

THE WORLD-CLASS UNIVERSITY IN YOUR BACKYARD



Nearly 50 years ago, the effort to establish George Mason as an independent institution began with a plan to create a "regional university for Northern Virginia."

For what was then a branch campus of the University of Virginia, the aspiration to "regional university" status was an ambitious, even audacious, goal. Yet a half-century later here we are—the largest public research university in Virginia, one of the nation's top 150 national universities according to U.S. News & World Report, and one of only 115 universities in the highest research tier in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

As we have grown, so too has our community. What was once a sleepy suburb of the nation's capital is now an economic powerhouse. Mason

deserves a great deal of the credit for that transformation. Our graduates have become the core of Northern Virginia's economy and provide key talent in every industry from aerospace to cybersecurity to biomedical to government consulting and a host of others.

As we approach our 50th anniversary, we find ourselves at a strategic inflection point. The vibrant and globally connected economic region we helped build demands that we continue to up our game as a national research university. Yet our resources—from state appropriations, to research facilities, to endowment size—resemble those of the more modest "great regional university" our founders envisioned.

Going back of course would be foolish. Our community and the Commonwealth of Virginia desperately need a world-class research university in Northern Virginia. Without it, we wouldn't be able to attract and retain international businesses, create new start-ups to diversify our economy, or offer the rich intellectual environment necessary to foster and sustain top talent. Without it, Virginia also would jeopardize its most powerful economic engine and its deepest source of revenue.

So how do we secure the resources necessary to remain a modern, global research university?

This year we introduced a new budget model that gives our academic units greater autonomy and incentive to build and grow new programs while maximizing resource efficiency. We also have spent the last four years bolstering our financial reserves, providing the university with greater security and stability to weather uncertain times.

We have forged new partnerships, such as our agreements with INTO to recruit international students, and with Wiley Education Services to enhance our online course technologies and capabilities. Both programs will make earning a Mason degree a greater possibility and generate much-needed additional revenue.

We also are coming off our fourth consecutive record-setting year for fundraising, and we are running ahead of schedule on our goal to raise \$500 million in our Faster Farther campaign.

Combined, these initiatives drive the university in a positive direction. But there is much more to do. To truly serve this community and provide the full value of a world-class university, we need to re-double our commitment on the original decision to establish an independent university in Northern Virginia.

Now is the time to invest in Mason. As friends, alumni, and supporters of this university, we seek your partnership and support in writing the next chapter of our history. In the meantime, spread the word—we have arrived!

Ángel Cabrera
President



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