



I always look forward to fall in Blacksburg as students return and we are surrounded by maroon and orange on the trees. Another highlight of the fall is the opportunity to present the annual edition of the Via Report. I am pleased to recognize our current Via scholars and the outstanding multi-mission efforts from faculty of the Charles E. Via, Jr Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Virginia Tech.

Among those faculty are seven new members to our outstanding team of educators: Jingqiu Liao and David Munoz joined as an assistant professors in Environmental and Water Resources, Monica Arul as an assistant professor in Structural Engineering and Materials, Joseph Vantassel as assistant professor in Geotechnical Engineering, Reihaneh Hosseini as research scientist in Geotechnical Engineering, Holly Casey as assistant professor of practice in Sustainable Land Development, and David Ford as Vecellio Professor in Construction Engineering Management. We are excited to welcome our new colleagues and look forward to highlighting their achievements in future Via Reports.

This year we also welcome the Myers-Lawson School of Construction into the College of Engineering. Our long-landing engagement with the School will be strengthened through improved synergy with the Vecellio Construction Engineering Management graduate program and university initiatives in the area of Smart Design and Construction.

Speaking of construction, a 7,000 square-foot expansion to the Occoquan Watershed Monitoring Laboratory is underway with completion of the project scheduled for the end of 2022. This long-awaited addition will improve the research capabilities of faculty, staff, and students and provide new and expanded experiential learning opportunities in Northern Virginia. Changes to the Blacksburg campus continue including eight new and on-going projects that directly impact the college and department. For those alumni and friends visiting Blacksburg, the transformation of the campus is impressive with the end result being improvements to elements of our core mission.

I invite you to read through the research efforts highlighted in several articles and the accomplishments and honors that faculty have been awarded this year. I am excited to share

changes coming to the land development design program which will be renamed the Bowman Sustainable Land Development Program. We are grateful to Gary Bowman, CE class of 1980, for his generous gift of \$5 million to our department to expand learning and research opportunities in sustainable land development.

The Via Scholars are the highlight of this document and I hope that the biographical sketches contained in the report help you get to know them. We will be recognizing our scholars at a reception in December in Blacksburg. This is always a special event to honor the achievements of the Via Scholars and the generosity of the Via family.

I am looking forward to another exciting year and, once again thank you for your continued support. I wish to give a special thanks to all of our alumni, friends and colleagues who have generously supported the department. These gifts are helping to prepare a new generation of engineers to invent the future and address the multitude of challenges as we reimagine and recreate our nation's civil infrastructure. Please visit cee.vt.edu and join us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to follow the latest news and research going on in the department.

Regards,

Mark Widdowson, Department Head and Professor