Honorary Degree

Purpose: Honorary Degrees are awarded:

1. to bring national recognition and renown to the University;
2. to recognize outstanding contributions to society such as scholarship, artistic production, or humanitarianism; and
3. to aid in attracting outstanding commencement speakers.

Eligibility for Consideration: Consideration will be given to qualified candidates without regard to race, sex, creed or national origin.

The most important single guideline determining eligibility is implied in the fact that the recipients of the degree are forever associated with the University, and therefore, must be of sufficient stature and character so as to honor the University by receiving an honorary degree from it.

Examples of such persons might be prominent graduates, important business leaders, outstanding professional persons, leaders in public affairs, statesmen, prominent educators, outstanding humanitarians, and persons distinguished in the arts, sciences, and the humanities.

There should be clear demonstration why these individuals should be recognized by an institution of higher learning and more specifically Virginia Commonwealth University. Also, the individuals considered should be recognized for their contribution to society.

There are a number of people who, because of positions held, should not normally be considered for honorary degrees. This group includes members of the Board of Visitors and present employees of the University. In addition, emeriti faculty and former members of the Board should only be considered for honorary degrees on an exceptional basis.

Number of Awards: No more than five (5) honorary degrees will be awarded within a one-year period.

Time of Awards: Conferral of honorary degrees may be made at Commencement or at other special occasions.

Public Announcements: Public announcement of the award is to be handled exclusively through the Office of the President.
Edward A. Wayne Medal

Purpose: The Edward A. Wayne Medal is a high honor bestowed by Virginia Commonwealth University and is awarded in recognition of extraordinary generosity and service to the University and the community.

The recipient either must have served as a volunteer leader in a major role for a campaign or fund drive at the University, demonstrated a commitment to the Commonwealth and its citizens through leadership and/or personal philanthropy, served in a leadership capacity for one of the University’s related foundations, advisory boards or alumni associations, or contributed a leadership gift to the University. The medal may be awarded to both the donor and members of their family if it is deemed appropriate by the President and the Special Awards Committee.

The Medal is named in honor of Mr. Edward A. Wayne, who was Chairman of the Commission to Plan for the Establishment of a Proposed State-Supported University in the Richmond Metropolitan Area. This commission recommended, and the General Assembly approved, the establishment of Virginia Commonwealth University in 1968. In addition, Mr. Wayne, who was a past president of the Federal Reserve Bank, served as VCU’s first vice-rector and had been a long-time friend and supporter of the University.

Number of Awards: While there is no fixed number of awards, sufficient care and restraint shall be exercised so that the Edward A. Wayne Medal will remain an exceptional honor.

Time of Awards: The Edward A. Wayne Medal will be awarded at Commencement.

Public Announcement: Public announcement of the award is to be handled exclusively through the Office of the President.

Presidential Medallion

Purpose: The Presidential Medallion is a high honor bestowed by Virginia Commonwealth University and is awarded in recognition of outstanding contributions by a member of the University community. The award will recognize extraordinary achievement in the world of learning and dedication to Virginia Commonwealth University as evidenced by a series of outstanding contributions to several areas of University life. In order to recognize outstanding contributions by members of the University community, the President recommended, and the Board of Visitors approved, the establishment of this award in March, 1984.

Number of Awards: While there is no fixed number of awards, sufficient care and restraint shall be exercised so that the Presidential Medallion will remain an exceptional honor.

Time of Awards: The Presidential Medallion will be awarded at either the Annual Faculty Convocation or at Commencement upon recommendation of the President.

Public Announcement: Public announcement of the award is to be handled exclusively through the Office of the President.