduates and numerous outreach efforts into classrooms as well as other community organizations emphasizing the value of obtaining education beyond high school.

VSU views student retention and graduation as a comprehensive issue that involves admission to the university, advising, orientation, freshman retention, and progression to graduation. Significantly, as indicated in Table 1 below, the institution has maintained its ability to attract, retain, and graduate African American students over the years of rising admission standards. This is largely attributable to an environment that is sensitive to the needs of a diverse student population. Table 1 reflects the composition of the student body by ethnicity for the

period from Fall 1998 through Spring 2005. Twenty-five percent of VSU's students represent ethnic minorities.

TABLE 1: VSU Student Composition By Ethnicity (Fall 1998 – Spring 2005)

Semester	Caucasian	African American	American Indian	Asian	Hispanic	Multiracial	Total
Fall 1998	7038 (75.0%)	2002 (21.3%)	26 (.3%)	138 (1.5%)	101 (1.1%)	81 (.9%)	9,386
Spring 1999	6577 (74.6%)	1902 (21.6%)	22 (.2%)	124 (1.4%)	107 (1.2%)	88 (1.0%)	8,820
Summer 1999	3266 (74.6%)	937 (21.4%)	17 (.4%)	67 (1.5%)	49 (1.1%)	44 (1.0%)	4,380
Fall 1999	6546 (75.0%)	1842 (21.1%)	19 (.2%)	118 (1.4%)	116 (1.3%)	88 (1.0%)	8,729
Spring 2000	6327 (75.0%)	1777 (21.1%)	17 (.2%)	121 (1.4%)	112 (1.3%)	84 (1.0%)	8,438
Summer 2000	3310 (74.4%)	964 (21.7%)	14 (.3%)	65 (1.5%)	60 (1.3%)	36 (.8%)	4,449
Fall 2000	6612 (75.2%)	1819 (20.7%)	21 (.2%)	121 (1.4%)	129 (1.5%)	90 (1.0%)	8,792
Spring 2001	6262 (74.5%)	1781 (21.2%)	21 (.2%)	119 (1.4%)	127 (1.5%)	90 (1.1%)	8,400
Summer 2001	3544 (75.2%)	993 (21.1%)	11 (.2%)	66 (1.4%)	60 (1.3%)	40 (.8%)	4,714
Fall 2001	6920 (75.0%)	1912 (20.7%)	23 (.2%)	132 (1.4%)	142 (1.5%)	101 (1.1%)	9,230
Spring 2002	6599 (74.5%)	1880 (21.2%)	18 (.2%)	120 (1.4%)	140 (1.6%)	99 (1.1%)	8,856
Summer 2002	3573 (74.9%)	996 (20.9%)	12 (.3%)	71 (1.5%)	72 (1.5%)	47 (1.0%)	4,771
Fall 2002	7454 (75.3%)	2021 (20.4%)	29 (.3%)	122 (1.2%)	152 (1.5%)	122 (1.2%)	9,900
Spring 2003	7262 (75.4%)	1979 (20.5%)	28 (.3%)	108 (1.1%)	143 (1.5%)	116 (1.2%)	9,636
Summer 2003	4043 (76.4%)	1034 (19.5%)	12 (.2%)	65 (1.2%)	79 (1.5%)	58 (1.1%)	5,291
Fall 2003	7982 (75.7%)	2114 (20.0%)	29 (.3%)	128 (1.2%)	155 (1.5%)	139 (1.3%)	10,547
Spring 2004	7587 (75.4%)	2049 (20.4%)	28 (.3%)	122 (1.2%)	147 (1.5%)	127 (1.3%)	10,060
Summer 2004	3,958 (75.9%)	1,045 (20.0%)	19 (.4%)	62 (1.2%)	66 (1.3%)	68 (1.3%)	5,218
Fall 2004	7,834 (75.3%)	2,081 (20.0%)	30 (.3%)	142 (1.4%)	170 (1.6%)	143 (1.4%)	10,400
Spring 2005	7,373 (75.0%)	2,001 (20.4%)	25 (.3%)	133 (1.4%)	165 (1.7%)	130 (1.3%)	9,827

The Office of Admissions generated 6,537 undergraduate applications for Fall 2004. New undergraduates enrolled in the Fall of 2004 numbered 2,449 of whom 1,872 (76.4%) were freshmen. Special emphasis was placed on the recruitment of transfer students, and articulation transfer handouts were developed for all area USG two-year institutions.

As Table 2 below suggests, increasing admissions standards also has resulted in higher student retention rates over the past eight years although the University will carefully monitor the impact of changing HOPE Scholarship policies on retention in future years.

**TABLE 2: VSU Fall-to-Fall One-Year Student Retention Rates
All First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen Entering from Fall 1996 – Fall 2003**

Fall Cohort	Institution Retention	System* Retention
Fall 1996	64.3%	74.2%
Fall 1997	69.6%	78.8%
Fall 1998	66.3%	78.1%
Fall 1999	70.9%	79.8%
Fall 2000	72.5%	82.1%
Fall 2001	75.1%	84.0%
Fall 2002	74.3%	85.0%
Fall 2003	75.7%	84.2%

* Includes students who entered VSU and either returned to VSU or transferred to another USG institution.

During 2004-2005, the six-year institutional graduation rate rose to a record 38.6%, representing the rate of the 1998 entering cohort. (See Table 3 below.) Over the past four years, this rate has averaged 34%. The six-year graduation rate for VSU students who completed their degrees either at VSU or at another University System of Georgia institution rose to a high of 48.3%. This represents an increase of 5.1 percentage points over the 1997 cohort graduation rate and reflects Valdosta State University's long-term commitment to student success. Both institutional and system-wide graduation rates are expected to continue to increase with the new admissions standards and expansion of retention programs and strategies. Additionally, graduation rates will rise if the increasing retention rates of the 1999 and beyond freshman cohorts translate into greater retention at the sophomore, junior, and senior levels.

**TABLE 3: VSU Six-Year Graduation Rates
All First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen Entering from Fall 1991 – Fall 1998**

Fall Cohort	Institutional Graduation Rates	System Graduation Rates*
Fall 1991	31.4%	38.1%
Fall 1992	31.1%	39.6%
Fall 1993	30.2%	38.3%
Fall 1994	30.8%	41.3%
Fall 1995	33.9%	43.3%
Fall 1996	30.2%	38.7%
Fall 1997	33.4%	43.2%
Fall 1998	38.6%	48.3%

* Includes students who entered VSU and graduated either from VSU or from another USG institution.

Section E: Management of Institutional Conflict and Change

Valdosta State University has established an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Committee, the goals of which are consistent with those of the University System. The 14 (trained) members of this committee, as well as the institution's administration, remain deeply committed to these goals and are cognizant of the advantages that mediation and other non-adjudication remedies can afford the institution. During 2004-2005, VSU supported beginning mediation training for five individuals (four staff and one faculty member).

A brochure that is sent to departments across the University and posted prominently on bulletin boards explains the goals of Alternative Dispute Resolution and provides contact information for members of the ADR Committee. The majority of the conflicts managed by the ADR Committee have involved faculty or staff and their supervisors. During 2004-2005, only one issue was forwarded to the committee; following a conversation with the plaintiff, the latter opted to withdraw the complaint.

At the beginning of the academic year, conversations were initiated between the chairs of the ADR and University Grievance Committees in an attempt to explore ways to more effectively provide the services of both committees to faculty, staff, and students. As it currently stands, the aggrieved party is presented with a number of options, including the ADR committee which employs mediation; the University Grievance Committee; AAUP legal assistance; various "in house" forums (such as the formal grievance procedure of the College of Arts and Sciences); and adjudication. Given the range and disparate nature of these various avenues to conflict resolution, it may be that what is needed is a "coordinator" role, capable of informing users what this menu of options entails and also of explaining the ramifications, legal and otherwise, of each. In addition to heightening awareness of remedy agents on campus, this coordinator could offer advice as to the sequentially appropriate actions to be taken in the event the aggrieved party decides to employ more than one avenue of redress.

Section F: Overall Institutional Health

Examples of **student success**, the ultimate barometer of VSU's institutional health, include the following accomplishments:

- Graduation and retention rates both reached record-high levels as discussed in Section D above.
- The College of Arts and Sciences sponsored the eleventh annual Undergraduate Research Symposium with a record number of oral and poster presentations by students of their research throughout the year. Awards were presented for the Best Paper and Best Poster.
- Seventeen students completed all Honors Program requirements; fifteen students who had completed all honors program requirements graduated during the same time period. One hundred two new students were admitted to the program.
- VSU Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) engaged in 46 service projects, providing over 12,000 hours of local and regional service to the community, won the regional competition, and finished third at the national competition in May 2005.

The expansion and renovation of campus facilities is another indicator of institutional health. Valdosta State University demonstrated continued growth through new **construction and renovation** projects. January 2005 witnessed the ribbon-cutting ceremony for Centennial Hall East when the 348 beds were opened to students. The 170 additional beds of Centennial Hall West were occupied in Fall 2005. Renovations were completed at Brown and Lowndes Halls as

well as at the Fine Arts building. Major projects in progress as the 2004-2005 year drew to a close included extensive renovation of Patterson Hall, a restructuring of internal campus areas to create a pedestrian mall, and the redesign and renovation of the Nevins Hall parking area.

The learning community at Valdosta State University continued to improve its resources. For example, the **Odum Library** purchased 15,057 volumes, increasing the book collection to 482,617 and the total holdings of the library to 1,748,661, a 1.4% increase from last year.

Major **Information Technology** initiatives significantly enhanced security this year. Together with the Registrar and a team of offices from across campus, VSU successfully implemented new institutional identification numbers for students, staff, and faculty, thus eliminating use of the social security number. This was a crucial step in protecting students and personnel from the risk of identity theft. Campus security was further strengthened through the installation of a perimeter firewall to deny all but particular connections. Information Security policies were completed and approved, and VSU's initial security plan was reviewed by the Board of Regents' Office of Information and Instructional Technology (OIIT). Additional Information Technology activities during 2004-2005 include:

- Completion of the first phases of the data warehouse with the installation of new servers and Oracle Warehouse and Portal for the warehouse and the completion of the first data mart design.
- Establishment of a new server room in the Odum Library Annex to support major campus servers for student information systems, e-mail, and other services.
- Migration of online courseware into the new WebCT Vista platform utilizing the latest version of that application in production within the University System.
- Enhancement of the data network with additional installations of fiber optic cabling connecting buildings such as the University Center and Fine Arts, installation of new internal copper cabling in Fine Arts, and replacement of the HallNet network in residence halls with new wireless equipment.
- Development of a USG Advanced Learning Technologies-sponsored pilot program for WebCT Vista with VSU's Department of Modern and Classical Languages. This new program will integrate voice over IP tools directly into the WebCT Vista online course environment allowing voice communication over the Internet for online instruction and validation of oral language competencies.

Diversity is an important element of a healthy campus. The Office of **Equal Opportunity Programs and Multicultural Affairs** promotes diversity on campus. This year the office:

- Hosted the University System of Georgia's Minority Achievement Program/Minority Recruitment Officers Annual Spring Conference – March 24-25, 2005.
- Developed an informational booth for the Residence Hall Assistants Resource Fair as well as an informational booth for "The Happening."
- Developed and led an online training session for the Diversity Council using the Blazenet internet portal.
- Co-sponsored Hispanic Heritage Month Activities, the African American Studies Lecture Series, and the End-of-Year Celebration with the Black Student League.

- Sponsored Cultural Diversity Training.
- Coordinated Diversity Training/Strategic Planning for VSU Administrators (President, Cabinet, and Deans).
- Sponsored student attendance at Fort Valley State University for the John W. Davison Lecture Series in February and March 2005, with Spike Lee and Sister Souljah as guest speakers.

A dynamic program of **International Studies** continued to enhance Valdosta State University's health and diversity. This program reflects the Board of Regents' initiative on the internationalization of the campus. VSU's Director of International Programs, Dr. Tracy Harrington, chaired the USG European Council, overseeing system-wide programs in Europe including three study abroad programs in England, France, and Russia. With the support of the Office of International Programs, VSU:

- Functioned as the leading institution in the International Student Exchange Program (ISEP) Consortium with seven member institutions. Coordinated exchanges for the ISEP program for all USG institutions with \$10,000 in funding from the BOR Office of International Education.
- Developed a new system-wide summer study abroad program in Madrid, Spain.
- Drafted new faculty and student exchange agreements with the University of La Serena in Chile and the Polytechnical University of Valencia, Spain.
- Created a new International Student Services Website: www.valdosta.edu/iss. This comprehensive web site informs international students on all aspects of student immigration status and student life.
- Organized International Education Week activities including country displays, student performances, study abroad sessions, and a lecture by a visiting professor from Africa.
- Hosted the President and Vice President of Abant Izzet Baysal University in Turkey which led to the signing of an MOU on faculty and student exchanges between the two institutions.
- Arranged for doctoral students who were pursuing a degree at the University of Sunderland in the United Kingdom to complete a research component at VSU while being jointly supervised by both VSU and the University of Sunderland.
- Hosted the Louis Brown Scholar from India, Dr. Vrnda Chaitanya, who was a member of the Philosophy Department and taught courses in Religious Studies.
- Coordinated the visits of an exchange professor of Art from China for the Fall 2004 semester as well as of three instructors from the Czech Republic (two in Physical Education and one in History) during the 2004-2005 academic year.

With its numerous programs and services, VSU's Division of **Student Affairs** improved the quality of life on campus. Examples of its service include the following:

- The Counseling Center was awarded a sixth year of full accreditation from the International Association of Counseling Services, Inc. (IACS). The Counseling Center

- remains one of only four centers in the State of Georgia to be accredited by IACS. During the 2004-2005 academic year, the Counseling Center provided individual and group counseling to a total of 666 individuals. This figure accounted for over 2,078 client contact hours. During this same period of time, the Center offered a total of 28 different groups and seminars. Consistent with the Center's philosophy of a proactive outreach model of counseling, the staff met with over 4,876 individuals outside the office environment.
- Student Health provided acute, routine, and preventive care to 17,650 patients; performed 5,340 laboratory tests; filled 9,644 prescriptions; and provided 388 female wellness physicals. There were 74 referrals to other health care providers. Despite a shortage of flu vaccine in the Fall of 2004, Student Health was able to vaccinate 623 students, staff, and faculty. Vaccine clinics were held throughout campus.
 - The Office of Alcohol and Other Drug Education participated in 31 programs, presentations, and training sessions, addressing a total of 1,000 students, parents, and staff. AOD also reached a potential 7,600 students through campus-wide events, including The Happening, Alcohol Awareness Fair, Safe Spring Break, Health Fair, Diversity Fair, Staff Appreciation Day, and Great American Smoke-Out activities.
 - A Steering Committee for a new student union was formed and developed a comprehensive proposal for the President. After receiving approval, the Committee visited several new student unions and made a presentation to the Student Fee Committee and Student Government Association (SGA). The SGA provided unanimous support, and the Student Fee Committee approved a recommendation for an \$80 per student mandatory fee. This fee was also approved by the Board of Regents for implementation during the Fall 2005 semester.
 - New Intramural Fields at the Sunset Park site were designed, funding was acquired, and bids were administered. Construction is now underway for completion during 2005-2006.
 - The Campus Activities Board (CAB) increased the number of weekend and late night programs and has become increasingly creative in developing popular in-house programs. CAB served approximately 7,500 students, holding 78 various programs and events throughout the year.
 - VSU's Greek system raised \$80,000 for various charities and volunteered over 7,000 hours at a variety of community organizations during 2004-2005.
 - The Access Office collaborated with the Mayor's Council for Persons with Disabilities to host the annual Mayor's Awards and Recognition Banquet.
 - Career Services reported 5,873 student contact visits, representing a 12% increase over the previous year. There were 8,969 jobs listed with Career Services.
 - The Career Development Specialist created the "Operation Think about It" program, a unique collaboration between Career Services and Judicial Affairs that encourages freshmen to consider how the long-term consequences of their actions can impact selection of a major.
 - The Office of Testing administered 10,140 examinations to 7,892 examinees during 567 testing sessions. The number of examinations represents an increase of 2% over 2003-2004. The numbers of examinees and testing sessions rose by 8% and 24%, respectively.

- Co-operative Education placed 165 students for FY 2005; 46 in summer; 54 in fall; and 65 in the spring. The office placed 38 international students and made 115 site visits to 55 different work sites to review student progress.

Athletics is another important component of campus culture, and this division's accomplishments further enhance the health of the University. Major accomplishments of the 2004-2005 year include:

- The Blazer Football team won the 2004 NCAA Division II National Championship.
- VSU won Gulf South Conference championships in football and women's tennis (which advanced to the national semifinals). Women's basketball won the GSC East Division regular season title.
- The VSU cheerleading squad finished sixth in the National Cheerleader Association (NCA) nationwide competition.
- VSU's student-athletes successfully organized an effort to build a house for the local Habitat for Humanity chapter. Over 1,400 volunteer hours were generated in this successful "Blazer Week" build in January 2005.
- The cumulative GPA for VSU's student athletes during Fall 2004 was 2.92, and this figure rose to an all-time high of 2.94 in Spring 2005. A record number of students (125) achieved GPAs of 3.0 or above in the spring; eighteen of these students (another record) earned a GPA of 4.0. The women's tennis team attained a cumulative GPA of 3.77 in the spring with five of the seven players earning Dean's List honors.
- Six VSU tennis players (three men and three women) were named to the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's all-America team. Eva Petschnig, Anne Corten, and Annika Biro were the Lady Blazer selections, and Christoph Schneider, Eduardo Rincon, and Philipp Laucht were the Blazer honorees.
- The planning and design process began on a new locker room facility for the University's softball program.

Many of the accomplishments mentioned in this report were made possible through the support of private donations to the Division of **University Advancement**. Highlights from that area include:

- The University appreciated the generosity of 3,917 donors who contributed a total of \$1.5 million in FY 2005 toward academics, arts, and athletics. A total of \$259,900 was added to endowment funds, and \$145,000 was given with no restrictions. \$68,600 was paid out from endowments to support student aid.
- Three new members were added to the Order of the Dome (donors by will, trust, insurance, retirement plan, etc.) during 2004-2005.
- Nine houses and lots have been acquired for future expansion under the VSU Foundation Real Estate II and III LLCs. This represents a total of 4.97 of acres of land, including a gift of 2.29 acres of vacant land.

- The University Relations Department's Publication and Design Services helped VSU communicate with over 30,000 alumni through the *Alumni Voice* magazine distributed in the summer of 2004 and the new tabloid *Portico* distributed in the spring of 2005.
- University Relations staff distributed over 230 general news releases and prepared more than 1,000 publication and design services projects.
- Two 30-second television commercials were produced this year; these aired nationally on ESPN during the NCAA Division II National Championship football game.
- The Office of Special Events planned and coordinated numerous activities throughout the year, including three commencements, Honors Day, the House in the Woods luncheon, Centennial Hall Grand Opening, and the National Championship Football Banquet and Parade.
- The position of Director of Alumni, Community, and Regional Relations & Centennial Operations Manager was filled. This individual is responsible for directing Centennial-related activities and is co-convenor of the Centennial Steering Committee.
- Contact information was compiled for all Advancement Vice Presidents and university-affiliated foundation representatives within the University System of Georgia. This list was forwarded to the Board of Regents, and the first ever system-wide advancement meeting was held.
- University Advancement staff joined their colleagues from Student Affairs and the Athletic Department to participate in Freshman Move-In Day, personally greeting virtually every student and parent who came to campus the day the residence halls opened for Fall Semester.

VSU demonstrated an increased awareness of the legal issues in post-secondary education. The **Office of Legal Affairs** proactively presented a number of workshops relative to legal issues surrounding higher education, sexual harassment, HIPAA, and legal issues in academic advising. The wealth of information in these workshops can be used to protect the interests of the University, its employees, and its student population.

The division of **Finance and Administration** promotes efficient business practices and services. Accomplishments during the 2004-2005 year include the following:

- Recognition of Odum Library's "Food for Thought" and the Loop Pizza Grill in *On Campus Hospitality*.
- Completion of a telephone audit which identified over \$30,000 in annualized savings.
- Premiered "The Tech Shop," a retail store specializing in technology products and services, located in Langdale Hall.
- Designed and opened the "Sustella Street Market," a campus convenience store in Centennial Hall.
- Added three new parking lots, creating 221 student spaces and 34 employee spaces.
- Implemented a risk management operation to work with departments in handling insurable events.

- Completed implementation of the State fuel card.
- Began the selling of surplus property online through the State Property program.
- Engaged in a benchmarking study of revenue enhancement opportunities in conjunction with MGT consultants.
- Identified optimal locations for and installed 19 new emergency telephones across campus, bringing the total number of emergency telephones to 32.
- Developed comprehensive campus emergency preparedness plans.
- Combined the departments of Human Resources and Organizational Development and Training to ensure that all Valdosta State University employees have access to necessary training that can enhance their opportunities for career advancement.
- Provided training sessions to 599 VSU employees throughout the year. Organizational Development and Training delivered 2,629.5 contact hours and awarded 263.23 CEUs.
- Processed approximately 20,000 work orders through Plant Operations' work management system during FY 2005.
- Participated in the design, bidding, contracting, and administration of over 100 projects with a combined cost of \$5.3 million.
- Created a Student Patrol unit utilizing current students to assist the University Police Patrol Division with locking/unlocking buildings, serving as escorts, and various other duties as assigned.
- Implemented an achievement and longevity award system for the uniform patrol division. This included awarding medals and certificates for service and certifications held by individual officers.
- Secured the AFLAC insurance company as an alternative supplemental insurance option for employees.

Valdosta State University's **Strategic Research and Analysis** played a vital role in monitoring institutional health and progress toward our strategic goals and communicating that information across the campus. Throughout the past year, this area:

- Coordinated the University's participation in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), working closely with the Student Government Association to ensure understanding of the goals of the survey and an appropriate level of response.
- Sponsored a day-long series of workshops for faculty, staff, and students by Dr. John Hayek, Senior Associate Director of the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and day-to-day operations manager for the NSSE.
- Actively supported numerous Board of Regents initiatives and committees, including participation on the System's statewide Master Plan Steering Committee, assisting System staff with a facilities audit at another USG institution, proactively contributing to the development of the USG Academic Data Mart, and coordinating training for institutional research personnel throughout the state of Georgia in effective use of the Data Mart.

- Led a 13-member steering committee in initial discussions about space needs for the new Health Sciences and Business Administration facility. The committee provided a preliminary report to President Zaccari in December 2004 with some creative ideas for space utilization that can serve as a basis for the formal planning process.
- Actively engaged in planning, analysis, and dissemination of information related to student graduation and retention issues, including serving on the AASCU team that visited Murray State University in Kentucky.
- Collaborated with Information Technology on the development of an institutional Data Warehouse system to make aggregate student and course data more accessible and useful to deans and department heads for informed decision-making.
- Expanded participation in the national Delaware study of faculty to include the Out-of-Classroom Activity component on a pilot basis for several departments.
- Actively participated in refining VSU's Comprehensive Program Review process and data templates and developed an electronic data system to provide departments with easy access to key information.
- Conducted a comprehensive University-wide assessment study that identified stated outcomes of degree programs, the methods used to assess achievement of these outcomes, and changes that have been implemented as a result of this process.
- Collaborated with several faculty members in developing research grant applications, including the design and refinement of their hypothesis, literature base, and methodology sections.
- Developed a special section on the website that outlines information and key statistics that are useful to grant writers.
- Worked closely with Student Government Association representatives on the development, analysis, and interpretation of the three web-based surveys the Association conducted.
- Assisted the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce through facilitating a student focus group designed to inform the business community about current trends in student shopping and purchasing.
- Facilitated a strategic planning workshop for the faculty of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program, leading to refinement of the vision and development of strategic goals for that program.