

Virginia State Conference of the  
American Association of  
University Professors and the  
Faculty Senates of Virginia

## 2006-08 Budget: Recommendations

### **HIGHER EDUCATION: INVEST AND GROW**

In the historic legislative session of 2004, the General Assembly restored \$278 million to general fund appropriations for the Commonwealth's institutions of higher education, and in 2005 the legislature made further progress toward goals for base adequacy funding and for competitive salaries by bringing us closer to the 60<sup>th</sup> percentile of our peer institutions. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the Faculty Senates of Virginia (FSVA) **thank the General Assembly** for recognizing that properly funded higher education is a key to assuring future growth and a stronger economy for all Virginians. Increases in appropriations in 2004 were the second highest in the country. Still, there is more to be done. It must be remembered that this restoration of funds came after three years of reductions in which general fund support declined by \$291 million. Virginia suffered the fourth largest reductions in the nation at that time. Even without a new campus, Virginia institutions today receive \$340 million less than what the legislature has determined as necessary for adequate financing. We thus urge that the 2006-08 biennium build on progress of the last biennium.

There are many demands for new funding. As we seek to improve our economy and develop a broader tax base, higher education will play a key role in providing the educated workforce that attracts the kinds of employers who provide high-paying jobs. It is faculty at colleges and universities who work through partnerships with government agencies, chambers of commerce, nonprofit agencies and others to help resolve the economic and social issues facing Virginia. The Governor's Higher Education Research Initiative would provide much needed financial capital enabling institutions to build and leverage cutting edge knowledge to address compelling economic and social needs of the Commonwealth.

### **Recommendations for the General Assembly**

- Maintain the legislature's long-term commitment to excellent public education by addressing the needs for **base adequacy** at each state institution.
- Maintain legislative commitment to meeting a target of **faculty salaries** at the 60<sup>th</sup> percentile of salaries at our peer institutions in each year of the 2006-08 biennium.
- Support the **Governor's Higher Education Research Initiative** such that economic partnerships with higher education can impact positively on the lives of all Virginians.