Title IX at VCU
2015-17 Biennial Progress Report
# Title IX at VCU: 2015-17 Biennial Progress Report

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Introduction

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

At VCU, we stand firm in our commitment to providing a safe and secure learning and living environment for all members of our community. This report reflects that pledge.

2015 marked a watershed year for Title IX at Virginia Commonwealth University: Equity and Access Services (EAS) was established within the Office of the President and was designated to serve as the Title IX office for VCU. Between 2015 and 2016 there was a significant increase in reporting of prohibited conduct due to heightened awareness, advocacy and public policy developments. And by 2017 our interactive, online training designed to prevent sexual assault was completed by more than 43,000 students and employees, while campus and community partnerships coordinated by EAS advanced safety and accountability.

Federal and state laws, as well as guidance from the U.S. Department of Education, help inform the ways colleges and universities implement sex/gender discrimination protections. In 2014, the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault released its “Guide to Preventing and Addressing Campus Sexual Misconduct.” Its six themes — coordinated campus and community response; prevention and education; policy development and implementation; reporting options, advocacy and support services; climate surveys, performance measurement and evaluation; and transparency — frame this report.

The university offices listed here comprise the VCU Title IX Steering Committee.

Office of the President
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VCU Helpline:
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Office of University Counsel
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VCU Athletics
Deputy Title IX coordinator for athletics: Sofia A. Hiort-Wright, Ph.D., associate vice provost of academic support and executive associate athletic director/SWA
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VCU Police Department
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https://police.vcu.edu
You Have Options online portal: https://www.reportingoptions.org/vcu-pd
Message from the president

Greetings,

This year marks the conclusion of the 45th anniversary of Title IX. Passed as part of the Education Amendments of 1972 and as originally enacted, Title IX was designed to end sex discrimination in education. Early emphasis included equity in admissions, financial aid and sports. Its protections have evolved over the years in concert with other laws and federal guidance, with a focus on institutional responsibilities to prevent and respond to sexual assault.

We take Title IX’s protections and our responsibilities seriously at VCU. Between 2015 and 2017 in particular, we invested significant resources in our Title IX program and established Equity and Access Services to serve as VCU’s Title IX office, reporting to me.

The U.S. Department of Education’s rescission of certain Title IX guidance last year did not diminish our commitment. VCU remains committed to providing a living and learning environment that is safe and secure to all who come here to our university. It is a moral obligation that all members of the VCU community must strive to uphold.

At VCU, we listen to and support those impacted by sexual abuse, harassment and other forms of discrimination and address prohibited acts in accordance with our robust Sexual Misconduct/Violence and Sex/Gender Discrimination Policy. I am proud of our efforts and the progress we have made to strengthen our compliance and our culture.

We are deeply invested in providing the university community with the knowledge and tools to prevent sexual violence and to respond to incidents to the fullest extent possible in accordance with our policy. Education is incredibly important, and we work hard to ensure that our policies and training are up-to-date with best practices.

I am grateful for the efforts of Equity and Access Services, the VCU Police Department, the Division of Student Affairs, the Wellness Resource Center, the Title IX Steering Committee and numerous other university offices and community partners who work to ensure that we go beyond compliance and exceed the standards to advance cultural change.

In this Title IX biennial report, you will learn more about our progress at VCU over the past two years. Still, we have a lot of work to do. Our investment must continue. We also must be transparent and assess what we are doing as an institution and personally to make our communities places that are truly safe and equitable for all. I am confident that together we can make a difference.

Thank you,
Michael Rao, Ph.D.
President, VCU and VCU Health System
Coordinated campus and community response
A school’s effective response to sexual violence and misconduct requires strong partnerships with both campus and community partners. Equity and Access Services serves as the Title IX office for VCU and coordinates the university’s response to reports. EAS works with university and community partners to provide support services, safety measures and process coordination.

VCU initiatives and accomplishments
- Created a coordinated community approach with local Richmond partners to enhance safety and accountability
- Provided case coordination among EAS, VCUPD, Division of Student Affairs, Human Resources and Athletics to discuss reported cases and coordinate on safety measures and supports since 2015
- Served on State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Sexual Violence Advisory Committee to identify programs, policies, training and education opportunities to prevent and respond to sexual violence within the commonwealth’s institutions of higher education
- Expanded the VCU Title IX Steering Committee to include policy development, resource allocation and strategic planning
- Trained first responders in trauma-informed investigation
- Developed formal Memorandums of Understanding with local law enforcement and with local sexual assault and domestic violence agencies
- Enacted the university’s Sexual Violence Review Committee
- Formed the Transgender Inclusion Administrative Work Group in 2016 to assess the university’s systems, procedures and facilities to ensure inclusion
- Tripled Title IX staff since 2015
- 8 Title IX positions now exist within EAS
- Other offices also have increased their capacity in support of Title IX

Annual Security and Fire Safety Report
Leading campus public safety efforts for the VCU community, the VCU Police Department produces an Annual Security and Fire Safety Report highlighting its efforts to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct. The report serves as a robust source of information regarding relevant initiatives and resources.
- Title IX-related Clery reportable offenses included 78 in 2015 and 109 in 2016
- Title IX-related Clery reportable offenses in the ASR include rape, statutory rape, fondling, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and hate crime-sexual orientation numbers for all campuses. Definitions may differ from those in the policy.
You Have Options program
- VCUPD is the first campus law enforcement agency to adopt this national program in August 2016
- Empowers survivors with different sexual assault reporting options

Total sex offenses reported to VCPD, which includes batteries and felony sex offenses in and out of jurisdiction:
- 54 sex offenses from Aug. 1, 2015, through July 31, 2016
- 77 sex offenses from Aug. 1, 2016, through Aug. 1, 2017

Prevention and education
Ongoing prevention, education and training programs — from undergraduate orientation through graduate and professional studies — impart valuable knowledge to students and send a strong message about VCU values. Education and training programs at the university also extend to administrators, law enforcement and security, faculty, staff, contract employees, and volunteers.

Online training
Prior to 2015, the university provided in-person Title IX training workshops for employees, and Wellness Resource Center staff worked with partner offices to deliver in-person training and awareness to students (approximately 75 to 100 sessions per year). VCU has since expanded the training for students and employees to require the interactive online program, Not Anymore, which is designed to prevent sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, and stalking.

Not Anymore online training
All students and employees are required to complete Not Anymore online training (starting in 2015). 43,579 students and employees had completed the training as of July 2017.

Pre-test to post-test scores
- Student scores improved from 69% to 89% between 2015 and 2016
- Student scores improved from 71% to 90% between 2016 and 2017
- Employee data not available between 2015 and 2016
- Employee scores improved from 83% to 95% between 2016 and 2017

Testimonials
“The program was thorough in its description and application of diversity; in clarifying that it is never the victim’s fault; in clearly defining what does and doesn’t count as consent and assault; and providing resources about state laws and how to contact help.” — VCU student
“Even though this is a required program for my new job at VCU, I feel that this is very important for everyone to see. Sexual assault happens far too often on college campuses, and I am very grateful that VCU is taking big strides in stopping this and providing resources for victims.” — VCU employee

In-person training
Title IX
- 40 in-person policy sessions per year for students
- 20 to 30 in-person policy sessions per year for employees on both the Monroe Park and MCV campuses

The Well
- Over 100 trainings per year on both the Monroe Park and MCV campuses
- Program topics included sexual violence, intimate partner/dating/domestic violence, stalking, healthy relationships, safety, sexual health, and bystander intervention.
- The Well program highlights include bystander intervention presentations for all UNIV 101 classes and escalation workshops for all student athletes.

Annual training provided to fraternity and sorority leadership
National speakers Suzette Walden Cole and Archie Messersmith delivered sexual assault prevention workshops to all fraternity and sorority chapters in 2015

Screened “The Hunting Ground”
This documentary about sexual assault on campuses included a panel discussion and resource fair in 2015 and 2016

Peter Lake workshops
Nationally recognized Title IX expert and law professor Peter Lake of Stetson University conducted reporting workshops for VCU faculty and academic leadership on both the Monroe Park and MCV campuses, as well as contributed to the university’s “Responsible Employee” video, in fall 2015

Annual campaigns and activities

It’s On Us
A pledge- and video-based national awareness campaign implemented by VCU Athletics

Fear 2 Freedom
An international sexual violence awareness campaign sponsored at VCU by the Division of Student Affairs and VCU Health
Take Back the Night
An international campus-based awareness event and survivor speak-out sponsored by Students Advocating Violence Education and Support (SAVES)

The Red Flag Campaign
An awareness-raising program involving student volunteers posting 100 small red flags on both campuses to represent the warning signs of an unhealthy relationship, sponsored by SAVES

The Clothesline Project
A collaboration in the wider community raising awareness about the prevalence of sexual assault and fostering a culture of support and healing, sponsored by SAVES

Silent Witness Exhibit
A collaboration with the Wilder School, involving red, life-size cutouts of human figures and a story attached to the cutout explaining how this individual lost their life due to domestic violence

Policy development and implementation
Implemented in 2015, VCU’s Sexual Misconduct/Violence and Sex/Gender Discrimination Policy replaced and superseded the Title IX Student Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Antidiscrimination Policy (Student Sexual Misconduct Policy) and the Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment. Informed by the principles of fair process and privacy, the policy applies to all prohibited conduct reported on or after Aug. 5, 2015.

New, defining characteristics of the policy
- Employs a civil rights investigation model
- Brings students and employees under one policy
- Uses review panels instead of an evidentiary hearing
- Includes more information about available process and support services, prevention and training
- Incorporates state laws that went into effect in July 2015, including the transcript notation law and the sexual violence reporting law
- Provides new procedures for sharing information with the parties throughout the investigation
- Sets forth affirmative consent standard
Reporting options, support services and advocacy

Anyone who may have experienced prohibited conduct as defined in the Sexual Misconduct/Violence and Sex/Gender Discrimination Policy is encouraged to report it. VCU also has a policy of mandatory employee reporting. From 2015 through 2017, there was a significant increase in reporting, attributed to heightened awareness as a result of local and national advocacy, communication about the university’s new policy and public policy developments.

Reporting options

VCU offers a range of support services and reporting options for students and employees.

- University Counseling Services and advocates within the Wellness Resource Center provide services to students on a confidential basis.
- Employees can access confidential resources through the Employee Assistance Program. VCU does not have data about EAP support services related to Title IX.

EAS receives reports about any prohibited conduct, which may violate the Sexual Misconduct/Violence and Sex/Gender Discrimination Policy. VCUPD receives reports about potential criminal offenses. Students who first seek confidential support and then make a report to the university would be counted twice in the data.

Equity and Access Services reports

Includes sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, partner or relationship violence, retaliation, other sex- or gender-based harassment/discrimination, and undisclosed. Not all Title IX reports move to investigation. This is for a variety of reasons, including the university’s lack of jurisdiction (if a respondent is unaffiliated or unknown, or because the complainant does not want to move forward and the university is not in receipt of facts indicating a community threat within the university’s ability to address).

- 2015 to 2016, there were 339 EAS reports, and of these, 134 were sexual assault
- 2016 to 2017, there were 390 EAS reports, and of these, 163 were sexual assault

University process for resolution

Due to enhanced intake and assessment procedures from 2016 to 2017, 47 additional cases were reviewed but determined ineligible for formal resolution through investigation, as compared to 13 such cases from 2015 to 2016.

- 2015 to 2016, there were 44 additional cases that included 16 investigations, 8 alternative resolutions and 6 other; these cases included investigations, alternative resolutions and investigations that were begun but not completed for a variety of reasons such as unwilling complainant, reevaluation by EAS or respondent separation for unrelated reasons
- 2016 to 2017, there were 21 additional cases that included 16 investigations, 2 management reviews and 3 alternative solutions; these cases included investigation, management review and alternative resolution
Resolutions
Resolutions completed in the academic year. The numbers may include investigations initiated in the prior AY. Additionally, investigations initiated in the prior AY may not reach resolution for a variety of reasons, such as non-participating complainant or re-evaluation by EAS. Therefore, the numbers for resolution do not correspond exactly with the number of investigations.

- 2015 to 2016, there were 21 resolutions, of which 5 were removals; these included suspension or expulsion, which receives a transcript notation
- 2016 to 2017, there were 23 resolutions, of which 6 were removals; these included suspension or expulsion, which receives a transcript notation

OCR Title IX complaints
2015 to 2016:
- 3 were opened
- 1 was closed, meaning it was resolved without further action
- 2 remain open

Support measures (academic, housing, other)
The Division of Student Affairs promotes emotional and mental wellness through a variety of services for students. University Counseling Services provides confidential counseling services and student outreach. The Well educates students about sexual violence prevention, healthy relationships and reporting options regarding Title IX and VCUPD. Student Health Services provides medical testing and examinations.

Support and report resources cards distributed 2015 to 2017
- 28,000

University Counseling Services
The Wellness Resource Center and University Counseling Services reported this information to EAS in the aggregate, without any personally identifying information. Data collected from intake paperwork. Reports from within the last year.

- Reports from 2015 to 2016 include 97 unwanted sexual experiences and 173 harassment/abuse
- Reports from 2016 to 2017 include 140 unwanted sexual experiences and 224 harassment/abuse

EAS-facilitated interim/support measures (academic, housing, other)
Does not include no-contact directives, which are issued in most cases.

- From 2015 to 2016, there were 109 EAS-facilitated interim/support measures
- From 2016 to 2017, there were 102 EAS-facilitated interim/support measures
**Advocacy**

Advocacy services were provided for domestic/intimate partner/dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, gender-based discrimination, hate crime, other, not applicable, other-stress/anxiety and other-relationships.

**Wellness Resource Center**

The Wellness Resource Center’s advocates help survivors with their physical and emotional health, reporting options and academic concerns, and connect survivors to campus and community services. The goal of The Well is to provide all survivors with comprehensive information regarding options and resources that result in an informed decision and choice. Requesting services and assistance from The Well does not require additional information about the incident or participation in a university investigation.

**Student-to-student support**

- From 2016 to 2017, The Well’s trained peer advocates met with a total of 25 students and others

**Advocacy cases**

- From 2015 to 2016, there were 113 advocacy cases, which included sexual violence, domestic violence, dating violence, and/or stalking
- From 2016 to 2017, there were 117 advocacy cases, which included sexual violence, domestic violence, dating violence, and/or stalking

**Advocacy programs at The Well include:**

- Survivor Solidarity Hour: A weekly, year-round program where survivors of violence and allies can come together, meet and hang out in a safe space at The Well.
- Trans and Gender Nonconforming Support Group: A weekly, student-facilitated group open to any student who would like to attend and identifies as T/GNC or is questioning their gender. This private space offers students community, resources and support.
- Relationship Skills class: A six-week psychoeducational curriculum developed by the Northwest Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian and Gay Survivors of Abuse. Classes focus on anti-oppression and values, expectations and negotiation; accountability, boundaries, conflict and community connections. The class is geared toward self-reflection and skill building versus processing specific experiences.
Climate surveys, performance measurement and evaluation

The annual Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Violence and Bystander Behavior assesses the campus climate related to sexual violence and bystander behavior to inform the development of formal training, policy and protocols. The survey collects information on student demographics, bystander intervention behavior and beliefs, sexual assault prevalence and utilization of resources.

Campus Climate Survey

First conducted in 2015 as a component of a federal award through the Office on Violence Against Women 2013 Grants to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence and Stalking on Campus Program.

- 5,000 students were invited to participate in the 2015, 2016 and 2017 surveys
- Between 2015 and 2017, the survey response rate increased from 14% to 23%; at the time of this biennial report, the 2017 survey results were not available yet beyond the response rate

Survey key trends in 2015 and 2016

- VCU students by and large felt positive about their experience at VCU and how VCU handles sexual assault. They were generally likely or very likely to engage in positive bystander behaviors.
- Students were more likely to intervene with friends than with strangers.
- Female respondents reported higher levels of intimate partner violence victimization (sexual assault, dating/domestic violence and stalking) and street harassment than males. (It is difficult to make accurate comparisons for nonbinary respondents; nonbinary is inclusive of anyone who marked transgender, non-binary, gender fluid, gender nonconforming, or who marked multiple categories) due to low numbers of respondents. However, in 2016 nonbinary respondents reported the highest levels of IPV and street harassment.
- The majority of respondents who reported experiencing violence/assault did not seek help from on- or off-campus resources. In both years, there was no clear pattern of reasons why survivors did not utilize resources; most survivors reported multiple reasons. Only a small number of survivors stated they did not know that resources existed.

Key comparisons in 2015 and 2016

- Increase from 65% in 2015 to 75% in 2016 of survey respondents who said they agree/strongly agree with the statement, “I understand VCU’s formal procedures to address complaints of sexual assault.”
- Increase from 60% in 2015 to 75% in 2016 of survey respondents who said they agree/strongly agree with the statements, “I have confidence VCU administers the formal procedures to address complaints of sexual assault fairly” and “The university would handle [a sexual assault] report fairly”
Additional 2016 stats referring to a report of sexual assault

- 75% of survey respondents said they agree/strongly agree with the statements, “The university would take action to address factors that may have led to the sexual assault” and “The university would support the person making the report.”

- 80% of survey respondents said they agree/strongly agree with the statement, “The university would take steps to protect the safety of the person making the report.”

- 85% of survey respondents said they agree/strongly agree with the statements, “If requested by the survivor, the university would forward the report to criminal investigators (for example, the police)” and “The university would maintain the privacy of the person making the report” and “The university would take the report seriously.”

Shifting culture

Title IX has contributed significantly to the culture shift at U.S. colleges and universities since it was signed into law in 1972. With equality at its core, Title IX has been responsible for equity in admissions and parity in programs. At VCU, as we continue to do the highly visible and important work of combating sexual assault on campus, we will focus in the coming years on building capacity to engage our community and campus partners in coordinated efforts around other issues of equality.

Looking ahead, VCU will concentrate on the following areas

Internal review of our Title IX program:
- Exploring assessment tools

Policy revision:
- Monitoring developments at the federal level and expecting new proposed regulatory guidance
- Incorporating promising practices

Enhancing and adding to training/education:
- Exploring innovative models for student programming

Leading the way

The VCU Title IX Transformative Leadership Award is presented to a VCU student, faculty member or staff member who has made innovations in Title IX strategic and policy approaches, practice, and/or research resulting in operational excellence; who has helped set the tone to promote an environment free from sex-based discrimination, harassment and violence across the university through exemplary leadership; and whose work is in alignment with VCU's Quest
for Distinction's mission to provide a climate of inclusion. The award was established in 2016 by the Title IX Steering Committee.

Previous recipients:
- Madelyn F. Wessel, Esq. university counsel, in 2016
- John Venuti, VCU Police chief, assistant vice president for public safety, in 2017

National milestones
- 1972: Congress passed the Equal Rights Amendment
- 1972: President Nixon signed into law Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972
- 1980: Alexander v. Yale, 631 F. 2d 178 (1980), recognized sexual harassment as a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX
- 1982: 35 states ratified the Equal Rights Amendment, falling 3 states short of the 38-state ratification required to amend the U.S. Constitution
- 2001: Office for Civil Rights (OCR)/U.S. Department of Education released Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties
- 2002: Title IX law renamed Patsy Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act
- 2009: The Center for Public Integrity reported that crisis-services programs and clinics had higher incidences of sexual offenses than the average yearly Clery Act statistics submitted by schools in their locality from 2002 to 2006
- 2013: Know Your IX, a survivor- and youth-led project, was founded
- 2014: Not Alone: The First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students From Sexual Assault was released
- 2014: OCR released list of 55 schools that faced civil rights investigations related to their handling of sexual violence reports (as of 2017, that number had tripled)
- 2015: The Hunting Ground, a documentary about sexual assault on campuses, was released; VCU hosted a film screening and panel discussion and resource fair
- 2017: White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault report was released
- 2017-18: The Me Too Movement, founded by Tarana Burke in 2006, gained momentum through a widespread hashtag campaign, #MeToo

VCU milestones
- 1980s: Project SAFER (Sound Advice For Every Ram), a peer education group on healthy sexuality and consent, was founded
- 1986: Office of Health Promotion (OHP) was established (predecessor to The Wellness Resource Center)
- 1987: Peer Sexuality Educator program was founded by OHP
1990: Rape Services Consultant Program, an advocacy program for student sexual assault survivors, was created by OHP
1991: VCU held its first Take Back the Night, an international campus-based sexual assault awareness event and survivor speak-out
1993: VCU Police Department began its first victim/witness program
1994: OHP founded Peer Sexual Assault Educators, a student education group
1995: OHP combined with VCU’s Office of Substance Abuse and Sexual Assault
1995: VCU held its first Clothesline Project, a collaboration in the wider community to raise awareness about the prevalence of sexual assault and foster a culture of support and healing
1996: VCU Medical Center's Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) team was founded.
1997-98: VCU hosted its first conference on sexual assault, “Communicate, Collaborate: Campuses and Communities”
1998: VCU created its first part-time positions dedicated to sexual assault advocacy and prevention in OHP
2000: OHP provided advocacy services to 13 survivors of sexual assault (this number would rise to 163 by 2017)
2000: VCU Medical Center’s SANE changed its title to the Forensic Nurse Examiners Program and began to also serve survivors of intimate partner violence.
2001: Sexual Assault and Violence Education by Students (SAVES) peer education program was founded
2001: Project EMPOWER, a multi-disciplinary initiative dedicated to enhancing prevention and intervention services to individuals and their families who experience intimate partner violence or sexual violence, was founded.
2007: VCU was awarded its first U.S. Department of Justice Grants to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking on Campus Program (second grant awarded in 2013)
2007: Men Against Violence, a peer education and advocacy group for male identified students, was founded
2008: OHP changed its name to the Wellness Resource Center
2009: VCU Medical Center was recognized by Virginia Chapter of the International Association of Forensic Nurses and received the Dream Team Award
2012: VCU hosted Fear 2 Freedom, a 501(c)(3) global non-profit that helps restore hope and dignity to survivors of sexual assault while empowering students and communities to combat sexual violence
2013: VCU Police hired its first full time victim/witness coordinator to work with victims of all types of crimes
2013: VCU created first position dedicated to advocacy services for LGBTQ students
2014: VCU entered into resolution agreement with OCR regarding its policy and procedures, coordination and communication, and training
2014: Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe convened Task Force on Combating Campus Sexual Violence and appointed as members VCU Police Chief John Venuti (Law Enforcement
Subcommittee Chair), Jean A. Cheek, VCUHS Forensic Nurse Examiner and Brandon T. Day, President of VCU Student Government Association

- 2014: VCU hosted the National Center for Campus Public Safety Pilot Training on Trauma Informed Investigations
- 2014: VCU launched online Title IX training
- 2015: To be more inclusive of its advocacy mission, Peer Sexual Assault Educators changed its name to Students Advocating Violence Education and Support (SAVES)
- 2015: Equity and Access Services (EAS) was established within the Office of the President and designated to serve as the Title IX office for the university
- 2015: Peter Lake, nationally recognized Title IX expert and law professor at Stetson University, conducted reporting workshops for faculty and academic leadership
- 2015: VCU formed its Campus Sexual Assault Team (SART)
- 2015: VCU launched its new Title IX policy and implemented new, related state laws
- 2015: VCU Police, in connection with partners at VCU and in the City of Richmond, adopted the Start by Believing awareness campaign. The campaign encourages people to start by believing sexual assault survivors when they disclose an assault.
- 2015: The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) honored VCU Police for excellence in victim witness services. The department was one of six law enforcement agencies worldwide — and the only agency in higher education — to win an honorable mention.
- 2016: VCU formed the Transgender Inclusion Administrative Work Group to conduct a needs assessment and implement new procedures to support transgender and gender non-conforming people at the university
- 2016: EAS hosts first annual VCU Title IX Review and Planning Day for VCU and community partners
- 2016: VCU Police launched The You Have Options Program, a web-based reporting portal that removes barriers in reporting sexual assault with the goals of increasing the number of sexual assault reports and thoroughly investigating identified offenders for serial perpetration
- 2017: VCU Police was one of two law enforcement agencies internationally to receive the Leadership in Victim Services Award, given by International Association of Chiefs of Police to recognize departments that use innovation, best practices and training to better their responses to victims.
Virginia Commonwealth University does not discriminate in admissions, treatment, employment or access to its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin (including ethnicity), age, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions), parenting status, marital status, political affiliation, veteran status, genetic information (including family medical history), sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or disability, as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Virginia Human Rights Act; the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008; the Governor’s Executive Order Number One (2018); and other state or federal laws and university policies. VCU prohibits sexual and sex-/gender-based misconduct, discrimination, harassment and interpersonal violence, including sexual assault. VCU also prohibits discrimination against employees or applicants because they have inquired about, discussed or disclosed their own pay or the pay of another employee or applicant. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act and related statutes and regulations: Crystal Coombes, accessibility administrator and ADA/Section 504 coordinator, Equity and Access Services, Moseley House, 1001 Grove Ave., Box 842549, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Va. 23284-2549, (804) 828-8532, equity@vcu.edu. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies and to serve as the overall coordinator for purposes of Title IX compliance: Laura Walsh Rugless, director of equity and access services and Title IX coordinator, Moseley House, 1001 Grove Ave., Box 842549, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Va. 23284-2549, (804) 828-6404, titleix@vcu.edu. The full text of the VCU Notice of Nondiscrimination, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action is at https://equity.vcu.edu/discrimination/vcu-notice-of-nondiscrimination-equal-opportunity-and-affirmative-action.