

Provost's Report
October 16, 2026

Board of Trustees
Educational Policy and Institutional Resources Committee

Prepared by
Interim Provost and Senior Vice President Linda S. Schadler

President Tromp's State of the University Address set the tone for the academic year. Her acknowledgement of the very real challenges we face was tempered with optimism and resolve, celebrating our many accomplishments, and expressing confidence in our ability to come together, solve problems, and build a better university. I share in her confidence. The challenges ahead are real, and frankly, reflect a magnitude and convergence the likes of which we've never before experienced. But our assets are many: we are a community that is values-driven, smart, strong, creative, innovative, and determined, and I know our faculty and staff are committed to finding solutions, piloting ideas, and crafting impactful university-wide strategies that lead to real change. This report will provide you with information and updates on many of the activities underway that do just that.

CAMPUS COMMUNITY

Welcome, Class of 2030!

I'm pleased to introduce the class of 2030 to you:

- We received over 25,000 applications for Fall 2026, reflecting the fifth highest number of applications in university history
- Over 50% of the valedictorians within Vermont are enrolling at UVM
- 27% of Vermonters are first generation and 34% of Vermonters are Pell eligible
- Over 52% of our first-time first-year (FTFY) students hail from outside of New England; this is critically important as we broaden our reach in response to demographic shifts which will be especially challenging in New England
- 48 states and 38 countries are represented
- 16% of new FTFY students identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC); this is the second most diverse class in university history
- 13% are first-generation, and will be the first in their families to receive a bachelor's degree

Welcome, New Academic Leaders!

As noted in my May report, on July 1, we were delighted to welcome the following new members of our academic leadership team:

[Dr. Vikas Anand](#) is our new Dean of the Grossman School of Business. A highly accomplished academic leader and scholar with extensive experience in business school administration, strategic program development, accreditation, and global engagement. Vikas most recently served as Associate Dean for Academic Programs at the Poole College of Management at North Carolina State University.

[Dr. Dain LaRoche](#) is our new Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. He was most recently the Associate Dean for Research in the College of Health and Human Services and Professor of Exercise Science at the University of New Hampshire, Durham. Dain oversaw the college's \$30 million annual research portfolio from sponsors such as NIH, NSF, CDC, HRSA, USDA, and PCORI, and co-developed the college's first interdisciplinary PhD program.

Two searches that were underway at the time of my last report have concluded and I'm happy to announce that:

[Dr. Chris Berger](#) has been appointed Dean of the Graduate College. Chris is a faculty member in the Larner College of Medicine, and a highly collaborative leader with extensive experience in graduate education administration. Chris most recently served as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Innovation in the Graduate College with leadership responsibility for graduate academic affairs, interdisciplinary programs, and initiatives that promote student success and institutional advancement.

[Aaron Nichols](#) has been appointed Interim Dean of Libraries. He has most recently served as UVM Libraries' Director of Access, Technology, and Multimedia Services, and a Library Associate Professor. Aaron has more than 20 years of experience as an academic librarian and 18 years as a supervisor and leader. He understands the evolving landscape of academic libraries and the importance of responding to the needs of students, researchers, community members, and institutional partners. Aaron held the position of Acting Dean of UVM Libraries in 2025.

Additionally, [Larry Granillo](#) has been appointed Interim Executive Director of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA). Larry is the Associate Director of OIRA and is a thoughtful and collaborative colleague who is deeply committed to student success. He has played central roles in the design and development of Catamount Data (now [Catamount Factbook](#)), promoting a culture of data-informed decision-making at UVM, and building a system of data governance. His strong technical and analytical skills and his

deep understanding of higher education and UVM will enable him to play an important leadership role in developing the metrics for the university's new strategic plan.

In August, Bettyjo Bouchey accepted a position at the University of Arizona. We wish her well, and we're delighted to welcome Mark Wheeler to the role of Interim Chief Professional and Continuing Education (PACE) Officer. Mark was recently the Dean of Extended Studies at Boise State University and will work closely with the PACE team and our academic leaders to continue to increase access to the university and expand the offerings across the state and beyond.

Strategic Alignment Plans

Since last spring, our colleges, schools, and divisions have been actively engaged in the development of Strategic Alignment Plans to support the university's new strategic plan, [Green, Gold, and Bold](#). Key questions we asked ourselves as we developed the plans were whether they are bold enough to create meaningful change, and whether we are taking advantage of opportunities to build a stronger, more resilient and nimble university. I also developed a set of campus-wide academic success initiatives in support of the university's strategic plan. At the end of September, all of these plans were submitted for review by the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee, which will share comments with the unit leaders in November. The plans will be revised and finalized by the end of the fall semester.

TEACHING, LEARNING, AND STUDENT SUCCESS

Focus on Retention and Progression

We have recently charged a standing Retention and Progression Leadership Committee, led by Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Student Success J. Dickinson and Vice President for Enrollment Management Jay Jacobs, to build the strategies and identify the tactics that will lead to improved retention and graduation rates. Our goals are to achieve retention rates consistent with or better than the best flagship Land Grant universities, and to achieve 4-year graduation rates consistent with or better than the best flagship Land Grant universities. Achieving these goals will require broad coordination across the university; the group's membership is broad and includes all key constituents. The group will also draw on expertise across the university as it implements both long-term strategies and annual projects/pilots that address urgent needs or emerging ideas.

Catamount CareerX

Pillar one of our new strategic plan, [Green, Gold, and Bold](#), calls on us to expand opportunities for experiential learning by, "engaging every student in rich, hands-on learning occurring through opportunities such as internships, community-engaged

learning, research, clinical practice, independent projects, co-op experiences, and international study that help them develop skills, build networks, and forge a meaningful career path...” The university has a number of strong experiential learning programs, but we can do more to increase visibility, accessibility, and participation. The goal is for every student to participate in at least one of these critically important experiences that position them for career success. Some universities even require them. To achieve this we need better organizational, administrative, and curricular structures. In August, I charged a Catamount CareerX Working Group, co-chaired by Bill Falls, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and Sarah Heath, Director of the Career Center, to (1) map the current ecosystem of internship, community of engagement, undergraduate research, and co-op programs opportunities across the university, (2) recommend either specific structural changes or opportunities for collaboration and integration among these programs to increase visibility and coherence from a prospective and enrolled student perspective, (3) determine a scalable mechanism to track participation, (4) identify and recommend specific ways colleges and schools can eliminate curricular and administrative barriers to student participation, and (5) identify specific opportunities to embed these experiences into the curriculum. We’re looking forward to the group’s preliminary report in December and final report in March 2027, with the goal of implementing recommendations for Fall 2028.

Ask UVM

[Ask UVM](#), our “one-stop shop” for students to get connected—promoting academic success, involvement, health, and career readiness—is open for business in the Davis Center (on the 3rd floor, across from the Bookstore). Staffed by two professionals and a team of highly trained students (“CAT Guides”), Ask UVM will play an important role in supporting our retention efforts. At Ask UVM, students receive on-the-spot answers to simple questions, and referrals to the appropriate office/resource for more complex issues. Those referrals are logged/opened in Navigate360, our student success platform, and are monitored by the Ask UVM team. The current rate of resolving these referrals is two days. The team is also tracking data about visit reasons to help us understand where we can be providing students with better information and support. Moving forward, the Ask UVM team will venture out into dining halls and residence halls to engage with students, answer questions, and make them aware of all of the UVM resources available to both support and challenge them. Assessment and a continuous improvement mindset are central to Ask UVM, and a quarterly review process is in place.

Study Cats

In Fall 2025, UVM launched a university-wide expansion of the [Study CATS](#) program for students with a low first-year GPA whose retention rates are typically below 80%. Study CATS, which supports students through enrollment in an academic support course, originated in the College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences. With a \$320,000

institutional implementation grant from the Davis Educational Foundation, UVM was able to pilot the program university-wide, with over 200 students taking the Study CATS academic support class during AY 25-26. The course promotes academic skill-building, and attention to students' well-being, while also connecting them to the wide range of supports available at UVM. The initial data point to strong outcomes:

- Overall, 172 students who took the class returned to UVM this fall. Of those, 127 were rising sophomores, equaling a first to second year retention rate of 84.7 percent, almost 5 percentage points higher than our usual retention rate for students in this GPA range.
- 72% of students who enrolled in Study CATS had an increase in their cumulative GPA during the semester they took the Study CATS course.
- Students who completed the course in Fall 2025 saw a .31 point increase in their cumulative GPA; in Spring 2026 that rose to a .42 point increase; for students with the lowest GPAs (below 1.0), this increase was 1.2 points.

During the second and final year of the grant, the Study CATS team is expanding offerings to include sections for first-time first-year students and returning students and students who are seeking an academic skills course for semester-long support in reaching their goals. Through this program, we are gaining a more nuanced understanding of how to support all UVM students in completing their degree, and how to build a stronger outreach network for student success.

AI Fellows and Preparing Students for an AI-Enabled Future

[The AI Fellows program](#) announced last December is off and running. We have 47 fellows who are developing or updating a significant component of an existing undergraduate upper-level course (or modules that can be used in multiple courses) that will be available to students this year. The goal is for all students to have an intentional and thoughtful engagement with artificial intelligence (AI) relevant to their field.

We have also established academic year 2026-27 goals for the AI Academic Committee of the [UVM AI Team](#). They include:

1. Assess and update as appropriate the AI literacy modules developed for faculty and students last year.
2. Work with faculty to identify and develop other topics for deep workshops / conversation over the academic year. Some ideas: What should students learn in an age where AI can generate content? (Curriculum), How do we use, question, and/or resist AI in ways that preserve trust, integrity, and human judgment? (Governance and Ethics) How does the use of AI affect Cognitive functions such as critical thinking, creativity, attention and problem solving? How do we evolve curriculum, pedagogy, and learning experiences to ensure UVM graduates lead and

thrive in a world increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence? (Teaching and Learning) What new competencies should students develop, how do we assess them and where should AI awareness, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and human-centered leadership fit within the educational experience? (Teaching and Learning)

3. Based on consultation with and feedback from faculty, develop principles for faculty who are considering the use of AI in grading and assessment in partnership with the Faculty Senate. This should include consideration of: transparency, privacy, human oversight, and preservation of faculty judgment
4. Collaborate with Enterprise Technology Services (ETS)/AI Team Workforce Committee and the Center for Teaching and Learning on the design and implementation of faculty-professional development opportunities in these areas:
 - Modern Work – Develop a faculty-focused track of the Modern Work initiative focused on digital productivity, Microsoft 365, Copilot, and automation tools.
 - Brightspace and Navigate – Develop opportunities for faculty to learn how/where AI interfaces with Brightspace and Navigate, and what AI tools exist within these systems (that may be for use by students or faculty).
 - An AI Fellows symposium in which the AI fellows share with the community the work they have been doing.

Online Undergraduate Programs

Pillar three of our new strategic plan, [Green, Gold, and Bold](#), calls on us to broaden access to the University of Vermont by, “opening new doors and building pathways for learners of all backgrounds and cultures with flexible curricula and modalities, including robust online options.” Increased online offerings support a number of important aims. Chief among them is enhancing access and keeping pace with innovative pedagogy and trends, as well as supporting student enrollment, diversifying revenue streams, and strengthening the university’s financial sustainability. Last May, I charged the Associate Deans for Undergraduate Education/Academic Affairs with developing online versions of existing undergraduate majors ready for launch in Fall 2027. We’re moving forward with online majors in Special Education (College of Education and Social Services [CESS]), Public Health Sciences (College of Nursing and Health Sciences [CNHS]), and Sustainability Leadership and Practices (Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources [RSEN]). The latter is a new major that has been in development for some time and will be ready for Fall 2027. A new major in Data and Society (College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences [CEMS]) will be ready for Fall 2028, and a credential in Food and Agribusiness (College of Agriculture and Life Sciences [CALS]) is also in development. The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) will be providing the Catamount Core Curriculum (general education) courses essential to all of these majors.

Online graduate programming will also expand beyond our existing online programs to provide busy working professionals throughout New England and beyond with access to

UVM master's degrees and graduate certificates. Processes have been initiated for the launch of the following online programs: a Master of Public Administration (CALs), a Master of Science in Ecological Economics (RSENr), and a Master of Science in Conservation Biology (RSENr). More online programs, including the SI-MBA (Grossman School of Business [GSB]), the Master of Healthcare Services Administration (Larner College of Medicine [LCOM]), and Master of Agroecology (CALs), are also being discussed for Fall 2027 launches. To support the increased number of students who will be pursuing degrees online, student services are being expanded as well.

The Division of Enrollment Management will be adding several positions in a new Department of Online Enrollment which will help market online programs, recruit students, and provide assistance navigating enrollment and financial aid processes. Work is being done in other key student support areas to ensure online students have access to resources and are positioned for success.

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

The University of Vermont's research enterprise continues to grow in key areas that benefit people and the planet. With \$222.6 million in total extramural support for research in FY26, an increase of \$15 million over last year, and 24 awards valued at \$1 million or more, UVM continues to expand both the scale and reach of its scholarship. While current research support falls short of the FY24 record, UVM shows continued strength in the research enterprise despite an evolving and turbulent federal landscape. That momentum is especially visible in health and life sciences. UVM-led research is uncovering how genetic adaptations may help bats resist disease, cancer, and age-related decline, while another team has identified the first known transmissible cancer in a freshwater fish, a discovery with implications for wildlife health, environmental monitoring, and cancer biology. New research support from non-federal sources includes grants from the Gates Foundation, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Schmidt Family Foundation, American Cancer Society, Nature Conservancy, and the Burroughs Wellcome Fund.

UVM is also strengthening research at the intersection of environmental resilience, engineering, and public benefit. Researchers are tracking the spread of beech leaf disease in Vermont forests and testing new methods to detect and manage the pathogen, contributing knowledge that could help protect forest ecosystems and the wildlife that depend on them. In engineering, [Jihong Ma's National Science Foundation CAREER Award](#) supports quantum-inspired approaches to vibration control that could improve the safety and resilience of buildings, bridges, aircraft, and microelectronics. Her recognition, together with 21 UVM proposals submitted to the National Science Foundation (NSF) CAREER program that will support early career researchers across UVM, reflects a growing culture of ambitious, interdisciplinary research focused on translating discovery into practical solutions.

Two outstanding and very recent examples of our ability to translate discovery into solutions that Vice President Kirk Dombrowski will tell you more about at the Board meeting include a \$19 million, five-year National Science Foundation project to design the [National Connectomics and Ultrastructure Volume Observatory](#). Led by neuroscientist Davi Bock, the initiative will combine high-throughput electron microscopy, artificial intelligence and advanced computing to create detailed three-dimensional maps of cells, tissues and neural connections. Working with University of California, San Diego and the San Diego Supercomputer Center, UVM aims to make imaging capabilities currently limited to specialized laboratories available to researchers nationwide. Four pilot projects will examine learning-related changes in mouse brains, retinal circuitry across species, how *Toxoplasma gondii* crosses the blood-brain barrier and the internal structures of single-celled organisms. The project will also develop educational materials and produce a tested design and implementation plan for a future national observatory.

Additionally, Gary An, M.D., a trauma surgeon and researcher at the University of Vermont Robert Larner, M.D. College of Medicine, has received an ARPA-H contract worth up to \$38.9 million to develop AI-powered digital twins for critically ill patients. The five-year [ReSCUED project](#) will use frequent blood testing and physiological monitoring to create personalized computational models of patients' immune responses. Clinicians could use these models to simulate treatments with existing medications and identify the right intervention at the right time. The multi-institutional initiative includes three clinical sites and private-sector technology partners. Researchers aim to reduce intensive care unit stays by at least 25 percent while improving treatment selection and patient outcomes. If successful, the platform could transform care for sepsis, severe trauma, burns, and other conditions involving complex immune dysfunction.

I look forward to seeing you at our meeting.

UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
FY2026 Research Activities

Annual Report to the Board of Trustees

October 16, 2026

Prepared by

Kirk Dombrowski, Vice President for Research and Economic Development

Executive Summary

The last two years have been a stress-test of sorts for research-intensive institutions of higher education, as federal delays, uncertainties, and shifts in priorities create an uncertain terrain for the entire research enterprise. Against that backdrop, fiscal year 2026 has demonstrated the resilience and flexibility of both UVM researchers and the support systems that enable their work. The strongest forward indicator is the proposal pipeline. Sponsored-project application activity reached a three-year high: 1,218 applications requested \$933.8 million, up 18.5% in count and 11.7% in requested dollars over FY25. Applications to private foundations, typically only a small part of UVM's portfolio, increased 36% year-over-year. Extramural funding totaled \$188.1 million across 622 awards; although award count declined 14.8% from FY25, our continued success at securing large, center-level awards serving research, infrastructure, training, and engagement at UVM and across the state and region enabled UVM to achieve a slight increase in its overall extramural funding in a difficult and uneven funding environment.

To better support researchers through this uncertainty, the OVPR's research development, administration, and protections offices have continued to develop and implement process improvements amid rising transaction volumes. Through a combination of external funding and UVM investments, we are also broadening the university's research capacity to support a wider range of basic, applied and translational research outcomes, including AI-enabled advanced computing, innovation and commercialization, long-term agricultural research facilities, and advanced semiconductor technologies, among others. These resources should position UVM as an attractive destination for star researchers and excellent students, and promote greater partnership with businesses, employers, and government agencies.

Board-level takeaways

- Total awarded dollars increased 0.7%, holding steady despite continued disruptions at federal funding agencies.
- Proposal demand is expanding faster than award count, creating both opportunity and pressure on faculty support and research administration.
- UVM is emerging as a regional leader in institution-scale infrastructure in advanced computing and AI, with new secure environments for sensitive medical, proprietary and controlled unclassified data.
- Engagement programs are translating research capacity into statewide partnerships, student experiences, business support, workforce development, and community problem-solving.
- The research enterprise increasingly operates as an integrated system rather than a collection of separate offices.

1. Sponsored Projects: FY26 Institutional Overview

The table below shows the three-year trend in sponsored projects activity:

Measure	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY26 vs. FY25
Applications submitted	1,061	1,028	1,218	+18.5%
Requested dollars	\$816.1M	\$836.0M	\$933.8M	+11.7%
Awards received	668	730	622	-14.8%
Awarded dollars	\$224.8M	\$186.8M	\$188.1M	+0.7%

Highlight: Applications reached a new high

UVM submitted 1,218 applications requesting \$933.8 million in FY26. Both are record levels of activity for UVM and represent a strong response at the individual and organizational level to the risks posed by federal funding uncertainties. Compared with FY25, the university submitted 190 more applications and requested nearly \$97.9 million more in total award dollars. Notably, 491 investigators submitted proposals in FY26, nearly 10% more than in FY25. The average dollar amount requested was approximately \$766,700 per application, compared with about \$813,200 in FY25. Though interpretation of year-to-year trends is difficult, the combination of higher volume and a lower average request suggests a broad-based growth in proposal activity at UVM, including new early-stage investigators, as well as outreach to a number of previously under addressed sources. Private foundations, in particular, attracted a growing share of grant proposals, rising from 22% to 26% of total applications. Importantly, this trend came alongside a 29% increase in UVM's pursuit of >\$5 million funding opportunities.

Outcome: Award dollars held steady despite fewer transactions

UVM received 622 awards totaling \$188.1 million. The number of awards fell by 108 from FY25, while overall funding increased by approximately \$1.3 million. The average support per award rose to approximately \$302,400 from \$255,900 in FY25. This trend reflects greater reliance on large awards and programmatic funding sources, which mask a significant decline in individual awards. While this is a sign of resilience, it represents challenges to individual faculty seeking to advance their own research trajectory.

Warning: Administrative workload remains substantial

SPA completed 882 award modifications in FY26, in addition to award setups and closeouts. High levels of federal agency friction, including constant and complex changes in award terms and conditions have impacted a labor force that is smaller in 2026 than it was in 2025 or 2024. These transactions involve continuing challenges to the administrative work required to adjust budgets, extend timelines, revise award terms, and maintain active sponsored projects. SPA's FY26 application, award, and modification volumes further underscore the evolution of UVM's research infrastructure, with changes in leadership across several units. Attention to both human capital and the systems that allow it to be successful are part of an ongoing management upgrade effort in the OVPR.

2. Applications and Awards by College and Unit

FY26 activity was concentrated in a small number of major academic and research units, but the pattern differs between applications and awards. Larner College of Medicine was the largest

contributor to both. CALS also showed substantial application growth, while several units experienced lower award counts and dollars than in FY25. The OVPR's share of UVM's award dollars increased substantially due to continued consolidation of the university-wide research institutes, centers and research networks under the OVPR, and an increasing emphasis on large-scale funding opportunities.

College / unit	FY26 applications	Requested	FY26 awards	Awarded
CALS	282	\$137.4M	113	\$28.7M
CAS	69	\$24.4M	23	\$3.1M
CEMS	151	\$68.7M	54	\$10.8M
CESS	28	\$17.4M	10	\$5.8M
CNHS	42	\$21.4M	8	\$2.4M
LCOM	495	\$565.4M	323	\$94.4M
Other	14	\$4.8M	9	\$3.0M
OVPR	33	\$75.5M	19	\$26.1M
RSENr	104	\$18.8M	63	\$13.8M
Total	1,218	\$933.8M	622	\$188.1M

Where application growth occurred

- CALS increased from 199 to 282 applications, while requested dollars decreased from \$166.1 million to \$137.4 million.
- LCOM increased from 443 to 495 applications and from \$495.1 million to \$565.4 million requested.
- CEMS increased from 125 to 151 applications and from \$46.6 million to \$68.7 million requested.
- OVPR increased from 28 to 33 applications and from \$23.9 million to \$75.5 million requested.
- RSENr increased from 88 to 104 applications, while requested dollars declined from \$31.4 million to \$18.8 million.

Award distribution

LCOM received \$94.4 million, approximately half of UVM's reported FY26 award dollars. CALS received \$28.7 million, OVPR \$26.1 million, RSENr \$13.8 million, and CEMS \$10.8 million. OVPR was the most prominent year-over-year increase in the summary data, rising from eight awards totaling \$6.3 million in FY25 to 19 awards totaling \$26.1 million in FY26. Some of this increase can be attributed to the movement of two large programs out of college oversight and into OVPR oversight. Other factors include a renewed emphasis on the congressional appropriations process. . CALS award dollars also increased from \$23.8 million to \$28.7 million, although its award count fell from 143 to 113. Several units recorded decreases. LCOM award dollars declined from \$99.9 million to \$94.4 million, CEMS from \$17.3 million to \$10.8 million, and CAS from \$8.5 million to \$3.1 million.

3. Large Awards and Strategic Research Investments

Strategic highlights of larger awards and programs include:

Highlight	Documented amount	Strategic significance
Vermont Biomedical Research Network (VBRN) INBRE 5 renewal	\$4.07M per year for five years	Sustains statewide biomedical research, student training, and participating undergraduate institutions.
Snow STORE regional initiative	\$3.3M	Builds snow monitoring infrastructure and research partnerships across northern New England.
IceCore next-generation computing cluster	\$2.1M NSF award	Expands UVM high-performance computing and AI capacity with GPUs, CPU cores, and high-speed networking.

Statewide biomedical research capacity

In addition to core facility support on UVM's campus, the NIH-funded Vermont Biomedical Research Network (VBRN) supports research, equipment, and training at participating undergraduate institutions throughout Vermont. This year the network added Landmark College and the Community College of Vermont and now reports coverage of institutions educating 85% of Vermont undergraduates.

Water and climate research

The Water Resources Institute has attracted \$16 million in CIROH-funded research since its inception, and in 2026 announced "Snow STORE," a \$5.9 million award from NSF to a regional collaborative network led by UVM, which received \$3.3 million of the total award. The project aims to improve mountain snowpack observations and build regional monitoring infrastructure, advancing snow research and the outdoor economy.

Computing and AI infrastructure

The Vermont Advanced Computing Center launched the IceCore cluster, supported by a \$2.1 million NSF award and \$2.6 million in internal funding. The new system includes 152 GPUs, 8,128 CPU cores, and 400-Gbps networking, with reported processing speeds up to 100 times faster than earlier UVM systems. At time of reporting, it is the 3rd fastest supercomputer in New England.

4. Research Development and Support for Major Faculty Projects

Research Development reported its highest activity since its inception in FY21. In FY26 the office responded to 489 requests involving 282 distinct lead investigators. This represents a 25.7% increase in requests from FY25 and a 74.0% increase from FY23. The number of lead investigators served increased 11.5% from FY25 and 47.6% from FY23.

Research Development measure	FY26	Change from FY25
Total intake requests	489	+25.7%
Distinct lead investigators	282	+11.5%

Early-career requests	208	+23.1%
Grant writing / editing	262	+7.4%
Strategic consultations	111	+91.4%
Funding-search consultations	62	+14.8%
Large / complex requests	28	+47.4%
Federal-related requests	206	+20.5%

A broader and more strategic service model

More than 40% of FY26 activity supported early-career investigators. Early-career requests reached 208, more than three times the FY23 level. Strategic consultations nearly doubled from FY25, and large or complex proposal requests rose to 28. These trends indicate that faculty demand is broadening beyond editing toward project design, team formation, sponsor strategy, and institution-scale proposal development.

RD-supported proposals represented approximately \$268 million in requested funding. This portfolio included 33 proposals requesting at least \$1 million and 10 requesting at least \$5 million.

Institute-based support for team science

In addition to the proposal development support described above, UVM's research institutes and centers offered internal funding resources directly to support a wide range of research activities, from integrative health to food systems to the humanities. To highlight just a few examples, the Water Resources Institute awarded \$147,000 to 11 faculty through collaborative grant-writing initiatives and provided \$5,000 career-development awards to three faculty affiliates. The Vermont Complex Systems Institute distributed \$50,000 in internal micro-grants for projects in complex systems, data science, and AI/ML. The Food Systems Research Institute supported ten undergraduate fellows in summer research projects. And the Gund Institute for Environment launched a new \$300,000 Impact Award in FY26, awarded to an interdisciplinary team designing low-cost and renewable energy options for small, rural communities in Alaska. Together, these investments create pathways from early ideas to competitive external proposals while building interdisciplinary teams and fostering trainee participation.

Looking to the Future: Emerging digital support

As in so many other domains, the emergence of artificial intelligence tools is already having a dramatic impact on both the outputs and the process of research. The OVPR has taken a proactive approach to investigating the potential applications of this technology for process improvements, with use cases in every unit of the division. The Codec initiative, led by Entrepreneur-in-Residence Dr. Barry Finette, is developing an AI-native platform for research, innovation, and commercialization. Working prototypes already developed by the team include a faculty portal, grant intelligence and proposal support, governance and quality monitoring, commercialization decision support, and a cross-platform backbone. As a key feature, the internal governance model addresses data security, privacy, intellectual property, accuracy, human oversight, and auditability across all platform activities.

5. Compliance, Protections, and Research-Critical Operations

UVM's research growth depends on systems that protect participants, animals, personnel, data, and institutional integrity. FY26 accomplishments include major advancements in service

design and external partnerships, bracketed by increasing workload and a difficult regulatory environment.

Human research protections

- The Institutional Review Board (IRB) developed value-added metrics to assess protocol-review turnaround times.
- A new Data Matrix helps researchers understand where protocol-governed research data may be stored and accessed safely.
- UVM enrolled its first participant in an Exception from Informed Consent emergency-medicine protocol. This rare but critically important protocol type allows enrollment of patients with life-threatening and incapacitating conditions in an emergency research study with the potential to provide direct benefit to the patient.
- The office codified a requirement for Single IRB consultations before grant submission to clarify reliance expectations and budgeting.

Challenges included maintaining timely and uniform review, implementing changing federal policies, dependencies on other institutional units, and the need to coordinate requirements that extend beyond the IRB's core role.

Animal care and biosafety oversight

- Research Protections Office (RPO), the Office of Animal Care Management (OACM), and Environmental Health and Safety established monthly on-site help sessions timed to IACUC and IBC submission deadlines.
- UVM's committees agreed to serve as IACUC and IBC of record for external companies using BioLabs, requiring new procedures, agreements, and invoicing arrangements.
- UVM's IACUC became the committee of record for USDA-ARS under a collaborative agreement and participated in review of Nordic Farm renovation plans.
- UVM completed a successful Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care visit, with an outcome of Full Accreditation.

Animal care operations

OACM fully deployed new VOS operating software, including billing, and created a multi-step career pathway for animal care technicians. The unit cared for approximately 2,600 rodent cages and 12 pigs. FY26 revenue and expenses were each reported at \$2.13 million, with revenue supported by \$210,000 of surplus. For FY27, OACM is planning approximately \$600,000 in infrastructure upgrades, including an animal transport van, pen expansion, and replacement of a vivarium autoclave with a dry-heat sterilizer.

Financial Conflict of Interest

In FY2026, the scope of the UVM Financial Conflict of Interest in Sponsored Research policy has been expanded to include the review of financial interests in the context of any research at UVM, including clinical research and non-sponsored research. A new UVM Clinical Research COI committee was established in November 2025.

- 622 annual FCOI disclosures were submitted for researchers. 111 required a review by an FCOI administrator.
- 752 unique certifications were created to review a financial interest in the context of a specific research project.
- 32 reviews resulted in establishment of formal Financial Conflict of Interest management plans.

Outlook: Anticipated regulatory pressure

The Research Protections Office anticipates increased compliance challenges in the coming year, including tighter HIPAA cybersecurity requirements, revision of the Common Rule, further FDA harmonization, and a potential expansion of IBC scope from recombinant and synthetic nucleic acids to broader significant research hazards.

6. Research Infrastructure, Core Facilities, and Enabling Technology

FY26 investments expanded the physical, computational, technical, and organizational infrastructure available to researchers at UVM as well as external partners. These shared capabilities are central to faculty competitiveness and also create direct value for health care providers, businesses, students, and public agencies in Vermont.

Advanced computing

VACC launched IceCore as a next-generation high-performance computing and AI cluster. The unit reported 152 advanced GPUs, 8,128 CPU cores, 400-Gbps NDR InfiniBand networking, and liquid-assisted rear-door heat exchangers. VACC also resolved 4,857 support tickets and offered regular virtual office hours to lower technical barriers. As a result of these efforts, our number of paying Center affiliates continues to exceed 1000.

Instrumentation and Technical Services

Instrumentation and Technical Services combines IMF Labs and the Technical Services Partnership. In FY26, IMF completed 130 prototyping and instrumentation projects for 21 UVM departments and research groups, four inventors or emerging companies, and six other universities, hospitals, and state agencies. Through Leahy Institute partnerships, UVM also supported demonstration and development work involving thin-film solar, environmental remediation, business acceleration, and agricultural production. TSP continues to support an active inventory of nearly 70,000 devices across UVM, the UVM Health Network, regional health care providers, higher education institutions, and K-12 schools in Northern New England. ITS reported a combined staff of 56 and five to seven interns per semester, including nine undergraduate and one graduate student intern during FY26.

Food systems infrastructure

In FY26 the first research projects have been initiated at the newly-established Food Systems Research Station at Nordic Farm (Charlotte, VT). USDA Agricultural Research Service scientists established experiments on forage, cattle grazing preferences, and novel crops, including buckwheat. The long-term lease provides a platform for sustained research and partnership. OACM and the IACUC also contributed to planning for animal facilities at the site.

Water monitoring and operational science

WRI maintained and expanded water and weather monitoring infrastructure. The first Vermont Mesonet station was completed in Lyndonville in May 2026, building on 22 existing weather and snowpack stations from the Summit to Shore network in Vermont.

7. Outreach, Engagement, and Statewide Impact

FY26 research and engagement activities reached communities across Vermont, connected faculty and students with community-defined challenges, and supported pathways from research to implementation. The Leahy Institute for Rural Partnerships and the Office of Engagement provide a particularly clear picture of this statewide role, but community-engaged scholarship extends across the university and is an essential part of our land-grant mission.

Community-university partnerships

The Leahy Institute reports more than 49 partnerships reaching every county in Vermont. Partnership grants, which provide up to \$250,000, facilitate UVM/partner activities, while capacity grants of up to \$20,000 help organizations develop university relationships and project concepts. The Institute's 2026 grant solicitation round resulted in the award of \$2.5 million across 16 partnerships, up from \$2.3 million across 12 grants in 2025, and \$1.7 million across 13 grants in 2024.

Illustrative FY26 partnership	Community or economic objective
Vermont Innovation Accelerator	Connect students with emerging Vermont businesses for early-stage development support.
Thin-film solar demonstration	Pilot lightweight solar panels on three Vermont barns.
Microbots for microplastics	Develop an environmental remediation platform for Vermont waterways.
School-based asthma therapy	Evaluate programs in ten rural schools and prepare a statewide protocol.
Goat dairy development	Identify research and technical-assistance needs with Vermont Creamery and UVM Extension.

Workforce and student experiential learning

Nearly 25 UVM students worked through the Leahy Institute's Statewide Summer Internship Program with employers in Brattleboro, Bethel, and Hardwick. The Green Mountain Job and Retention Program has served 630 graduates working and living in Vermont, with 187 reported as having received full payments. SERV grants support faculty developing Vermont-focused, community-engaged courses. The Vermont Complex Systems Institute's Vermont AI Literacy Initiative seeks to expand understanding of large language models across K-16 communities, and the MassMutual Center of Excellence is exploring graduate internships in AI engineering and open-source models.

Convening and translation

The Office of Engagement meets monthly with an average of 30 UVM faculty and 50 community members interested in collaboration. Its 2026 issue-based convenings addressed food systems, arts education, municipal capacity, and support for startups. The third annual RISE Summit brought university, community, business, municipal, regional, and government participants together around rural problem-solving. The Water Resources Institute separately engaged more than 2,000 participants across 34 seminars, two national symposia, and six research gatherings, including 334 participants at the 2026 Lake Champlain Research Conference.

Statewide reach

UVM is leveraging its research enterprise to serve the entire state by expanding access to data, research participation, and workforce development opportunities. The Vermont Data Collaborative, a project developed in FY26 by the Leahy Institute in partnership with the Vermont Research Open Source Program Office (VERSO), was launched this September as a

community-driven service to provide public agencies, communities, and organizations with accessible data and analysis tools to address public challenges. Together with the VBRN, Lake Champlain Seagrant, EPSCoR and NASA Space Grant programs, these efforts support research, internships, and community engagement across the state that span higher education, industry, government, communities, and K-12 learners statewide.

8. Innovation, Commercialization, and Support for Vermont Businesses

UVM's innovation and economic-development activities increasingly connect research infrastructure, business-development expertise, faculty translation, student experiential learning, and startup support. UVM sits in the center of a growing knowledge and high-tech economy in the Champlain Valley region, positioning the university to serve as both a driver of new research-led innovations and attractor for emerging and mission-aligned industries. In FY26, we have focused on building out our capacity to support innovation along the entire commercialization pathway, from research translation to startup support to ecosystem development, as we outline below.

Commercialization infrastructure

UVM Innovations began an overhaul of its intellectual-property data systems, including an inventor portal and updated material-transfer-agreement management. This shift from an IP-management-centered model toward business development model was begun in 2022, and has involved significant staff and systems turnover. We continue to cover government reporting and agreement responsibilities, but are working toward a venture-oriented approach to early-stage technologies. A new \$5.9 million award from the NSF's Accelerating Research Translation program will support a new university-wide initiative, Identifying and Nurturing Vermont's Emerging Strategic Technologies (INVEST), that will expand graduate student and post-doctoral training and launch three thematic innovation incubators in biomedical devices, digital technologies, and sustainable agriculture. Student participation in commercialization activities is achieved through two programs, ARC and VIA, that match student interns to faculty translation projects and external businesses and organizations.

BioLabs Innovation Center

The BioLabs Innovation Center at UVM's Colchester Research Facility provides equipped office and laboratory space for life-science entrepreneurs and startup companies. The facility hosted 6 resident companies at the end of FY26, meeting approximately 30% capacity, with two additional companies expected to join in Fall 2026. FY26 revenue was \$145,797, averaging \$12,150 per month. BioLabs served more than 250 participants in educational, mentoring, and networking programs. The companies in the facility created 15 high-skilled jobs, hosted five biotech interns, and resulted in more than \$3 million in aggregate economic activity since launch.

V-GaN Tech Hub

Although UVM was not selected for a US Economic Development Administration Tech Hub award in the latest round of funding, our collaborative efforts to develop a closed-loop development, testing and fabrication ecosystem for advanced semiconductors made significant advances this year. A new Test and Characterization Lab opened in August 2026, funded by a 2-year \$3.4 million grant from the New England Microelectronics Coalition. A state-funded (\$750,000) Semiconductor innovation grant program, VIGOR, will launch on October 7, 2026, and UVM will host the IEEE Workshop on Wide Bandgap Devices and Applications (WiPDA) in Burlington October 24-26, in partnership with Global Foundries and Rugged Micropower.

9. Research Visibility

UVM Research recorded more than 250,000 Instagram views and nearly 10,000 Instagram interactions in FY26, with the account growing to 1,072 followers, an increase of 600 over FY25. LinkedIn generated more than 13,000 impressions. The research communications team is shifting toward video-first storytelling so researchers can explain their work directly and content can be reused across social media, websites, presentations, and events.

Top research stories reported for FY26

- Transmissible cancer in catfish: UVM researchers reported the first known transmissible cancer in a freshwater species in a Nature publication. VBRN describes substantial support from its Data Science Core, participating institutions, and students.
- Snow research and the outdoor economy: a UVM-led regional team received a reported \$5.9 million NSF award to improve snow monitoring and study connections among winter conditions, water, weather, and the regional economy.
- Plant evolution in a changing climate: UVM plant biologist Stephen Keller participated in a global experiment published in Science that observed evolution in real time and examined limits to climate adaptation.
- Chronic absenteeism: the Every Day Counts initiative connected researchers with Vermont schools, health providers, and families to develop research-informed responses.
- Water research: WRI highlighted work on cyanobacteria, national-scale water-quality prediction, flood risk, statewide weather monitoring, environmental sensing, and water-resilient agriculture.

Outlook for the Coming Year

Although the federal funding landscape continues to be a major source of uncertainty and growing administrative burden, UVM researchers continue to achieve remarkable success at securing major federal investments in cutting-edge research capacity that will position us for national and international leadership.

Looking forward, we see four priorities for FY27: sustain proposal-development capacity as application volume rises; create a better research reporting and communication system; and align our research infrastructure investments with emerging opportunities in biotechnology, semiconductor science, neurobiology and related fields, and computational approaches across a large range of fields. We look forward to the submission of UVM's Comprehensive Cancer Center application and a range of large grant initiatives currently underway. Finally, we continue to prepare for regulatory, cybersecurity, and compliance changes without slowing responsible research. Continued integration across research development, protections, core facilities, institutes, innovation, and engagement will be essential.



Senior Vice President's Report

October 16, 2026

Board of Trustees
Budget, Finance and Investment Committee

Prepared By
Alicia S. Estey, Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration

In addition to the information below, University Controller Lindsey Donovan will provide an external auditor update during this meeting.

Dual Enrollment

The administration is required to report annually on the number of high school students enrolled in UVM classes this past year. For FY26, there were 318 high school students who took classes at UVM through the Dual Enrollment Voucher Program and 181 additional high school students who were enrolled outside the Dual Enrollment Voucher Program. Below is the historical data for comparison.

Fiscal Year	# of HS students enrolled through Dual Enrollment Voucher Program	# of HS students enrolled outside Dual Enrollment Voucher Program
FY26	318	181
FY25	314	157
FY24	305	124
FY23	346	93
FY22	397	102
FY21	417	147
FY20	397	87
FY19	365	74
FY18	381	111
FY17	370	118



Faculty Senate President's Report

Board of Trustees

October 16, 2026

Prepared By

Abigail McGowan, Faculty Senate President

The Faculty Senate is responsible for the effective management of the academic affairs of the University, responsibility it shares with the administration.

With the start of the new academic year, the Senate has focused its work on two key areas: a proposed revision to the Catamount Core Curriculum to address the impact of AI; and ongoing work to engage faculty around both the university's recent financial challenges and the range of strategies under consideration to address those challenges.

Over the summer a Senate subcommittee met to discuss the possibility of modifying UVM's Catamount Core Curriculum (CCC) to respond to the rapidly emerging era of artificial intelligence. The committee quickly realized it would be impossible to meet the moment with a single course requirement. AI is not a discrete topic, to be discussed in isolation. It is impacting so many areas of what we learn and know that we need to address it from all angles, exploring ethics and technologies, social and environmental impacts, cognitive implications and more. This diversity of perspectives can and should be embedded across the CCC. The CCC, after all, is expressly designed "to expose students to the intellectual breadth of the liberal arts, develop the skills needed to integrate and apply diverse areas of knowledge, and build the foundations for lifelong learning and active participation in local and global communities."¹

Even as the committee agreed that courses across the CCC can and should engage with the AI moment, it also recognized the need for shared attention to AI's impact on the core skills we teach our students: writing, oral communication, research, and the use of data. With that in mind, the committee developed a proposal to

¹ <https://catalogue.uvm.edu/undergraduate/courses/ccc/>

revise the four CCC Core Skills requirements:

- Writing and Information Literacy 1
- Writing and Information Literacy 2
- Oral Communication
- Quantitative and Data Literacy

Specifically, the proposal adds expectations for critical AI engagement to all these four areas, asking students to refine their writing, evaluation of sources, use of data and communication accordingly. By embedding this work at the heart of the curriculum, across all courses that meet these requirements, we will ensure all students adapt to the changing landscape. At the same time, by emphasizing broad skills rather than the ability to use particular tools (which are developing rapidly), we are providing maximal scope for diverse perspectives on AI use, along with maximal flexibility in the face of future technological change.

The committee's proposal to modify the CCC is now under consideration by the faculty through eight focus groups, a survey, and initial presentations to the Faculty Senate. The Catamount Core Curriculum Committee will take up any further revisions to the proposal in October, with the goal of bringing it forward for a final vote at the full Senate in November. We hope to be able to report back on the results of that vote to you in February.

The other key area of work in the Senate has been in helping to inform and engage faculty around the challenges and opportunities of the moment. Like everyone else on campus, faculty are worried about our recent fall in enrollments. Those worries are both immediate (what are the short-term budget implications?) and more far-reaching (what will our university look like in five or ten years?) Our strategy in the Senate has been to invite faculty into the conversation about the future, offering regular updates on current conditions and forward projections, while also asking faculty to consider new enrollment, program, and financial strategies. These conversations can be complicated, as the implications of change are worked out across different sectors of the university. But we continue to invest in the process, harnessing the fierce commitment faculty have to this university, to help forge a strong path forward. We look forward to continuing these efforts in partnership with the administration and the Board.



Staff Council President's Report

**Board of Trustees
October 16, 2026**

**Prepared By
Jennifer Jorgenson, Staff Council President**

Members of the Board,

The summer months and opening of the 2026-2027 academic year provided meaningful opportunities for the University of Vermont Staff Council to strengthen staff engagement, support employee development, and deepen collaboration with university leadership. Through regular dialogue with senior administrators and the work of its standing committees, Staff Council continued to elevate staff perspectives while supporting institutional priorities.

Strengthening Partnership and Communication

Staff Council leadership maintained regular meetings with representatives from the President's Office, Human Resources, Strategic Communications, and Finance and Administration. These conversations serve as an important mechanism for sharing staff perspectives and ensuring that staff experiences inform institutional decision-making.

Key areas of discussion included staff recognition, professional development, workplace climate, communications effectiveness, accessibility, enrollment and financial planning, and implementation of the university's strategic plan. Staff Council continues to be encouraged by the willingness of university leaders to engage in open dialogue and collaborative problem solving.

Particular attention was given to university communication practices and accessibility readiness. Discussions focused on strengthening digital accessibility, improving governance of university websites, supporting institutional branding efforts, and enhancing communication tools available to the campus community.

Conversations with leadership in Finance and Administration highlighted enrollment-focused planning efforts and emerging governance structures. Staff Council welcomed the opportunity for staff representation on the new Incentive-Based Budgeting Advisory Committee, helping ensure staff perspectives are included in discussions related to

institutional resources and financial planning. I have been actively involved in the Provost search, through my role as Staff Council President and have appreciated the opportunity to raise up staff experience, voice and role throughout the process.

Staff Council leadership also met with President Marlene Tromp to discuss advancement of the university's strategic plan and identify systemic issues affecting staff across the institution.

Committee Highlights

- Social Committee: Approved continued funding for the Staff Wellness Grant Program and planned programs that foster employee connection and well-being.
- Compensation, Benefits and Budget Committee: Reviewed employee survey feedback and identified opportunities to strengthen staff participation in institutional conversations regarding compensation, benefits, and resource allocation.
- Personal and Professional Development and Occupational Environment Committee: Continued work related to professional development opportunities and Occupational Environment Survey findings.
- Community Engagement Committee: Focused on expanding volunteerism, community partnerships, and staff engagement opportunities.

Investing in Staff Success

One of the most encouraging developments this quarter was confirmation of an anticipated increase in funding for the Staff Council Professional Development Fund for non-represented staff to be more aligned with professional development funds available to represented staff. This enhancement reflects the university's continued investment in employee growth and learning opportunities.

Staff Council also continued to advocate for expanded employee recognition efforts, with particular emphasis on ensuring that recognition programs celebrate the contributions of staff whose work is often less visible but essential to university operations.

Looking Ahead

As the academic year progresses, Staff Council's priorities remain focused on strengthening employee engagement, advancing professional development opportunities, supporting follow-up efforts related to workplace climate assessments, and ensuring that staff perspectives continue to inform institutional planning and decision-making.

The collaborative relationships Staff Council has developed with university leadership continue to create valuable opportunities for dialogue and partnership. We appreciate the engagement of our campus colleagues and look forward to continuing our work on behalf of UVM staff.



Graduate Student Senate (GSS) President's Report

**Board of Trustees
October 16, 2026**

**Prepared By
Collin A. Coil, President of the Graduate Student Senate**

Guided by our 2026 annual survey, the Graduate Student Senate (GSS) has set four strategic priorities for this academic year: supporting graduate student workers, strengthening basic needs support, expanding external advocacy, and building coalitions with UVM's other student governments. These priorities build on an active start to the year. Since June, approximately 320 graduate students have attended GSS events, including a luncheon that welcomed about 200 new graduate students, and our Elevate Grant reimbursed approximately \$7,200 for research and conference travel over the summer alone. This report highlights the four priorities and strategic initiatives of the GSS, which we believe are critical to achieve as part of the University's Green, Gold, and Bold Strategic Plan.

Supporting Graduate Student Workers: About 550 graduate students are also University employees, and compensation and the cost of living in Burlington were among the concerns raised most often in our survey. Students repeatedly cited the unresolved contract negotiations with the Graduate Student Union (GSU), describing it as central to their sense of stability. The pressure is greater for international student workers, whose visas typically limit them to on-campus employment. The GSS respects the bargaining process and does not represent the GSU in it, but we encourage a timely and fair agreement. Furthermore, we ask the University to extend key contract benefits to graduate students outside of the bargaining unit. Notably, comprehensive dental and vision insurance is a high priority for all students, regardless of union membership, with only 29.7% of survey respondents saying their current health insurance is affordable. Pillar 3 of our Green, Gold, and Bold Strategic Plan prioritizes access to resources, and other benefits under negotiation, such as childcare support, should be expanded to all graduate students to achieve goals under that pillar.

Strengthening Basic Needs Support: Our survey shows that financial fragility is widespread: Two in three respondents said an unexpected expense would cause serious hardship, 64.2% of graduate students worry about finances regularly, and 25.4% respondents did not have secure access to three meals a day. Housing is the largest pressure point. Among students reporting a housing challenge, 88.1% cited cost as the biggest issue with median rent reported at \$1,132 per month. Students recognized the University's efforts on housing through Catamount Run but pointed out that rent is too expensive and leases are inflexible. The GSS is working to develop resolutions targeted at proposing solutions to improve housing offerings such as Catamount Run. Additionally, we are partnering with the Center for Health and Wellbeing to help students achieve basic needs. We welcome further opportunities to work with the University on meeting the basic needs of its students, in keeping with the focus on opportunity and affordability in Pillar 3 of our Green, Gold, and Bold Strategic Plan.

Expanding External Advocacy: Article II, Section B of the GSS Constitution requires that we “represent graduate student interests to the University community, the State of Vermont, and national organizations.” External advocacy is a central goal for the GSS this year since many of the challenges facing graduate students, such as housing affordability and immigration policies, cannot be fixed solely by the University. In September, the GSS created the External Affairs Committee to engage lawmakers at each level, and we are working with the Office of University Relations to ensure this advocacy aligns with University policy. We have also worked to build partnerships with graduate student organizations at other institutions. Notably, we partnered with the MIT Graduate Student Council to distribute a survey on federal immigration and funding policies. This survey closed at the end of September, and we will share these results with both UVM's leadership and Vermont's congressional delegation. We look forward to partnering with the University in its government relations work.

Building Student Government Coalitions: Graduate, medical, and undergraduate students share many of the same pressures. Building on last year's connections with the Student Government Association (SGA) and on new conversations with the Medical Student Council, the GSS will coordinate both bodies on joint advocacy and initiatives targeting issues such as housing, transportation, and food access. We aim to strengthen student voices, and we have developed a legislative agenda and streamlined Senate processes to facilitate joint advocacy. These partnerships advance Pillar 1 of our Green, Gold, and Bold Strategic Plan by connecting graduate students with the campus community, deepening the sense of belonging.



Student Government Association (SGA) President's Report

**Board of Trustees
October 16, 2026**

**Prepared By
Kennedy Connors, SGA President**

Hello all!

The Student Government Association has had a strong start to the semester, and I am pleased to share some of our recent accomplishments and upcoming goals. This September, the student body elected eight incredible first-year representatives in a competitive election cycle. We have focused on onboarding and leadership development this first month to ensure our newest senators are well equipped to succeed in their new roles.

In May, I outlined three senate-wide goals for the 2026-2027 session: advocating for improved campus infrastructure, broadening student well-being initiatives, and expanding our presence to build on SGA's momentum. These priorities have guided our work over the past months, and I am pleased to provide progress updates.

On the campus infrastructure front, we have focused on both goals we can complete this year and long-term advocacy work. For goals we hope to achieve soon, we are working with Residential Life to increase student recreational spaces in residential halls and dining to explore more late-night dining options. We continue to listen to student concerns surrounding residential infrastructure and long-term will continue to advocate for improved facilities.

To broaden student well-being, we have prioritized reaching students in all areas of the student experience. This summer, we created care packages for our newest 75

international students with beloved Vermont snacks, such as Ben & Jerry's coupons. We also assembled care packages for our resident advisors to show appreciation for everything they do for our students. Additionally, we welcomed students back to campus with a collaboration with the Mosaic Center to host breakfast on the first Friday of the school year.

To sustain SGA's momentum, we have reinforced last year's initiatives and introduced new ones. We updated our semester calendar, continued our accountability cards, and set clear leadership expectations. Externally, we are maintaining our section in *The Vermont Cynic* and expanding our outreach through a new emailed newsletter for all students and administrators. We are also partnering with Athletics again to host an SGA Game and distribute "Rally Towels" to boost school spirit.

Looking ahead, we are excited to host several upcoming events, including our semesterly Week of Kindness in October, the 2nd annual TEDx event in November, and our Week of Wellness during Finals Week.

We greatly appreciate your continued support of student governance. We look forward to a successful year and to sharing more updates with you in October.

UVM ALUMNI ASSOCIATION President's UPDATE

UVM Board of Trustees

Friday, October 16, 2026

Prepared by: Deb Mignucci '82, Alumni Association President
Susan Higgins '85, Alumni Association Vice President

The UVM Alumni Association is pleased to share this report highlighting key accomplishments and areas of focus during the first half of the fiscal year. Our volunteer leadership network includes more than 175 individuals representing eight decades of UVM graduates. While this report highlights only a portion of our work, it reflects the many ways we foster lifelong connections across the UVM community.

New Alumni Engagement Opportunities



Cat Notes Card

This year, the UVM Alumni Association launched two new micro-engagement initiatives designed to provide meaningful and accessible ways for alumni to stay connected. **Cat**

Notes gives alumni the

chance to share encouragement, advice, and personal memories with current students. Messages can be segmented by school and college, creating more personalized connections while providing students with support from fellow Catamounts. **Green & Gold Event Kits** help us meet alumni where they are by supporting alumni-led gatherings. Whether hosting a watch party, class gathering, networking event, or casual get-together, alumni can request UVM-branded materials to bring Catamount pride to their communities. Together, these initiatives provide simple, meaningful ways for alumni to engage with UVM throughout the year.



Green & Gold Event Kit

Student Engagement

Strengthening connections between students and alumni remains a key priority. This year, we expanded our support of signature programs including Senior Week and the Convocation

Parade, creating more interactions for students to connect with the lifelong Catamount community. As participation continues to grow, we are working closely with campus partners, including the Department of Student Life, to ensure programming is coordinated, impactful, and focused on connecting students with alumni.



UVM GO Students in Vancouver.

We also continue to create experiential and career-focused programming. Alumni participated in UVM GO programs in destinations including New York, Montreal, Vancouver, and London, providing networking opportunities and local insights for incoming students. Career engagement remains an important area of focus through UVM Connect.



CAS Students with Alumni in D.C.

This year, we are partnered with the UVM Career Center on key initiatives, including the Harvest Connection signature event on October 8, while beta testing the new UVM Connect Mentor Match module to strengthen alumni-student mentoring and networking. Catamount College Connection is one example of the growing partnership between the



Alumni Association and Enrollment Management,

leveraging alumni voices to support prospective students and families throughout the college decision-making process.

UVM Weekend 2026



UVM Weekend continued to be the university's premier alumni gathering, bringing Catamounts back to Burlington for a weekend of connection, celebration, and school spirit. This year's event featured reunions, athletic events, academic programs, alumni recognition, and community gatherings. A new addition was the alignment of the Larner College of Medicine Reunion with UVM Weekend, creating a more unified alumni experience.

Highlights include the second annual Rally's Rally, athletic competitions, the Celebrating Excellence Alumni Awards, and UVM Weekend Late Night at Halvorson's, offering alumni opportunities to connect both on and off campus.

Celebrating Excellence: Alumni Awards



During UVM Weekend, we honored alumni whose accomplishments, service, and generosity exemplify the best of the Catamount community.

2026 Honorees: **Outstanding**

Young Alumni Award- Saja Almogalli '23, **Alumni Achievement Award**- Ricky Strauss '88, **Distinguished Service Award**- Diane Seder '74 and the **Lifetime Achievement in Philanthropy Award**- Steven Grossman '61, HON '22. Lizzy Pope, G '13, recipient of the **2026 George V. Kidder Outstanding Faculty Award**, was honored at a special ceremony and lecture on October 14, 2026. Nominations are now open through a streamlined process that combines nominations for both the UVM Alumni Association Awards and Larner College of Medicine Alumni Awards into a single form. Nominate today: go.uvm.edu/alumniawards.

Celebrating Milestones

This past June, we welcomed members of the **Class of 1975** and **Class of 1976** back to campus for their Golden Reunion. Alumni enjoyed four days of

reconnection, learning, and celebration. With the support of a dedicated volunteer committee, attendees participated in campus tours, faculty lectures, a Lake Champlain cruise, dancing, and a

behind-the-scenes look at the admissions process. We are grateful to everyone who helped make the weekend a success and look forward to welcoming home the Class of 1977 and Class of 1978 for their Golden Reunion on June 2-4, 2027.



*1975 & 1976 Reunion co-chairs:
Backrow L-R Andrea Mastrocinque
Martone '76, George Beato '76, Skip
Beitzel '76, Pete Beekman '76
Front row L-R Paula Oppenheim Cope
'75 and Dina Dwyer Child '75*

Refreshed Look and Enhanced Digital Experience

This spring, the UVM Foundation and Alumni Association launched a new website, email platform, and events management system. Most notably, the Foundation and Alumni Association websites were merged into a single destination, creating a more seamless experience for our community. Led by the Marketing & Communications, Alumni Relations and Information Technology teams, this effort went beyond a technology upgrade. Content was reviewed, refreshed, and reorganized to improve navigation and create a more user-friendly experience. These enhancements allow us to deliver more personalized communications, simplify event registration, better showcase alumni impact, and provide a stronger foundation for future engagement. Stay connected by attending regional and virtual programs, connecting with fellow alumni in your area, and supporting UVM in meaningful ways. Visit uvmfoundation.org and/or go.uvm.edu/socials to explore upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, and ways to stay engaged with the Catamount community.

