



2025 - 2026

ANNUAL REPORT

**OFFICE OF
CAREER SERVICES**



A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

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As we reflect on another successful academic year, I am proud to share the continued growth and impact of Career Services in supporting our cadets' professional development and post-undergraduate success. Through expanded employer engagement, innovative career programming, and personalized advising, our team remained committed to preparing cadets for meaningful careers and lifelong professional achievement.



During AY 2025–2026, our partnership with Handshake provided cadets access to more than 5,500 internship opportunities and over 57,800 job postings nationwide. In addition, our staff conducted more than 235 individualized career advising appointments, including resume reviews, interview preparation, and career planning sessions designed to help cadets confidently navigate today's competitive job market.

Employer engagement also remained a cornerstone of our efforts. This year, we hosted two major career fairs and host over 65 additional networking events, welcoming participation from more than 150 unique employers representing a broad range of industries and career pathways. These events created valuable opportunities for cadets to build professional connections, explore career options, and secure internships and employment opportunities.

We also continued to enhance our career readiness resources through the implementation of Big Interview, an AI-powered online platform that combines interview training and practice tools to strengthen communication and interviewing skills. More than 120 cadets utilized the program this year to prepare for internship and employment interviews with increased confidence and professionalism.

Our employment outcomes continue to demonstrate the effectiveness of these efforts. Ninety-six percent of the Class of 2025 reported full-time employment, graduate school enrollment, or military service within six months of graduation. Additionally, 92% of cadets who completed internships indicated a direct connection between their internship experience and their post-undergraduate opportunities. These results reflect the hard work and dedication of our cadets, the commitment of our staff, and the strength of our employer and alumni partnerships.

LTC Sheikh, Ed.D.

MEET THE TEAM

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LTC Ammad Sheikh
Director



MAJ Brendan Harris
Assistant Director



MAJ Natalie Slone
Assistant Director of Experiential
Learning & Employer Relations



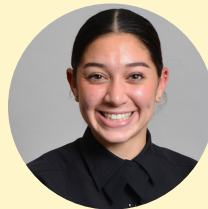
Hannah Blouin
Office Manager



Dylan O'Brien '27
CIC, International Studies



Kate Patrick '27
ACIC, Psychology



Katy Layman '26
International Studies



Adrianna Sanders '26
Psychology



Edward Menton '26
Economics & Business



Darell Hagerman '26
History



William Sloane '27
History



Ronnie Thompson '27
Civil Engineering

TECHNOLOGY & SOCIAL MEDIA

The Office of Career Services provides cadets with digital platforms and online toolkits designed to accelerate their professional growth.



Big Interview

A job interview training platform that combines video lessons, AI-driven interview practice, and résumé review to help users improve their interview skills and confidence.

120+

Cadets have used
Big Interview in 25/26

Handshake

Handshake is the #1 way college students find jobs. Cadets can explore career options, find jobs & internships and connect with employers.

5,500+

internships posted on
Handshake

44,800+

jobs posted on
Handshake



MAJOR SELECTION AND CAREER DECISION MAKING STARTS HERE

An online, self-guided program that identifies your work values, skills, personality preferences, and natural strengths to help you make decisions about your future career goals.

↑ 30%

active users compared to
previous academic year

Social Media



LinkedIn
175+ posts

726 follower posts

350% increase in reach



Facebook
200+ posts

295 Lifetime Followers

265% increase in reach

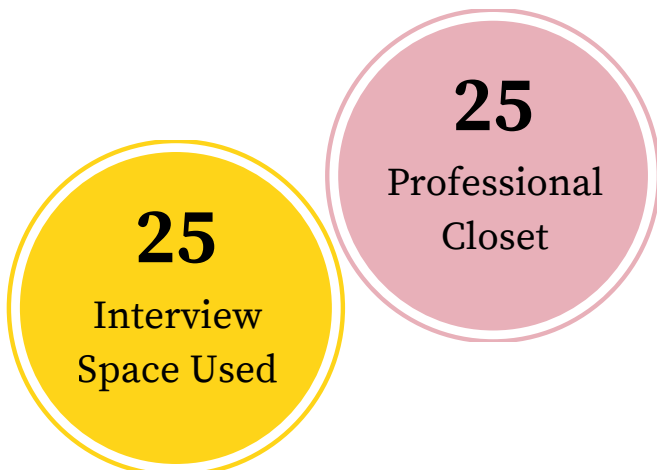


Instagram
160+ posts

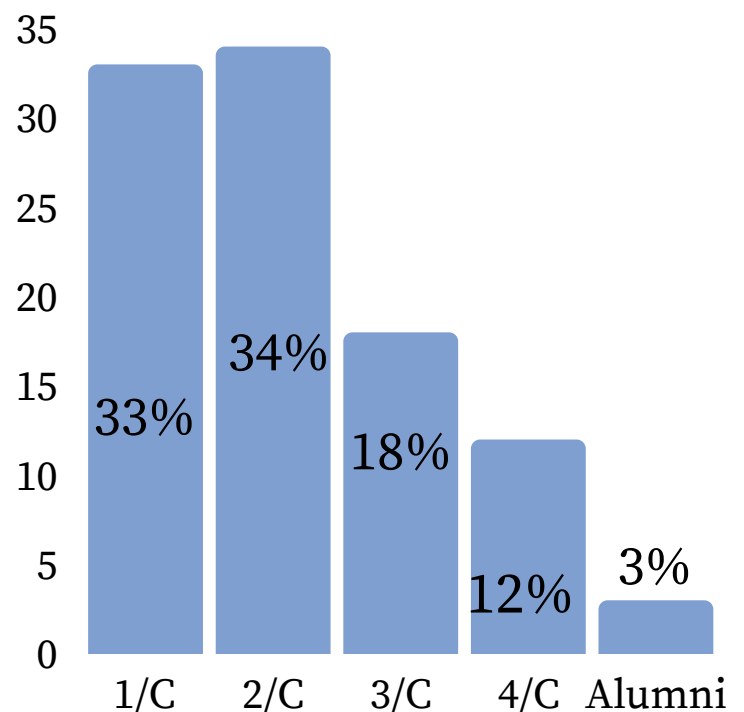
995 Lifetime Followers

YEAR IN NUMBERS

- 137** Resume Reviews
- 41** Job Search Strategies
- 8** Interview Preparation
- 32** Career Planning
- 3** Graduate Education Planning
- 16** Other



Percentage of Appointments by Class Year



In February 2026, OCS conducted an Academic Saturday session for the post-Breakout 4th Class to highlight career resources & services and encourage early engagement.

CAREER FAIRS & EMPLOYER EVENTS

The Office of Career Services hosted two career fairs along with twenty-three Workforce Wednesdays in the 2025-2026 academic year.

CAREER & INTERNSHIP FAIRS

FALL 2025

53 Companies
in attendance

215 Cadet Check Ins



SPRING 2026

55 Companies in
attendance

256 Cadet Check Ins

NETWORKING EVENTS

18 employers participated in 2 networking dinners held in association with each career & internship fair.

Over 50 cadets rehearsed elevator pitches, common interview questions, and strategies for approaching employers.

In collaboration with Building BRIDGES, Sigma Delta Pi (Hispanic Honor Society) & Omicron Delta Epsilon (Economics Honor Society)

WORKFORCE WEDNESDAYS

41 Companies held an on-post recruiting event over the academic year

ETIQUETTE DINNERS

200+ cadets participated in **etiquette dinners**, learning about dining etiquette while networking with alumni and prominent members of the VMI and Rockbridge County community.

VMi ATHLETICS

Delivered tailored career advising to 250+ athletes across 7 NCAA teams

Baseball, Basketball, Football, Track & Field, Cross-Country, Water Polo, and Wrestling



FALL CAREER PANELS



All non-commissioning 1/C & 2/C cadets attended career development panels, in partnership with the Commandant

Inside Government Careers: Pathways, Clearances & Entry-Level Roles

Explore what it takes to launch and grow a meaningful career in government through the experiences of professionals who have successfully navigated the path. The panel will cover strategies for getting started, understanding the security clearance process, and developing the skills needed to advance into leadership roles.

Panelists:

Ben Kincaid '99 - former U.S. Diplomat
Jeff Boobar '86 - former DEA
Freda Scheuer - former CIA
Peyton Wiecking '23 - DoD & Contractor
Moderator: Adrianna Sanders '26

Marching Forward: The Case for Graduate School

Join alumni as they share how they evaluated graduate school options, balanced admissions tests with VMI demands, and crafted strong applications. The panel will also cover selecting the right program, financing advanced study, and making the transition from cadet life to graduate-level academics.

Panelists:

Virginia Townsend '24 - UVA Law
Anne Townsend '24 - UVA Architecture
Mark Shelton II '24 - VT - Engineering
Luke Rose '24 - Regent University Law
D. John Dickenson '20 - UNC Chapel Hill
Moderator: MAJ Brendan Harris

Level Up Your Career: Using AI To Land Your Dream Job

Presentation by MAJ Natalie Slone; Laptops recommended but not required

Discover how to leverage the latest AI tools to sharpen your job search, strengthen applications, and stand out to employers. This session will demonstrate practical ways to use technology for résumé building, interview prep, and career exploration. Cadets will walk away with actionable strategies to gain a competitive edge in landing their next opportunity.

Networking Challenge

How do you start a conversation? What is the value in finding commonalities? After some brief networking tips, mix and mingle with your peers to fill out a bingo card. Special acknowledgement will go to the cadet to "black out" their card first. Additional challenge will include the largest group with the most unique commonality to be voted on by the session participants. *Facilitated by OCS Career Ambassadors.*



SPRING CAREER TREKS

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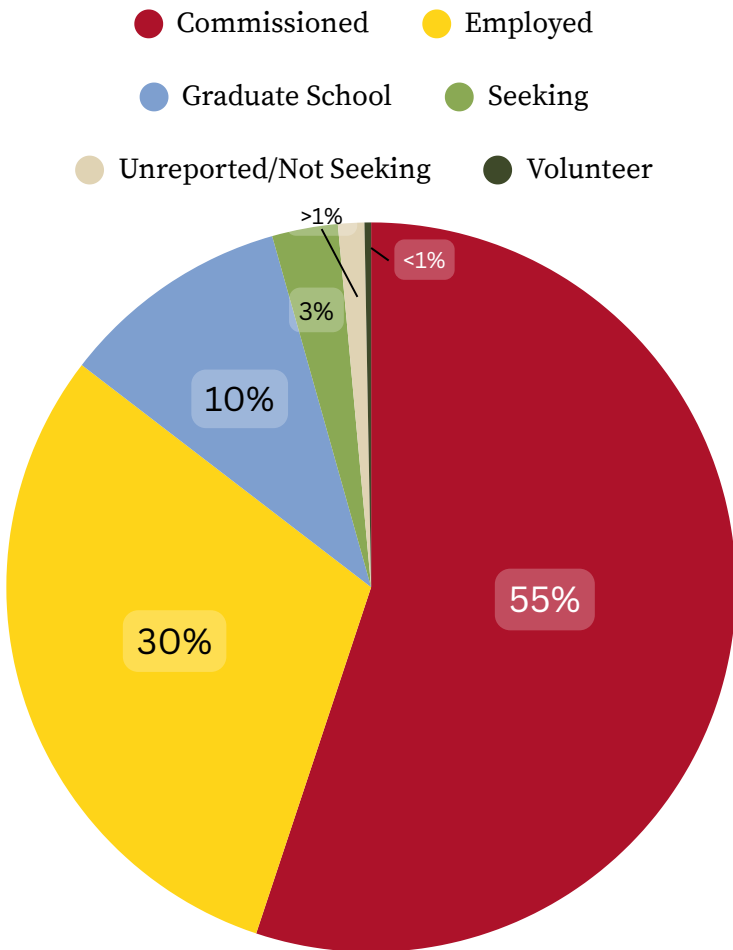
**87 non-commissioning
1/C & 2/C cadets
participated in employer
site visits for career
exploration**

PARTICIPATING EMPLOYERS

- Allan Myers
- CBG Building Company
- FBI - Richmond, VA
- InBio
- Kongsberg (Johnstown, PA)
- McKee Foods
- RK&K
- RS&H
- U.S. Secret Service
- Virginia Asset Manager LLC



2024-25 FIRST DESTINATION



ABOUT THIS REPORT

First Destination Surveys cover the previous academic year's graduates. This report covers graduates from September 2024 through May 2025. Data is based on information collected as of October 31, 2025.

HIGHLIGHTED EMPLOYERS

- Amazon
- CACI
- Defense Intelligence Agency
- Dominion Energy
- Embassy of Spain - Education Office
- Kimley-Horn
- General Dynamics
- National Security Agency
- S&P Global
- Estes Express Lines
- Lockheed Martin
- Virginia State Police

HIGHLIGHTED GRADUATE SCHOOLS

- SUNY Stony Brook University
- Georgetown University
- Texas A&M
- Regent School of Law
- University of Salamanca - Spain
- University of Tampa
- Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine
- University of Virginia
- University of Wyoming
- University of Tennessee - Chattanooga
- Virginia Tech
- William & Mary - Law

PROFESSIONAL CLOSET

NEW CADET RESOURCE OPENED APRIL 2025

28 cadets served since opening

Cadets have access to professional wear for use at career related events such as job interviews, conferences, and networking events. Each cadet has the option to keep an outfit as needed for internships or jobs. Tailoring and dry cleaning are supported by Auxillary Services.

“The career services professional closet was extremely beneficial to me. I came in on the day of a conference requiring business attire, and despite the time constraint the staff was very helpful in finding an outfit that fit and looked good.

I would wholeheartedly recommend the professional closet to cadets.”

- Cadet Srijon Bose '27



Photo from Cadet Marlang '26

The Professional Closet is made possible through generous donations from staff, faculty, parents, alumni, and the local community. Contact our office if you would like to donate any suits, blazers, shirts, slacks, dresses, or skirts to cadets in need of professional attire. Donations are accepted year-round! Call (540) 464-7560 or email careerservices@vmi.edu.

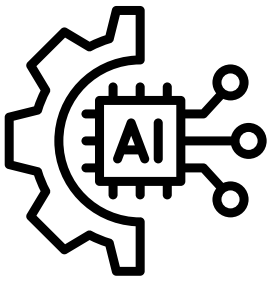
LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

TRACKING INTERNSHIP OUTCOMES

The Office of Career Services collected 696 unique responses to a survey of the Corps during the academic year (44%) about cadet internships experiences and perceptions. This data will be combined with data from the previous year to better understand when and where cadets are sourcing internships relative to their academic goals and career aspirations. This information will aid in reporting to the state on cadet participation in paid vs. unpaid internship participation.

27%

OF CADETS REPORTED PARTICIPATION IN A CIVILIAN INDUSTRY INTERNSHIP DURING THEIR CADETSHIP ON '25 - '26 SURVEY



ENHANCING CAREER GUIDANCE IN AN EVOLVING LABOR MARKET

The Office of Career Services has taken intentional steps to ensure our services reflect today's professional environment. We updated career resources by adding guidance specific to cadet-athletes, the responsible use of AI, and clarity on the capabilities and benefits of AI-enhanced tools such as Big Interview. The non-commissioning 2/C courses taught by OCS staff were refreshed to provide relevant practices, from ATS-focused modern resumes to multimodal digital networking. Additionally, industry experts were brought in to present on subjects like employee benefits, performance evaluations and personal budgeting, giving cadets practical advice for life after VMI.



New Challenges

- Growth in **skills-based hiring** + high demand for **interpersonal competencies**
- Increased use of AI for **recruiters** and **job seekers** alike
- Increase in **applications per job**

New Solutions

- Enhance cadet **access to internships** and other work-based learning
- Boost awareness of the **impact of AI** in recruitment and teach **AI literacy skills**
- Grow **interpersonal & networking skills**

CONTINUING TO DEVELOP IMPACTFUL PARTNERSHIPS

The OCS strategically partnered with key stakeholders on post and external partners during the 2025-2026 academic year. Collaboration with the **VMI Athletics** department yielded direct support for over **250 cadet athletes and recruits**. Employer partnerships were strengthened through **Spring Career Treks** and guest **recruiters and experts** invited to meet cadets **on post**. We are extremely grateful to faculty and leadership, alumni, community partners, and employer connections for their continuous support of the success of VMI cadets.