

THE COLLEGE

The College of William and Mary is a public university located in Williamsburg, Va. Founded in 1693 by Royal Charter issued by King William III and Queen Mary II of England, William and Mary is the second oldest college in the country after Harvard. William and Mary has a long history of liberal arts education and a growing research and science curriculum that demonstrates a strong commitment to undergraduate research. The College, which became a state university in 1906, has been designated a "Public Ivy," and for nine straight years has been ranked by U.S. News & World Report as the sixth-best public university in the country – and the nation's top small public university.

Also referred to as "the alma mater of a nation," the College has educated four U.S. Presidents -- George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe and John Tyler, which is the third-most of any college in the country. William and Mary also claims several firsts, including the 1776 creation of Phi Beta Kappa -- the country's first academic honor society -- the first honor code of conduct for college students, and the first collegiate law school, established in 1779. William and Mary is also home to the Sir Christopher Wren Building – the country's oldest academic building still in use – and the President's House, the oldest home of a university president still in use.

William and Mary Facts:

- In addition to four U.S. Presidents, William and Mary has educated a number of this country's key historical figures, including U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall and 16 signers of the Declaration of Independence.
- More recent famous alumni from William and Mary include U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates ('65), the late David Brown ('78) (astronaut on the Columbia Shuttle), actress Glenn Close ('74), comedian John Stewart ('84), fashion designer Perry Ellis ('61), actor Patton Oswalt ('91), the late Mark McCormack ('51) (founder of sports and celebrity agency IMG), actress Linda Lavin ('59), NASCAR and Gibbs Racing's J.D. Gibbs ('91), Minnesota Vikings star Darren Sharper ('97), and Pittsburgh Steelers Head Coach Mike Tomlin ('95).
- In 2008, William and Mary was recognized as the fifth-highest producer of Peace Corps volunteers among mid-sized schools (5,000-15,000 students). As of January 2008, 51 W&M alumni are serving. Since the Peace Corps' inception, 499 W&M alumni have volunteered with the Corps, making the university the 82nd-highest producer of volunteers of all time.
- For 2007-2008, the College had more Fulbright Scholars than any other college or university in Virginia, and it had the highest application-to-award rate among the nation's top research institutions. In 2006-2007, 12 William and Mary students were named Fulbright Scholars. Eleven received the honor in 2007-08 and scholars are studying in countries such as Argentina, Hungary, Uganda, Sweden, Senegal, and Ecuador.
- In 2008, U.S. News ranked William and Mary sixth among all public colleges and universities and 33rd out of all universities – both public and private. The William & Mary Law School ranked tied for 30th in 2008 by U.S. News. The Mason School of Business ranked 40th in nation (2008) by Financial Times and 71st in the world. William and Mary ranked as the fourth-best bargain in higher education by Kiplinger's in 2008. Newsweek magazine named W&M the "hottest small state university" in 2006.
- In 2008, W&M received a record number of applications for undergraduate admission for the third year in a row. More than 11,500 undergraduate applications were received.
- According to a recent survey, William and Mary students contribute 323,000 hours of community service per year. Seventy-five percent of undergraduates and 50 percent of graduate students report they volunteered during their time at the College. Ninety percent of undergraduates report they will volunteer in the community they reside in following graduation.