

Trends

No Data Available

Legend:

▲ Increase,
 ▼ Decrease,
 ↔ Steady

Key Performance Areas

No Data Available

Productivity

No Data Available

Legend:

▲ Improving,
 ▼ Worsening,
 ↔ Maintaining

For more information on administrative key, and productivity measures, go to www.vaperforms.virginia.gov/agencylevel/index.cfm

Background & History

The mission of the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center (SVHEC) is to advance Southern Virginia's economic potential through education, innovation, and collaboration. Located on the service area fringes of the closest community colleges and more than 75 minutes from the nearest state supported four-year institution, the SVHEC provides vital educational access and workforce training to an under-served rural population. By serving as an incubator, broker, and developer of innovative educational and applied research pathways, the SVHEC is focused on re-tooling Southern Virginia's rural workforce for jobs in the New Economy.

Since 1986 the SVHEC has provided access to affordable post-secondary education by forging unique alliances with a variety of academic and industry partners. Originally funded with Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) funds combined with local monies and private donations, the SVHEC began operations out of a 500 square foot mobile unit on the grounds of the local high school. Thanks to a long history of community-based support, the SVHEC has grown from serving a handful of students in its original location to serving an annual unduplicated headcount of more than 6,000 business and academic customers in 2012.

In 2005 the SVHEC became an independent state agency. Among the duties specified in Sections 23-231.24 and 23-231.25 of the Code of Virginia, the SVHEC is directed to: "Encourage the expansion of higher education, including adult and continuing education, associate, undergraduate, and graduate degree programs in the region, and foster partnerships between the public and private sectors to enhance higher education in the region."

Currently located in two repurposed tobacco warehouses donated by local benefactors and renovated with community bonds, private donations, historic tax credits, and state and federal grants, the SVHEC now provides 100,000 square feet of technically sophisticated educational space. Facilities include high-tech classrooms and labs featuring advanced machining and simulation technology focused on science, technology, engineering, math, and healthcare (STEM-H) areas. These facilities and equipment support education and training programs in nursing, advanced manufacturing including 3-D modeling, and digital art and communications.

Primary Product & Services

The Southern Virginia Higher Education Center (SVHEC) provides the following major services:

- For-credit programming that affords access to 125 degree programs through affiliations with 11 academic partners and the Center's partners in the Southside Higher Education Coalition;
- Programming and support for business and industry workforce training;
- Training and consulting services in applied research in advanced manufacturing for business and industry through the Research & Development Center for Advanced Manufacturing & Energy Efficiency (R&D CAMEE);
- Programming and support for non-credit programs and Prekindergarten-12th grade (PreK-12) science, technology, engineering, math, and healthcare (STEM-H) enrichment programs with emphasis on nursing through the Center of Nursing Excellence, and the STEM-focused Business of Art & Design program;
- Support services including administrative, technology, custodial services, conference space, and public information to students and member colleges and workforce groups; and
- Facility and support services to the business community for corporate meetings, training and teleconferences.

The SVHEC is equipped and staffed to support its current education partners and their programs, with capacity to add partners and programs. The agency is a leader in advanced manufacturing research and training, and has made significant investments in this area. The SVHEC-Innovation Center houses \$1.5 million in advanced manufacturing

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equipment and the R&D CAMEE has fostered strong partnerships with both Virginia Tech and the University of Virginia. These relationships have afforded the agency an opportunity to play a key role in on-going research in the area of energy-efficient housing and cross laminated timbers.

In the future, the SVHEC anticipates placing greater emphasis on non-credit workforce training leading to industry certifications, and increasing facility usage brought about by marketing the SVHEC's conference facilities. The SVHEC has also adjusted its business model to include partner cost-sharing to facilitate a more sustainable funding structure.

Customer Base

Over the past five years, the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center (SVHEC) has experienced significant growth in the number of students served. This year the SVHEC served an unduplicated student headcount of over 3,600 representing citizens across the Southern Virginia region. Due to an improving economy, rising tuition rates, and recent changes in federal financial aid a slight decrease is occurring in enrollments. Nonetheless, the SVHEC remains an educational stalwart for students who are unable or choose not to leave southern Virginia to pursue higher education. Evidence of this is Halifax County's number one position statewide in terms of participation rates in the Virginia Community College System through Danville Community College and Southside Virginia Community College, both operating at the SVHEC (note: participation rate is the ratio of county students enrolled to county population eligible for post-secondary enrollment).

For most of the agency's history, the majority of students at the SVHEC have been non-traditional adults returning to school for workforce training. Since 2000, there has been an increase in the number of traditional, 18-24 year olds coming to the SVHEC. While the SVHEC continues to serve traditional and non-traditional students, national education data suggests that the trend of younger students coming to the SVHEC will continue for the foreseeable future.

Since 2010, SVHEC Workforce Services Division has offered customized and industry-certified training opportunities, and demand for these programs has increased every year. In FY 2013 the division collaborated with the Virginia Manufacturers Association and GENEDGE Alliance to provide customized industry training to over 300 employees from one of Halifax County's largest manufacturers. In addition to customized training, the Workforce Services Division has identified an increasing need for training in the crafts trades, including welding, and is developing programming to provide this training for Halifax County and the region. As the SVHEC focuses increasing efforts on providing workforce training, as well as training and consulting services in advanced manufacturing applied research, the number of businesses and industries served is expected to increase.

Customer Listing

No Data Available

Key Agency Statistics

The statistics below show the magnitude of Southern Virginia Higher Education Center (SVHEC) operations and investments supporting education and workforce training activities during FY 2013.

Finances

The Southern Virginia Higher Education Center's (SVHEC) financial resources come from both general fund support and special funds. Roughly 50 percent comes from the Appropriation Act to fund operations for the SVHEC Facilities and personnel to provide services to educational partners and their students. The general fund dollars are also provided to allow the SVHEC to enhance workforce services to local and regional employers. The special funds are made up of donations provided, fees paid by partners and tenants, and grants awarded. Most of the grants are for specific short-term projects and the funding is not renewable nor is it intended for ongoing operating costs. The dedicated special funds represent grant funds awarded from the Commonwealth's agency "Center for Innovative Technology" program, a special appropriation from the Commonwealth Research Commercialization Fund.

Fund Sources

No Data Available

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Revenue Summary Statement

The Southern Virginia Higher Education Center (SVHEC) relies on the revenues obtained through grants from both state and federal agencies, as well as private foundations. This mix of grants represents about 60 percent of the agency's special fund revenues. The remaining revenues are earned through services provided to others such as training for industry workforce, facility usage fee, and partner membership fees. The surrounding localities also provide annual support to the SVHEC.

Key Risk Factors

FUNDING

The Southern Virginia Higher Education has improved its position in terms of operating funds in the past year through the establishment of cost-share agreements with its partners, funding support from the localities of Halifax County and South Boston, and through increased state appropriations. However, over half of the Center's staff are compensated through grants and other funding that will expire and is non-renewable. This puts the Center in a position of vulnerability in terms of losing key personnel and critical services over time.

BUSINESS MODEL

As a non-degree granting institution, the agency receives no funding from student tuition or the Commonwealth's higher education funding model for Full Time Equivalent (FTE) students. These funds go directly to the SVHEC's partners. Through good fiscal stewardship and pursuit of external, non-state funding, the Center has been able to weather economic downturn of the past 5 years. The Center has implemented a stronger business model in the past year with the establishment of partner cost-share agreements, and continues to be successful in obtaining a number of grants and contracts. As a now "proven model" for delivery of higher education in a rural area, there is every indication that demand for service will increase. Potential threats to financial stability under the new business model are those factors which are largely out of the control of the Center leadership and staff, such as increases in lease and utilities costs. The most significant potential threats to the ability of the Center to meet its mission is the loss of key personnel who are compensated under grant funding; increased general funds appropriations for key personnel would alleviate this threat.

ACADEMIC PARTNERS

A less obvious, but critical barrier to long-term sustainability is the reluctance of the Commonwealth's institutions of higher learning to offer four-year degree courses and programs off campus to the underserved and poorer regions of the state, except through distance learning.

Performance Highlights

Since the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center (SVHEC) is not a degree-granting institution, graduation rates are not an appropriate measure of institutional performance. SVHEC key performance measures are instead based on the work done by the SVHEC to support the Governor's goals of producing 100,000 more bachelor's degrees and to increase the number of science, technology, engineering, math, and healthcare (STEM-H) graduates in the Commonwealth. A third performance measure, number of professional development opportunities offered to agency staff members, enables the SVHEC to continuously improve quality of services and operations.

Performance Measures

Management Discussion & Analysis

General Information about the Ongoing Status of the Agency

The Southern Virginia Higher Education Center (SVHEC) is focused on re-tooling Southern Virginia's workforce for jobs in the

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knowledge and creative economies by providing affordable access to workforce training programs and by implementing new degree programs focused in STEM-H areas. The SVHEC has been successful in providing customized workforce training to regional business and industry. One example of this success is the on-going, multi-year training program for employees of one of Halifax County's largest manufacturers. The SVHEC manages this project, and oversaw the development of the customized training. Without this training, the Commonwealth and Southern Virginia could have lost a valuable employer.

A new collaboration with Virginia Technical Institute will bring a welding training program to Halifax County and broaden the agency's workforce training reach. Furthermore, a new industry partnership with Siemens shows the value industry sees in the agency's initiatives, and will strengthen the SVHEC's impact on advanced manufacturing research and training.

The SVHEC is also working to support the Governor's initiative to have 100,000 new degree completers. The SVHEC is committed to increasing enrollment in and completion of two- and four-year degree programs, as well as workforce training programs leading to industry-certifications. To this end, the SVHEC is a partner in the Finish Line Initiative targeting individuals in Southern Virginia who are 12 credits or less away from completing a two-year degree. The SVHEC has also taken an active role in developing and strengthening educational programming in areas of study identified as relevant and needed in the knowledge-based economy.

To address the funding and business model risk factors, SVHEC management, with the approval of the Board of Trustees, is implementing a new partner affiliation fee to have partners more equitably share in operational expenses. This solution is based upon the recommendations from the Department of Planning and Budget's Best Practices Management Study and is an on-going process.

Information Technology

The Southern Virginia Higher Education Center's (SVHEC) network operation center (NOC) utilizes a virtualized server environment supporting local and cloud services, campus wide wireless local area network (LAN) with centralized wireless controller, single authentication network, and a virtualized desktop environment [also wide area network (WAN) accessible] supporting over 168 student computers in 7 computer classrooms. Additionally, the SVHEC's Innovation Center has two 25+ Mac-based Digital Arts/Computer Aided Drawing (CAD) labs and a 16 Mac mobile lab for onsite/offsite deployments. The SVHEC's campus includes 32 classrooms, including an 80+ seat tiered classroom equipped with dual High Definition (HD) projection systems, all equipped with digital audio-visual presentation technology. Through inter-agency collaboration, the SVHEC participates in supporting the Southern Virginia Education Network (SVEN) which consists of a private fiber optic regional network connecting the academic partners and a 100 megabyte shared Internet gateway. Utilizing the SVENetwork and its Internet gateway allows for multiple distance education classes utilizing HD video conference systems. In addition, the SVHEC provides IT support to the Virginia Advanced Study Strategies, Inc., an Advanced Placement initiative for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Workforce Development

The Southern Virginia Higher Education Center (SVHEC) responded to budget revisions in recent years with strategic efforts to streamline operations for maximum efficiency. Positions deemed not to be mission critical have been eliminated or re-assigned. Part of the operational streamlining process has been to automate some procedures and functions or placing them online to allow them to be user directed, eliminating the user's dependence on SVHEC staff. These efforts succeeded such that operational efficiency and effectiveness increased at the same time that functional demand on staff, mostly though enrollment increases, was also increasing. The changes required staff members to receive specialized training and professional development. The SVHEC has provided a number of resources, including consultants as well as in-house training, to ensure staff received the training they needed. Professional development is part of the institutional culture of the SVHEC and is promoted among staff for continuous quality improvement.

Current SVHEC staffing is not "at risk" of attrition due to retirement, and to date recruitment to fill vacant positions has not been an issue.

Physical Plant

The Southern Virginia Higher Education Center (SVHEC) is housed in two facilities totaling 100,000 square feet. These buildings are former tobacco processing facilities that were renovated using historical tax credits and grant funds (including grants from the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification & Community Revitalization Commission). The SVHEC does not own these buildings, but rather rents them from the Halifax Educational Foundation. Rent is paid from the SVHEC's general fund appropriation. With its current facilities the SVHEC is able to meet the needs of its partners' for classroom and office space. Currently, there are no requests to the Commonwealth for capital funds.