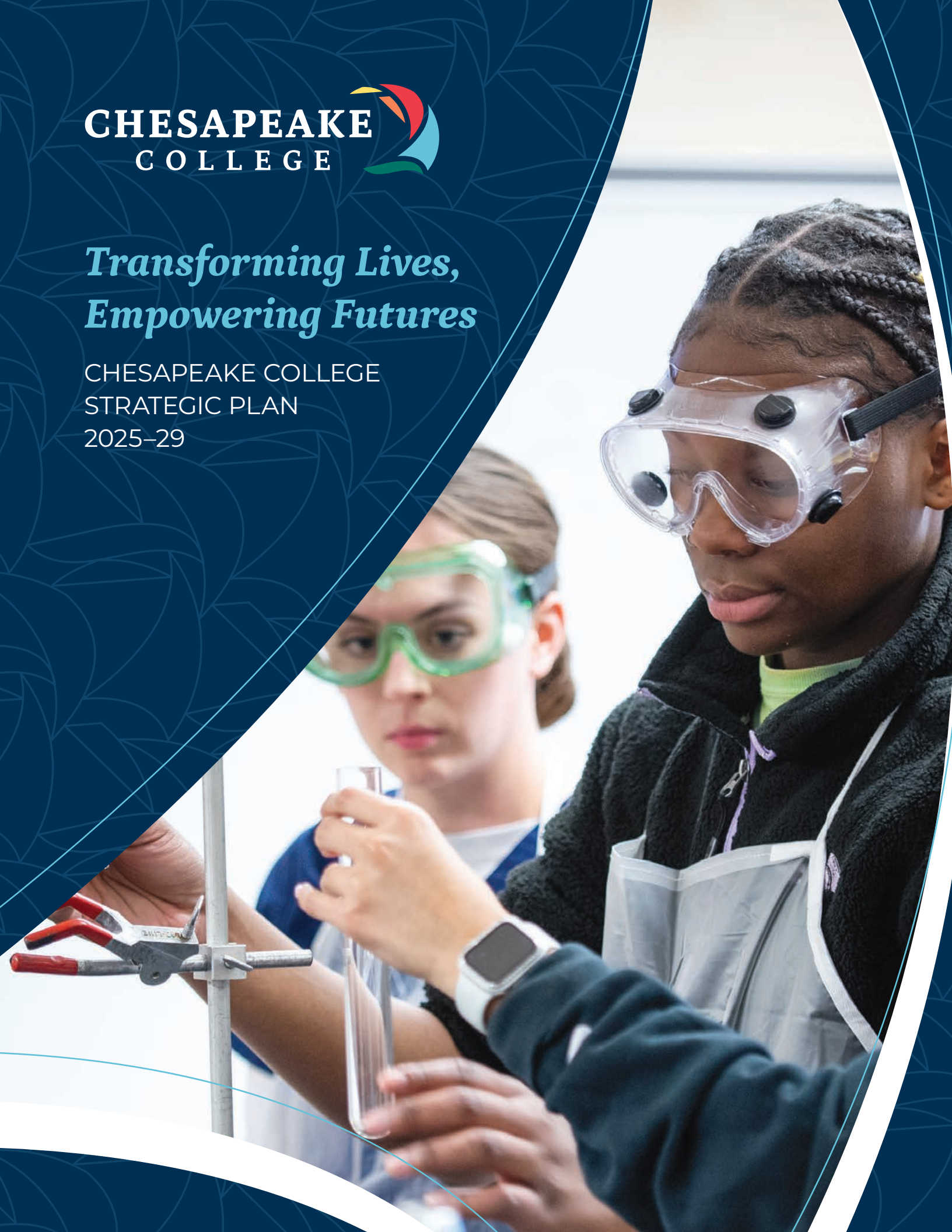




*Transforming Lives,
Empowering Futures*

CHESAPEAKE COLLEGE
STRATEGIC PLAN
2025-29



Members of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee:

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letter from the **PRESIDENT**

Dear Friends of Chesapeake College,

With great enthusiasm and commitment, I introduce our new strategic plan for Chesapeake College. This document represents the culmination of extensive collaboration from our entire campus community, reflecting our shared vision and aspirations for the future. As we navigate the ever-changing landscape of higher education, this strategic plan will guide us through the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Our strategic plan is not just a set of goals but a living framework that will evolve as we listen, learn, and adapt. We will regularly review our progress, assess our environment, and make necessary adjustments to ensure we remain responsive to the needs of our students and region.

Built on the foundation of our core values—student-centeredness, quality, sustainability, community, teamwork, innovation, diversity, respect, and adaptability—and guided by the principles of vibrancy, visibility, and viability, our plan aims to advance our institution’s mission with renewed vigor. Fostering a vibrant learning environment will spark curiosity, promote intellectual exploration, and prioritize student success. Enhancing our visibility will deepen community engagement and attract diverse talent and partnerships. Ensuring viability means committing to strategic planning and resource management that support sustainable growth and continuous improvement.

As we embark on this journey, I am confident that, together, we will achieve great things. We will continue to serve as a beacon of educational excellence, providing transformative experiences that prepare our students for success in an interconnected world. Our commitment to innovation and progress will keep us at the forefront of educational leadership, while our focus on inclusive excellence will create a supportive and equitable environment for all.

Thank you for being part of this journey. I am profoundly grateful to all faculty, staff, students, and trustees who contributed to this effort. Serving as president of Chesapeake College is a privilege, and I am honored to lead such a dedicated and inspiring community.

Together, we will create lasting, positive change for our institution and the communities we serve.

Sincerely,



Clifford P. Coppersmith, Ph.D.
President, Chesapeake College

letter from the **CHAIR**

First and foremost, on behalf of the entire Board of Trustees, I thank each and every one of you for your commitment to Chesapeake College in good times and tough times. Chesapeake is an exceptional institution due, in large part, to all of you who go beyond the call of duty to contribute to its many successes. As trustees, we see the dedication to excellence of the faculty, staff, administration, and students each time we are on campus. As a result of your collective efforts, the College's transformational impact is truly felt throughout our five-county region—through our students' contributions and accomplishments and through our partnerships and collaborations with other academic, workforce, business, and cultural institutions—the Chesapeake College ecosystem. We are proud of the College's past. Yet, the Board believes the College is positioned for even greater impact and success. It is a privilege for all of us to continue our contributions and to be a part of achieving that vision.

The first five-year strategic plan delivered on every expected metric and result despite unexpected challenges. Under the leadership of Dr. Coppersmith, and with the collective participation of all segments of our community and through an inclusive, transparent strategic planning process, we have now developed the second five-year strategic plan. To the Board, it is critically important to value the voices of all campus and community stakeholders in charting a course forward for the institution. We were delighted with the contributions of all segments of the Chesapeake College ecosystem. Through attentive, collaborative, and caring stewardship, we have arrived at this plan designed to ensure that Chesapeake College remains one of the essential and impactful institutions of higher learning on the Eastern Shore.

We all know the challenges the College faces. Still, we must never forget that this institution encounters great opportunities and responsibilities over the next five years and far into the future. For our students and our communities, it is vital that we aggressively pursue each opportunity and make thoughtful, purposeful choices as to how we move forward.

This strategic plan is the critical next step in that process. As we now turn to working together to implement the plan, it is a responsibility the trustees embrace. We look forward to doing all we can to help achieve the plan's objectives and expected results and to continue advancing Chesapeake College's mission.

With gratitude,



Reza Jafari
Chair, Chesapeake College Board of Trustees



The image features a large, stylized graphic of a leaf or petal shape, outlined in dark blue, which frames a photograph of a campus. The photograph shows a lush green lawn in the foreground, a paved outdoor seating area with several tables and chairs in the middle ground, and a modern building with large glass windows in the background. Two people are seated at a table, engaged in conversation. The overall scene is bright and sunny, with dense green trees surrounding the area.

our
CAMPUS

Chesapeake College is a public two-year regional community college dedicated to serving the educational and vocational needs of residents in Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot counties on Maryland's Eastern Shore. With a student-first philosophy, we offer transformative educational experiences and provide a broad range of programs and services that are comprehensive, responsive, and affordable. As a driving force and integral part of the regional economic development ecosystem, the College also serves as a hub for personal growth, the arts, and cultural enrichment.

At Chesapeake College, students can choose from diverse program offerings tailored to facilitate seamless transfers to four-year institutions, equip them for immediate career opportunities, or enhance their professional skills. Beyond academic offerings, the College actively fosters holistic development through a vibrant array of extracurricular and co-curricular activities that promote academic, social, personal, cultural, athletic, and community engagement.

Commitment to educational excellence is at the core of our mission. Chesapeake College supports an enriching learning environment backed by a dedicated, caring, and expert faculty and staff. We are committed to ongoing professional development, helping our employees and students alike to thrive as lifelong learners. The College nurtures a culture of innovation and creativity, empowering our campus community to devise new solutions that enhance student outcomes and benefit the broader community.

Embracing the importance of student learning to our mission, the College:

- › Empowers students as independent learners who are intellectually competent, skilled in the application of learning, technologically proficient, and grounded in the values and common goals of our civic culture
- › Challenges students to see beyond themselves to better understand their place in a global society and culturally diverse world, while preserving and enhancing the rich cultural heritage of the region
- › Provides a curriculum and activities that meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population
- › Enhances learning opportunities, in partnership with community organizations, that reinforce the value of service to others and strengthen students' ethical development and civic engagement
- › Ensures an environment conducive for learning by providing appropriate facilities, support services, technology, and other resources to enhance student learning

Recognizing our role as an engine for regional economic and community development that improves the quality of life for those in our service region, the College:

- › Supports workforce development by providing the courses and training needed to build a skilled labor force
- › Enhances enjoyment and appreciation of the arts by incorporating cultural activities into the curriculum and bringing fine and performing arts events to the region
- › Sponsors a broad range of community and civic activities that reflect the College's role as a community learning center
- › Extends access to baccalaureate and graduate degree programs for Upper Shore residents through inter-institutional partnerships

our **MISSION**

Chesapeake College empowers students from diverse communities to excel in further education, employment, and participation in an interconnected world.

our **CORE VALUES**

STUDENT-CENTERED

Empowering and supporting each student to achieve their greatest potential while making decisions with our students in mind

QUALITY

Creating a dynamic environment for learning and development that establishes high standards for individual excellence

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Taking responsibility for our actions, acting as responsible stewards of our resources, and adhering to the highest standards of ethical and civic behavior

COMMUNITY

Engaging our community and serving as a catalyst for positive change on campus and in our region through effective communication

TEAMWORK AND SHARED GOVERNANCE

Working together through collaboration to develop ideas, knowledge, and creative solutions

INNOVATION

Creating an environment where campus stakeholders are empowered to exercise collaborative creativity and innovation

DIVERSITY AND RESPECT

Fostering inclusiveness and an appreciation for individual differences

ADAPTABILITY

Responding rapidly to local and global change





our **PROCESS**

We understand that a truly impactful strategic plan requires collaboration. That's why we embarked on a comprehensive process, incorporating a wide range of voices and perspectives to craft a document that reflects our collective vision for Chesapeake College. This plan builds upon the solid foundation established by previous initiatives—including our existing strategic plan—while leveraging new and valuable insights from faculty/staff surveys, an environmental scan, and student feedback from satisfaction surveys.

To ensure inclusivity and address the needs of our diverse student body, we gathered information about the barriers students face in achieving success. Additionally, input from the Board of Trustees and a comprehensive survey of our service region helped us grasp the broader needs of the Mid-Shore community as a whole. By incorporating the Maryland Blueprint for Education and insights from the Middle States self-study and rebranding project, we aligned our plan with state and national best practices, guided by the College Council as a dedicated steering committee.

With the plan now solidified, it's time for collective action. Each member of our campus community, regardless of their position, possesses the ability to contribute meaningfully to the realization of our shared goals. While the strategic plan serves as a roadmap for our journey, its true impact lies in our collective commitment to implementing its directives.

As we move forward, let us remain steadfast in our dedication to translating vision into action, leveraging the strengths of our community to propel Chesapeake College toward a vibrant, viable, and visible future. We extend our gratitude to all who participated in this collaborative effort and eagerly anticipate the transformative impact of our collective endeavors.

our **GOALS**

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Serve as the leading source of high-quality, comprehensive general and technical education in the region, catering to the ever-evolving needs of the workforce

EMPOWERED STUDENTS

Empower all students to reach their full potential by fostering holistic development—including academic, interpersonal, and personal growth

THRIVING PARTNERSHIPS

Strengthen meaningful connections and partnerships between the institution and the community

INNOVATION & PROGRESS

Cultivate an innovative and forward-thinking environment where new ideas and technologies thrive

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

Ensure a success-oriented, inclusive college community that mirrors the diversity of our service area, prioritizing equity and mutual respect as fundamental values

our **CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES**

Higher education today faces an unprecedented array of challenges, reshaped by the global COVID-19 pandemic, evolving economic conditions, and significant societal shifts. Institutions are navigating a landscape marked by volatile enrollment patterns, intensified financial pressures, and a rapid shift toward digital learning environments. The enduring impacts of the pandemic, compounded by ongoing political instability and economic uncertainty, have profoundly influenced the priorities and operations of higher education. Amid these upheavals, the demographic landscape of campuses is transforming, emphasizing the need to serve a more diverse and often non-traditional student body. This shift demands innovative approaches in student services, curriculum development, and community engagement, challenging institutions to maintain public accountability and institutional resilience. Additionally, the growing demand for skilled trades careers reflects a critical pivot in educational preferences, underscoring the need for Chesapeake College to expand and innovate in our vocational training programs, ensuring they are aligned with the evolving job market and the diverse aspirations of our student population.

Chesapeake College is well-positioned to leverage its strengths such as affordability, a strategic location, and a strong reputation to enhance its educational offerings. Our alignment with local workforce demands now accounts for over 50% of noncredit FTE, highlighting our role in strengthening career pathways and fostering valuable partnerships. Additionally, the significant growth in online enrollment, with over 40% of students taking online courses exclusively and about 30% additional students engaging in a mix of online and face-to-face learning, demonstrates our capacity to meet the needs of a changing student demographic.

Marketing and branding initiatives are underway to refresh the College's image, attracting new student populations and reinforcing our status as a regional leader. Supported by the Maryland's Blueprint for Education Plan, our dual enrollment programs have grown to represent more than a third of our total enrollment, showcasing our alignment with state educational priorities. Moreover, securing grants for the development of trades programs and enhancing student support services underscores our commitment to strategic growth.

The demographic shifts in the 5-county region, including an increasingly diverse population, present further opportunities for enrollment expansion and community engagement.

Changing labor needs and interest in noncredit workforce development, job training, and skilled trades, evident after the pandemic, leads Chesapeake College to implement innovative strategies to provide these educational advancement opportunities.

Diversity in faculty and staff remains a critical area of focus, with 61% of students reporting exposure to diverse perspectives in their coursework, and only 70% of faculty and staff expressing satisfaction with the College's efforts toward diversity and intercultural competence. Enhancing the representation of our faculty and staff with the student body is essential for fostering an inclusive learning environment.



The success of students in online courses is also a pivotal concern, as identified in the Completion Project findings from student focus groups. Strategies to enhance the quality and satisfaction of online learning are crucial. Moreover, only 22% of our students are Pell eligible, underscoring the need to increase scholarship availability and financial aid utilization.

Chesapeake College also contends with competition from four-year institutions, requiring a clear emphasis on our unique strengths and value propositions. Location-specific challenges such as limited internet access and a smaller workforce in certain areas necessitate creative solutions to connect students with resources and opportunities.

Finally, a projected 10% decline in high school enrollment over the next five years demands innovative recruitment strategies to attract future generations.

As we prepare to navigate these complexities, Chesapeake College's strategic plan is heavily informed by data-driven insights, aiming to craft a forward-looking strategy that addresses both the immediate challenges and sets a robust foundation for future growth and success. By focusing on these strategic areas, Chesapeake College will continue to serve as a pivotal educational pillar in the community, adaptable and responsive to the ever-changing educational landscape.



our PLAN

GOAL 1: EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Serve as the leading source of high-quality, comprehensive general and technical education in the region, catering to the ever-evolving needs of the workforce

In our rapidly evolving world, education is paramount in shaping individuals for success. Chesapeake College is dedicated to attaining educational leadership in the region, serving as the primary destination for top-tier, comprehensive general, and technical education. In order to secure this position, it is imperative to continually assess enrollment and completion data and outcomes, ensuring the delivery of sustainable, relevant programming to the residents of the Mid-Shore. Our transformative initiatives, whether credit or noncredit, aim to empower individuals and communities, fostering lifelong learning and prosperity.

- Objective 1.1** Improve enrollment and completion rates in general and technical education programs
- Objective 1.2** Elevate the quality of general and technical education programs through the assessment of student success, satisfaction, and learning outcomes
- Objective 1.3** Amplify the institution's visibility and reputation as a leader in both general and technical education
- Objective 1.4** Improve student completion outcomes as measured by wages, job placement, graduation and transfer rates, and satisfaction with their educational experiences
- Objective 1.5** Lead the development and delivery of innovative and relevant education programs at a regional level—both general and technical



GOAL 2: EMPOWERED STUDENTS

Empower all students to reach their full potential by fostering holistic development—including academic, interpersonal, and personal growth

At Chesapeake College, students are the cornerstone of our mission—our success is measured by theirs. Whether pursuing vocational training, earning credits for transfer, or engaging in lifelong learning, we're dedicated to ensuring students' achievements extend far beyond the classroom. We prioritize their holistic development, supporting their academic journey while fostering interpersonal skills and personal growth. Our goal is to empower every student to thrive in their programs, communities, and personal lives.

- Objective 2.1** Explore diverse models and funding sources to progress towards a more holistic advising approach to address students' academic, interpersonal, and personal development needs
- Objective 2.2** Expand engagement in co-curricular activities
- Objective 2.3** Reduce barriers for prospective and current students to enhance enrollment, retention, persistence, and completion rates
- Objective 2.4** Refine the evidence-based strategic enrollment strategy to improve credit and noncredit recruitment and enrollment
- Objective 2.5** Evaluate and refine the prospective student onboarding process, creating a more streamlined and user-friendly experience for both credit and noncredit offerings

GOAL 3: THRIVING PARTNERSHIPS

Strengthen meaningful connections and partnerships between the institution and the community

Chesapeake College is committed to building bridges between our institution and the community. We achieve this by fostering meaningful connections and partnerships with employers, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions across the Eastern Shore. Through open communication, collaborative initiatives, and shared data, we strengthen connections and leverage coordinated fundraising to ensure student success and the continued vitality of our communities.

- Objective 3.1** Facilitate collaboration and partnership with regional educational institutions, community leaders, and alums to better address local needs
- Objective 3.2** Collaborate with regional employers to address workforce demands
- Objective 3.3** Maximize the College's visibility in the region by establishing the campus as a local hub for community engagement
- Objective 3.4** Ensure the College's viability through collaborative fundraising endeavors

GOAL 4: INNOVATION & PROGRESS

Cultivate an innovative and forward-thinking environment where new ideas and technologies thrive

Thriving in today's dynamic world requires continuous improvement, openness to innovative ideas, and a commitment to student success in all its forms. At Chesapeake College, we embrace these principles wholeheartedly. By streamlining operations, fostering data-driven decision making, and continuously adapting to technological advancements, we empower our employees to deliver exceptional service. Ultimately, these efforts culminate in an elevated online learning experience for our students, ensuring their success wherever their educational journey takes them.

- Objective 4.1** Improve document management and archival practices throughout the institution
- Objective 4.2** Foster a culture of data literacy among employees to bolster continuous, institution-wide improvement
- Objective 4.3** Develop deliberate and innovative solutions to adapt to evolving technology and enhance institutional efficiencies
- Objective 4.4** Elevate the quality of online services, teaching, and learning to facilitate student success

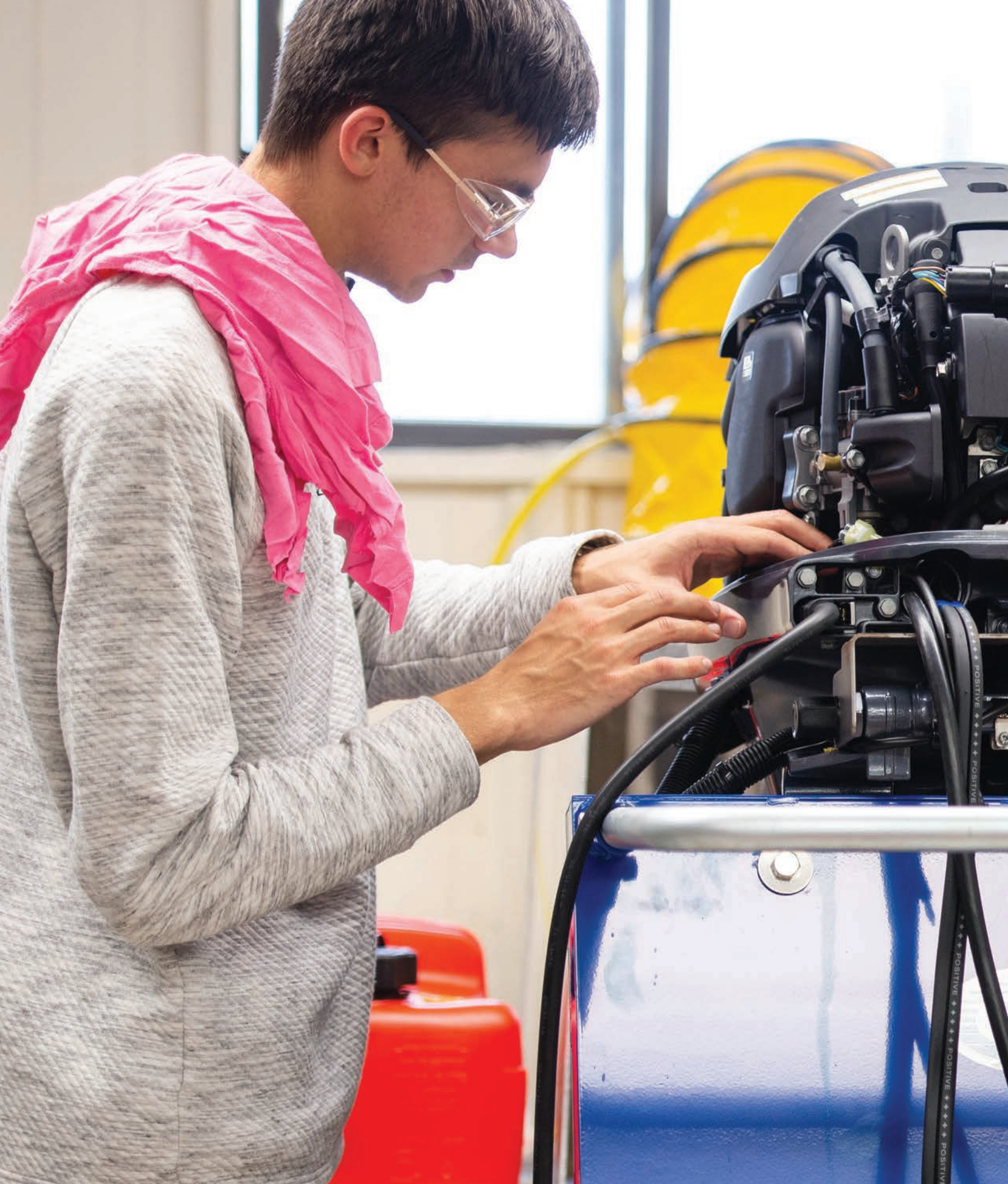


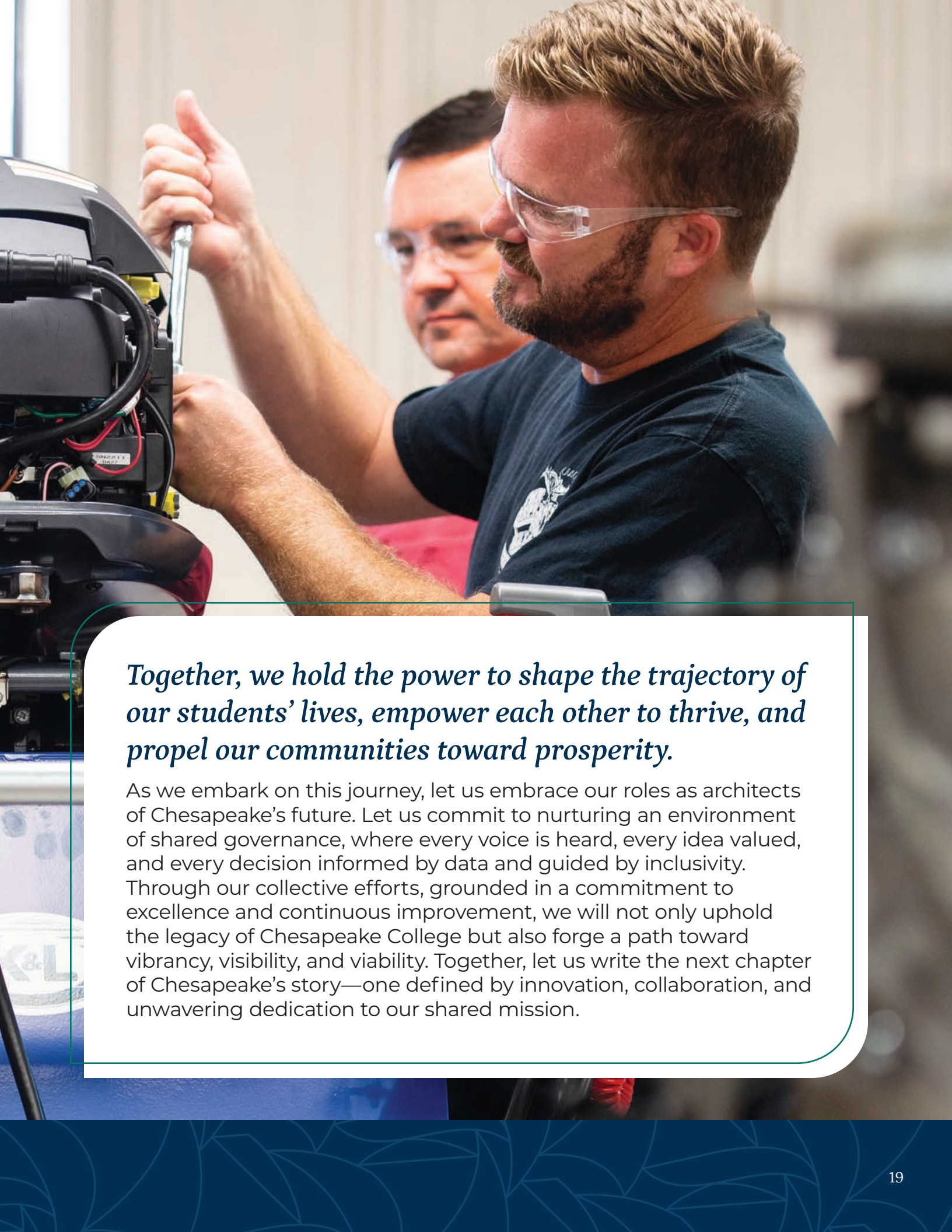
GOAL 5: INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

Ensure a success-oriented, inclusive college community that mirrors the diversity of our service area, prioritizing equity and mutual respect as fundamental values

Fulfilling our mission requires fostering a vibrant and inclusive community that reflects the rich diversity of our service region. At Chesapeake College, we believe in a deeper kind of inclusion—one where respect is woven into the fabric of our daily interactions, and where equity of opportunity empowers every member to thrive. This unwavering commitment to inclusion is not just the right thing to do—it's essential for student success and institutional excellence.

- Objective 5.1** Increase the recruitment of historically underrepresented groups for faculty and staff positions
- Objective 5.2** Boost enrollment of students from underrepresented groups
- Objective 5.3** Advocate for equity in student success outcomes through curricular and co-curricular support initiatives
- Objective 5.4** Develop and implement a culturally responsive teaching and learning curriculum across all disciplines





Together, we hold the power to shape the trajectory of our students' lives, empower each other to thrive, and propel our communities toward prosperity.

As we embark on this journey, let us embrace our roles as architects of Chesapeake's future. Let us commit to nurturing an environment of shared governance, where every voice is heard, every idea valued, and every decision informed by data and guided by inclusivity. Through our collective efforts, grounded in a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement, we will not only uphold the legacy of Chesapeake College but also forge a path toward vibrancy, visibility, and viability. Together, let us write the next chapter of Chesapeake's story—one defined by innovation, collaboration, and unwavering dedication to our shared mission.



CHESAPEAKE COLLEGE



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*Accommodations available upon request.
An equal opportunity institution and tobacco-free campus.*