Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow

NOVA | Northern Virginia Community College

President's Report
2026

Dear NOVA Community,

As Virginia's largest public higher education institution, NOVA is where our region turns for opportunity. Serving nearly 79,000 students across our six campuses and online, we did not simply meet that expectation in 2025-26 — we expanded it. Whether a student aspires to transfer to a four-year university or step directly into a family-sustaining career, we built the path. And we built it to move at the speed of change in our region.

This means removing the barriers that slow students down, starting with cost. Last year, thousands of students transferred from NOVA to four-year institutions, saving an average of nearly $22,000 on their bachelor's degrees by completing their first two years with us. Increasingly, students are earning that credit before they ever finish high school. Our Dual Enrollment programs now serve more than 20,000 high school students across Northern Virginia, giving young Virginians a tuition-free head start on their future.

In a rapidly changing job market, local employers are looking beyond traditional resumes for demonstrated skill. The Class of 2026 earned more than 7,200 degrees and industry-recognized credentials through programs built with the region's leading employers in fields from technology to healthcare. Behind each credential is a story: delivery drivers heading toward steady paychecks, parents re-entering the workforce and mid-career professionals retraining for a tech-driven economy.

The region's employers now come to us not only for talent, but for direct training. Over the past year, NOVA delivered customized AI training for members of Silver Diner's leadership team, prepared more than 450 Kaiser Permanente clinical staff for national certification and partnered with Fairfax County Public Schools to prepare its HR team for SHRM credentialing. NOVA is where Northern Virginia's employers find the workforce they need.

With more than 60 years of service and the continued partnership of our Commonwealth's leaders, this past year NOVA kept its eye on the horizon and built what our region will need for its future. Beyond every open door is a clear path forward, and NOVA will continue providing students with the keys to access them. Whichever path they choose, our students leave NOVA further ahead than when they arrived.

Anne M. Kress, PhD
President

Diana Brown
Chair of the College Board

NOVA At-a-Glance

20,618
High school Dual Enrollment students

4,611
Workforce students

22.5
Average class size

6,057
Students earned associate degrees and certificates

Our locations

NOVA serves the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas and Manassas Park across six campuses, the Reston Center and NOVA Online.

Alexandria
16,614 students

Annandale
16,994 students

Loudoun
19,853 students

Manassas
12,175 students

Medical Education
2,215 students

Woodbridge
11,105 students

78,956
Total enrollment

Our students

97%
of students live in Virginia.

79%
of students attend part time.

47%
of students took an online class.

A stepping stone to the four-year degree

Elizabeth always imagined herself a college graduate. But in her junior year of high school, debilitating migraines derailed her studies. Her grades slipped, and her college dream felt suddenly out of reach.

That's when she discovered NOVA.

NOVA offered an affordable, supportive pathway to rebuild her confidence — and a clear route to transfer into her dream four-year program. Today, Elizabeth is a student at the University of Virginia. She's one of thousands of NOVA students who transfer successfully to four-year institutions each year — not by luck, but by design.

Through Guaranteed Admission Agreements with more than 50 colleges and universities, NOVA makes transfer seamless and predictable. ADVANCE, a nationally recognized transfer partnership with George Mason University, offers NOVA students wrap-around academic support and a clear, supported route to admission.

NOVA wasn't Elizabeth's backup plan. It was the path that carried her, and thousands of students like her, exactly where they wanted to be.

STUDENTS TRANSFERRED TO FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS* **11,000+**

*The data includes students who were enrolled at NOVA over the past seven years and transferred to a four-year Virginia institution during 2024-25, the most recent complete data. Source: National Student Clearinghouse.

Top transfer institutions

1. George Mason University
2. James Madison University
3. Virginia Tech
4. Virginia Commonwealth University
5. University of Virginia

Leading the way in Dual Enrollment

Over 20,000 high schoolers across Northern Virginia are earning college credits before they ever set foot on a campus — at no cost to themselves or their families.

NOVA's Dual Enrollment program offers college-level courses taught in partnership with local high schools, with credits that transfer to colleges across Virginia and beyond. It is the fastest-growing pathway to college in the region.

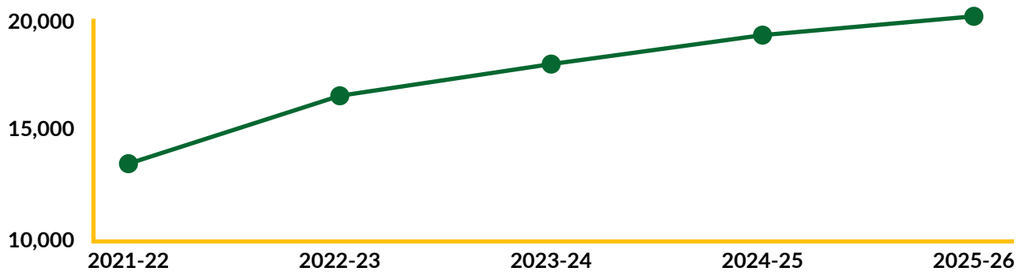
For first-generation students, starting college early at no cost changes the math.

Rosabel, a recent graduate of Manassas Park High School, knows this firsthand. As the oldest of three sisters and the first in her family to attend college, she understood that every dollar saved on her education was a dollar her family could spend on her sisters' futures.

> *"Having these Dual Enrollment classes really helps students like me who are first-generation, whose parents can't afford to pay for [college] classes. … Now my parents can focus on supporting my two younger sisters, making sure they get what they need."*

Rosabel found not only credits, but academic direction. This fall, she entered the University of Virginia on scholarship with plans to major in business. She hopes to be an inspiration for her younger sisters to follow.

Five years of Dual Enrollment growth by students enrolled



Expanding our reach

In its inaugural Spring 2026 semester, NOVA's College and Career Ready Virginia pathway enrolled around 250 students from across Northern Virginia public schools, providing students with the chance to take their first year of college at no cost while still in high school.

20,618
Students enrolled

142,906
Credits earned by all Dual Enrollment students

$32 million
Scholarship value

Connecting classrooms to careers

Every year, NOVA students step out of the classroom and into career-connected learning experiences across the region, in cultural institutions like the **Smithsonian;** technology companies like **Microsoft, Amazon Web Services (AWS), Digital Realty** and **AFCOM;** public agencies like the **Fairfax County Park Authority;** and even **NOVA's own police department.**

The range of opportunities is deliberate. We have built internship pathways across disciplines, from engineering and technology to the humanities and public service, so students have access to hands-on professional experience before they graduate.

For liberal arts students, work-based learning experiences are made possible in part through a $900,000 grant from the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation, which supports the development of micro-internships within humanities programs.

In today's economy, employers want graduates who have already done the work. NOVA students arrive with that experience.

> *"I got to meet so many other like-minded, passionate people who love history and museums. It's been a privilege to have those connections and get the hands-on experiences needed to work in this field."*
>
> **—Nicolas, intern, Smithsonian Institution**

Student interns work on a group project at the Smithsonian National Postal Museum.

Building the region's healthcare workforce

Virginia faces a shortage of more than 17,000 registered nurses,* and NOVA is helping meet that need with outstanding graduates from our Nursing program. Through close collaboration with clinical affiliates including Inova, Sentara Health and Reston Hospital Center, NOVA develops curriculum and programs carefully designed to meet healthcare demand.

NOVA is also expanding our capacity to match the need. Two major construction projects are opening in the 2026-27 academic year: the Arlene Evans and Barry Dewberry Center for Nursing Excellence, funded by a gift of $5.7 million from a NOVA Nursing alumna and her husband, and the Medical Center of Excellence: Featuring a Virtual Hospital, supported by $25 million in state investment and local funding. Together, they will grow NOVA's most in-demand healthcare programs and put more nurses, dental hygienists and technologists into the region.

Top placement partners

1. Inova
2. VHC Health
3. Sentara Health

*2025 analysis by George Mason University's Center for Health Workforce.

Partnering with employers across the region

With its red vinyl booths and tabletop jukeboxes, Silver Diner has been a fixture of the DC region for more than 30 years. But keeping a beloved brand fresh means staying current — so when its leadership team set out to integrate AI into their workflow, they came to NOVA.

Silver Diner wanted practical AI training its leaders could use right away. NOVA tailored a course to meet the company's needs and delivered it to its senior leadership team.

> *"The training has helped me become more productive and efficient. It has saved me time on administrative work … and allowed me to spend more time developing leaders, investing face-to-face time with people and focusing on strategic priorities."*
>
> **—Omar Martinez, area director, Silver Diner**

Some partnerships reach an entire workforce

When Kaiser Permanente moved to upskill its medical assistants across DC, Maryland and Virginia, it turned to NOVA.

Over six months, more than 450 Kaiser urgent care technicians and medical assistants prepared to become nationally credentialed as clinical medical assistants through online coursework and hands-on skills labs held at NOVA campuses and Kaiser sites. Participants achieved a 100% pass rate on the certification exam.

This image was generated using AI and refined by a human.

Built here, hired here

Through an innovative data center operations program, NOVA is ensuring the growth of data centers translates into strong wages for a new and expanding workforce.

In September 2025, we opened the Data Center Operations Training Facility at our Woodbridge Campus, an 8,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art training hub backed by millions in state and federal investment. With industry-grade equipment, students train on the very tools they'll use on the job.

Our flagship Engineering Technology Career Scholars program, supported by the U.S. Department of Labor and the National Science Foundation, offers graduating or recently graduated high school students a fully funded year at NOVA — tuition, stipends and a guaranteed interview with an industry partner — to launch careers in data center operations and semiconductor manufacturing.

Spotlight: Data Center Talent Accelerator

Through a new workforce partnership, Brooksource recruits talent and NOVA trains them in four weeks for AWS data center technician roles.

First cohort: 100% placement.

> *"We have been so impressed by NOVA's flexibility and the value its instructors bring to delivering a curriculum that directly targets the learning objectives set by the industry."*
>
> **—Nicole Prekop, director of Elevate Programs, Brooksource**

Answering the call for skilled trades

Graceleigh first picked up a torch in high school, when her father, a veteran, enrolled in free welding classes and was allowed one guest. She joined him and hasn't put it down since.

She now drives an hour each way to NOVA, for newer labs and better equipment than she'd find closer to home. A year in, she has a few months left before she's job-ready. And with a projected national shortage of 330,000 welders by 2028, employers are ready for her.

Welding is just one pathway NOVA offers into the trades, which are facing critical workforce shortages. The wages follow: in Northern Virginia, welders earn a median $64,180 a year, HVAC technicians $68,690.*

Salary data: Virginia Works, May 2025 Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics for the Northern Virginia Community College service region.

The Manassas Skilled Trades Center broke ground last year. On pace to open in Spring 2027 and funded by the Commonwealth of Virginia, congressionally directed spending, jurisdictional funding and industry support, the 24,000-square-foot center will expand training in automotive, electric vehicle and hybrid technology, diesel power generation and facilities maintenance.

FastForward: Trained in weeks, hired for years

Through the Commonwealth's FastForward program, NOVA trains Virginians for in-demand jobs across the state. The model rewards results: Students pay a third of the cost up front, and Virginia covers the rest once they finish and earn an industry-recognized credential. At NOVA, 94% of students complete the training.

The return shows up in paychecks. Graduates' average annual wages rose from $21,943 to $34,812 after earning a credential — a nearly 59% increase.

In 2025-26, participation grew 36%, driven in part by targeted retraining for Virginians displaced by federal workforce reductions.

For thousands of Virginians, FastForward is the shortest distance between where they are and where they want to be.

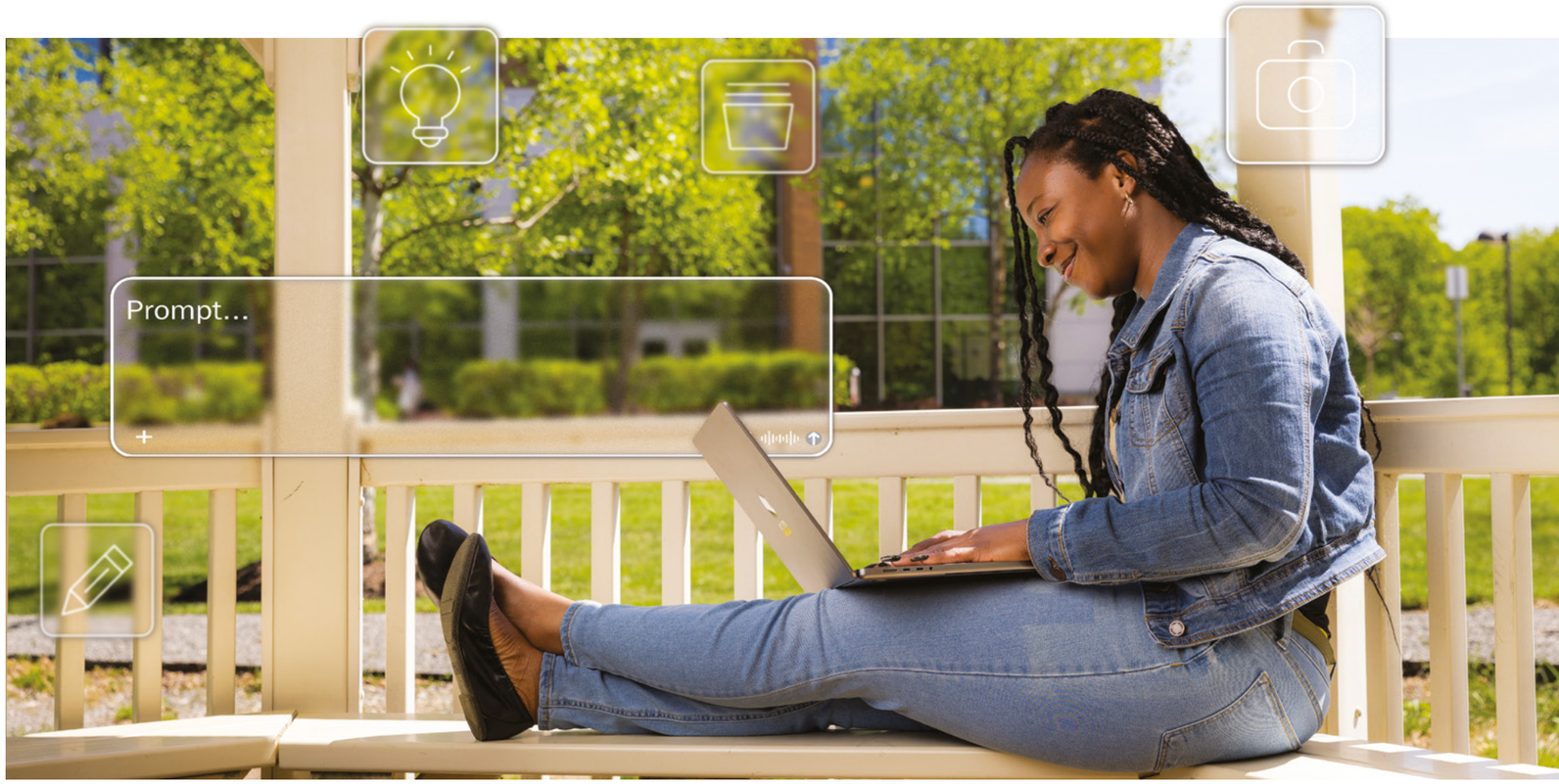
NOVA Online: Expanding educational access

Whether a truck driver on the road or a service member stationed abroad, NOVA Online students can access their coursework anytime, anywhere.

Increasingly, NOVA is powering online education not just for students enrolled directly through the college, but for students across the Virginia Community College System. Through Shared Services Distance Learning (SSDL), students remain enrolled at their home institution while accessing NOVA courses. This arrangement means students in every corner of Virginia can take courses their college may not otherwise offer.

In 2025-26, nearly 37,000 NOVA students took at least one course online. Another 1,488 Virginians took NOVA Online courses through SSDL, a number climbing each semester.

> *"NOVA Online has played a big role in helping me reach my academic goals. The flexibility allowed me to balance school, work, leadership responsibilities and family responsibilities while still staying on track with my education."*
>
> **—Natan, NOVA Online student government president 2025**



AI in every field

Employers aren't asking for AI graduates. In NOVA's May 2026 Workforce Pulse Survey, 64% of regional employers ranked durable skills — critical thinking, creativity, problem solving — as their top hiring priority for the next six months. They want nurses, data analysts and humanities majors who can use AI tools in the work they already do.

To meet this demand, NOVA treats AI as a skill that layers into every field. The Career Studies Certificate in AI and Data Analytics doubled its enrollment in its first two years, and NOVA Workforce offers short-term, stackable AI credentials for students and working professionals to keep ahead of changes in their field.

NOVA backs its faculty to lead

Through the Center for the Advancement of Teaching Excellence, 60+ innovation grants have gone to instructors weaving AI into everything from fine arts to sociology.

The NOVA Foundation looks ahead

Since 2023, the NOVA Student Success Fund has distributed more than $685,000 to NOVA students facing financial emergencies involving housing, utilities, transportation, medical expenses, childcare and food. Students who received Fund support completed their degrees at a 125% higher rate than those who didn't.*

$3.98 million
Contributions and grants

$40 million
Endowment value

$630,000
Scholarships awarded

"Balancing school while working multiple jobs has been a lot of juggling, but this support is allowing me to focus on the final stretch of my education. It's an investment in my future and in my dream of becoming an occupational therapist."

—Michelle, Student Success Fund recipient

*Calculated by tracking fund recipient and general NOVA student completion rates from the initial 2023 cohort through Spring 2026.

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Thank you to the NOVA community and those who contributed to this report.