



June 10, 2021

COVID 19 UPDATE - VIRGINIA NEWS

Virginia Employment Commission

Virginia

- The advance number of actual initial claims under state programs, unadjusted, totaled 367,117 in the week ending June 5, a decrease of 58,196 (or -13.7 percent) from the previous week.
- Nationwide, in the week ending June 5, the advance figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims was 376,000, a decrease of 9,000 from the previous week's unrevised level of 385,000.

Deaths rose in Virginia's mental hospitals last year, but COVID-19 wasn't the prime culprit - Virginia Mercury

Virginia Mercury

- The findings are raising concerns that patients are being inappropriately admitted to mental hospitals with complex medical conditions, said Colleen Miller, executive director of the Disability Law Center of Virginia.
- Over the years, Miller said that's likely resulted in a growing number of what DLCV calls "inappropriate" admissions — patients who would be better served in settings equipped to provide medical care.

Virginia housing market helps lead economic recovery following COVID-19

Augusta Free Press

- Virginia's booming real estate industry has been a leading contributor to the commonwealth's economic recovery following the recession triggered by COVID-19.
- The state's economy has far outpaced expectations during the COVID-19 pandemic and recession, and a major reason has been the strength of the residential real estate market.

Not entirely free of the pandemic's grip, Virginia's Community Colleges choose unorthodox springtime commencements - VCCS

VCCS

- A few days before graduating from high school, 18 year old Frank Kennedy earned his associate degree in Arts & Sciences Summa Cum Laude at Rappahannock Community College.
- But with determination, a positive attitude, and help from Camp Community College staff, Person graduated this spring with an associate degree in business administration, and was chosen student speaker at Camp's commencement exercises.

Virginia Tech to require COVID-19 vaccines for students

Roanoke Times

- The American College Health Association has advised campuses to enforce vaccine requirements for students, calling it "the most effective way for institutions of higher education to return to a safe, robust on-campus experience for students in fall semester 2021."
- About 500 among 5,300 institutions of higher learning are currently requiring vaccines of at least some students or employees, according to tracking from the Chronicle of Higher Education.

Roanoke Valley sees alarming trend as new COVID-19 cases double

WSLS

- – Since last week, the number of newly reported COVID-19 cases has doubled in the Roanoke City and Alleghany Health districts.

- And it's just a reminder to us that COVID is still in our community and we still need to take precautions," said Morrow.

Restaurant owners face burnout from long, hard shifts

The Northern Virginia Daily

- Burnout in the restaurant industry is a real thing, Arevalos and Grant said, and it's something they and their employees have felt the last 18 months.
- Both Arevalos and Grant have made a career in the food industry, having met while working for a large private restaurant company in Chicago before eventually finding their way to Shenandoah County, where Grant grew up.

Virginia's employment initiative VA Ready initiative enrollment reaches 2K

WFXRtv

- The initiative provides several incentives for people to gain new skills in accelerated training courses when they enroll in any VA Ready-approved FastForward course with the Virginia Community College System.
- "The state of Virginia's economy has begun to improve as Covid-19 cases have decreased and vaccinations have increased, but there are still many Virginians trying to reenter the workforce or reskill into an entirely new industry where good, family sustaining jobs are open," said Caren Merrick, chief executive officer of VA Ready.

#RealCollege 2021: Basic Needs Insecurity Among Virginia Community College System Students During the Ongoing Pandemic

The Hope Center

- Using our sixth-annual #RealCollege Survey, we assessed VCCS students' basic needs security and their wellbeing, as indicated by employment status, academic engagement, and mental health.
- This report examines the pandemic's impact on Virginia Community College System (VCCS) students who were able to continue their education in this trying environment.

JLARC moves up interim report on VEC to September

Richmond Times-Dispatch

The Virginia Employment Commission has been criticized for slow handling of claims under dispute or appeal. Worksheets and informational handouts were available recently at the People Incorporated Workforce Development Programs office in Abingdon.

Editorial: Virginia's community colleges have a set of tools to deliver an enrollment turnaround

Richmond Times-Dispatch

- Launched in 2016, Virginia's FastForward program has provided short-term workforce training (mostly six to 12 weeks long, with flexible scheduling) for more than 24,500 community college students.
- Second, the pandemic only reinforced the need for skilled workers in high-demand industries.

Virginia emergency SNAP benefits will continue in June

8News

RICHMOND, Va. (WRIC) — The Virginia Department of Social Services announced it will release emergency allotment for its Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) again in June.

Virginia has invested more than \$20 million in vaccine outreach. But demand is still dropping.

Virginia Mercury

- In less than 15 minutes, a group of volunteers and employees with the Mount Rogers Health District would pack up the day's COVID-19 vaccination clinic at the local public library.
- With fuzzy boundaries and many patients willing to travel for a shot — particularly in the early weeks of the vaccine rollout — Shelton said the system doesn't always capture every patient who received a dose outside Virginia.

COVID 19 UPDATE - NATIONAL NEWS

U.S. weekly jobless claims fall; consumer prices rise more than expected

Reuters

- The number of Americans filing new claims for unemployment benefits fell last week to the lowest level in nearly 15 months, while consumer prices increased further in May as the pandemic's easing grip on the economy continues to boost domestic demand.
- In another report on Thursday, the Labor Department said its consumer price index increased 0.6% last month after surging 0.8% in April, which was the largest gain since June 2009.

600,000 fewer students enrolled in college this spring, survey finds

Higher Ed Dive

- College enrollment fell 3.5% in the spring term compared to the prior year, representing about 600,000 fewer students and marking the steepest annual drop in a decade, according to final figures from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.
- A 4.9% drop in undergraduates, or roughly 727,000 students, fueled the decline. Graduate enrollment, which rose 4.6%, or around 124,000 students, helped offset some of those losses.

Millions of Americans could face eviction as housing protection expires in June

CNBC

- The CDC's eviction moratorium has faced numerous legal challenges and landlords have criticized the policy, saying they can't afford to house people for free or shoulder the country's massive rental arrears, which could be as high as \$70 billion .

- "If you've got the moratorium in place, it allows you the time to get the landlord paid," said Jordan, 48, who fell behind on her \$1,475 rent after she lost her sales job shortly before the pandemic.

Jobs are back, but where are the workers?

NBC News Top Stories

- "I think it's going to be harder for companies to get folks in those positions back because it's been a year, and those expectations have built up," said David Barron, a labor and employment attorney at the law firm of Cozen O'Connor.
- The Korn Ferry survey also found that roughly half — 49 percent — of workers said they would turn down a job offer that mandated full-time in-office work.

OPINION: The pandemic is wreaking havoc on the path to and from college

The Hechinger Report

- Lost in the political back and forth is funding in the American Families Plan to provide an additional \$147 billion to increase college retention and completion rates and reduce financial burdens on low-income students — much-needed steps.
- Four-year colleges, such as Illinois State University and Northern Illinois University, increased their spring-to-fall retention rates by more than 20 percentage points by continuing to work in direct partnership with the Chicago public schools to better support low-income, first-generation students.

Faculty Evaluation After the Pandemic

The Chronicle of Higher Education | News, Opinion, Advice about Higher Education

In our post-Covid personnel landscape, one-size-fits-all tenure and promotion policies are destined to fall short. By Kevin Gannon In our post-Covid personnel landscape, one-size-fits-all tenure and promotion policies are destined to fall short.

CDC: Fully vaccinated campuses can mostly drop coronavirus safety measures

Higher Ed Dive

- Colleges whose students and employees are all fully vaccinated against the coronavirus can resume in-person classes at full capacity, according to new guidance Friday from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- The agency said campuses without entirely vaccinated populations should use prevention strategies, such as mask-wearing and physical distancing.

What Will Reconnect Disrupted Learners to Education?

Strada Education Network

- Hanson was joined by two higher education experts who shared ideas about how to help reengage disrupted learners: Linda García, executive director of the University of Texas at Austin's Center for Community College Student Engagement — which promotes improvement in student learning and completion — and Su Jin Gatlin Jez, executive director of California Competes, focused on college access and success .
- Both Gatlin Jez and García said colleges need to prioritize more resources for faculty members to help students reconnect, including with work-based learning.

Online learning leaders want to prioritize flexibility post-pandemic

Inside Higher Ed | Higher Education News, Career Advice, Jobs

- The CHLOE report, which includes partial and complete survey responses from 422 chief online learning officers, indicates there is now greater concern for quality standards and increased commitment to faculty professional development and preparing face-to-face students to study online.
- The sixth Changing Landscape of Online Education (CHLOE) report, published today by Eduventures Research and Quality Matters, offers insight into how college and university administrators responded to the pandemic and what online learning leaders consider to be strategic priorities for online learning over the next three to five years.

Bipartisan bill would authorize millions in federal grant funding for work-based learning programs

Inside Higher Ed | Higher Education News, Career Advice, Jobs

- A bipartisan bill introduced in the Senate last week would pump federal funding into community college work-based learning programs, helping to provide students with more opportunities to further their education and the support they need to be successful.
- This is especially important because students at community colleges often come from a variety of nontraditional backgrounds, whether they're low income, first generation, adult learners or international students, and they require additional support services to ensure their success, said Michael Matthews, government relations manager at the Association for Career and Technical Education.

Infographic: What students really think about the COVID vaccine

Inside Higher Ed

- And when New York governor Andrew Cuomo announced that SUNY campuses, including UB, would mandate COVID-19 vaccinations for any student to attend in-person classes this fall, Spyhalsky felt encouraged.
- The Student Voice survey asked the 15 percent of respondents who had not been vaccinated and do not plan to get the shot what they would do if their college or university required it.

Chronicling Basic Needs Insecurity Throughout COVID-19

Higher Education Today

- A recently released report from the HOPE Center presents findings on student basic needs in Texas throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The survey reports on the overall experiences of students during the fall 2020 semester, with a particular focus on three areas of basic needs insecurity: food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness.

The Post-Pandemic Role of Education Philanthropy

FutureEd

- Second, given its greater flexibility relative to government funding streams, philanthropy has a unique opportunity of providing innovation and risk capital to nonprofits to help them meet their target populations' needs more effectively.
- Third, philanthropy should fund learning and measurement to ensure that the organizations it supports truly understand the impact their programs are having.

COVID-19: Transfer, Mobility, and Progress - National Student Clearinghouse Research Center

National Student Clearinghouse Research Center

COVID-19's resurgence in late 2020, coupled with its disproportionate economic and health impacts on disadvantaged populations in the U.S. made navigating traditional transfer options even more difficult.

Community colleges launch new plans for campus housing

Inside Higher Ed | Higher Education News, Career Advice, Jobs

- While public awareness of housing insecurity among community college students has grown over the years, there's now a "distinct uptick" in new pilot projects and plans to house them, said Sara Goldrick-Rab, president and founder of the Hope Center.
- More than half of the student body lacked consistent housing in the last year, according to a March survey of the campus, conducted by Temple University's Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice, which researches food and housing insecurity among college students.

Pandemic Fuels Increase in Financial Aid Appeals

Inside Higher Ed | Higher Education News, Career Advice, Jobs

Institutions are reporting an increase in the number of financial aid appeal requests they've received since last March, pointing to the financial impact that the COVID-19 pandemic is continuing to have on students' ability to pay for college, according to a new survey from the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators.

Innovations in Distance Education When Broadband Is Not an Option

Ed Note

- State leaders are at a pivotal moment: Let's reimagine learning while addressing inequitable access to broadband internet — not just now, this summer or next year, but for the long term.
- As Pennsylvania Department of Education leaders and educators explore the opportunities that datacasting provides, they realize this innovation impacts learners of all ages: preschoolers in early childhood centers such as Head Start programs; K-12 students with homework assignments, remote learning and summer school; adolescents and young adults in the juvenile justice education system; and adults in workforce training programs.