

A stack of several books is shown, with a rolled diploma tied with a red ribbon resting on top. A graduation cap with a black tassel is positioned above the books. The background is a soft, warm gradient.

# GREAT JOBS GREAT LIVES

The Gallup-Purdue Index Report

**VIRGINIA TECH**

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 VirginiaTech  
Invent the Future®

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# INTRODUCTION

For years, the value of a college degree has been determined not by the most important outcomes of a college education but by the easiest outcomes to measure — namely, job and graduate school placement rates and alumni salaries (usually only from their first job out of college). While these metrics have some merit, they do not provide a holistic view of college graduates' lives. These outcomes do not reflect the missions of higher-education institutions, and they do not reflect the myriad reasons why students go to college.

Together, Gallup and Purdue University created an index that examines the long-term success of graduates as they pursue a good job and a better life. This index — the Gallup-Purdue Index — provides insight into the relationship between the college experience and long-term outcomes.

## **GREAT EXPERIENCES: ALUMNI ATTACHMENT**

Gallup's research across hundreds of organizations in many industries shows that fully engaged customers buy more, stay with you longer and are more profitable than average customers — in good economic times and in bad.

The Gallup-Purdue Index measures graduates' current emotional attachment to their alma mater by adapting Gallup's research on customer engagement to assess graduates' perceptions of their colleges both in retrospect to their undergraduate experiences and their views as current alumni.

Because students spend a significant amount of resources preparing for life outside of college, it is crucial to gauge whether the experiences they had in college have promoted a well-lived life. This includes if they perceive that the college was a great fit for them, having professors who cared and

made learning exciting and, most importantly, feeling that their school prepared them well for life outside of college.

The Gallup-Purdue Index uncovers which college experiences and perceptions are related to greater gains in well-being and the workplace.

## **GREAT LIVES: WELL-BEING**

Well-being is not only about being happy or wealthy, nor is it only synonymous with physical health. Rather, it is about the interaction and interdependency between many aspects of life, such as finding fulfillment in daily work and interactions, having strong social relationships and access to the resources people need, feeling financially secure, being physically healthy and taking part in a true community.

Gallup and Healthways developed the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being 5 View to measure these important aspects. This survey, based on findings from the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index and years of joint research, asks 10 questions that gauge well-being in five elements:

**Purpose Well-Being:** Liking what you do each day and being motivated to achieve your goals

**Social Well-Being:** Having strong and supportive relationships and love in your life

**Financial Well-Being:** Effectively managing your economic life to reduce stress and increase security

**Community Well-Being:** The sense of engagement you have with the areas where you live, liking where you live and feeling safe and having pride in your community

**Physical Well-Being:** Having good health and enough energy to get things done on a daily basis

Gallup categorizes people's well-being in each of the elements as "thriving," "struggling" and "suffering," based on their responses. Those who are thriving are strong, consistent and progressing, while those who are struggling are moderate or inconsistent. Those who are suffering are at high risk.

Understanding how people think about and experience their lives is one of the first steps in determining the appropriate interventions that organizations, communities and higher-education institutions need to take to solve their biggest challenges. This research has the ability to provide colleges and universities with insight on how to improve the lives of current undergraduates in these key areas, which are within their control. Institutions can help provide their students with goals that are ultimately more fulfilling than income alone.

### **GREAT JOBS: WORKPLACE ENGAGEMENT**

Engagement is more than job satisfaction. It involves employees being intellectually and emotionally connected with their organizations and work teams because they are able to do what they're best at, they like what they do at work, and they have someone who cares about their development at work.

Gallup's expertise on engagement in the workplace is rooted in more than 30 years of research on the 12 elements that best predict employee and workgroup performance. Based on responses to questions that measure the 12 elements, Gallup categorizes workers as engaged, not engaged or actively disengaged. People who are engaged at work are involved in and enthusiastic about their work. They are loyal and productive. Those who are not engaged may be productive and satisfied with their workplaces, but they are not intellectually and emotionally connected to them. Workers who are actively disengaged are physically present but intellectually and emotionally disconnected. They are unhappy with their work,

share their unhappiness with their colleagues and are likely to jeopardize the performance of their teams.

Recent Gallup research shows that only 30% of Americans are engaged in their jobs, meaning that the U.S. workplace is missing out on staggering amounts of economic benefit that comes from workforces that are more engaged. If higher education does not lead graduates to an engaging job, then it has fallen down on a central expectation of students and their families who support them through college.

### **NATIONAL COMPARISONS**

For the purposes of this report, data from the Virginia Tech alumni cohort (those who received their bachelor's degree after 1950) are compared with Gallup's database of respondents in the national Gallup-Purdue Index who received their undergraduate degree in the same time frame. Some differences may exist between the national comparison points included in this report and national estimates that Gallup has previously released because this report includes graduates since 1950.

Additional comparison groups include graduates (within the Gallup-Purdue Index) of colleges with the Carnegie Classification as research universities with very high research activity (RU/VH — referenced as research universities throughout the remainder of the report), as well as those from Virginia Tech's State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV)-approved peer institutions.

Listings of these comparison groups can be found at <http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/> and [http://www.ir.vt.edu/work\\_we\\_do/PeerInstitutions/homepage\\_SCHEV.html](http://www.ir.vt.edu/work_we_do/PeerInstitutions/homepage_SCHEV.html).

Demographically, the sample of Virginia Tech alumni is similar to that of graduates interviewed in the Gallup-Purdue Index national survey in age (averaging 47 years) but, in accord with the historical male-female student ratio at Virginia Tech, includes a higher proportion of male respondents. The Virginia Tech alumni sample is 63% male, compared with 48% in the national sample, which may be related to the school's history. In 1964, the association between Radford College, the women's division of Virginia Tech, and Virginia Tech was dissolved, and Radford College became an independent university.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Gallup-Virginia Tech Alumni Survey interviewed nearly 14,000 Virginia Tech alumni through an Internet survey about their experiences at Virginia Tech and their lives today. This report explores the relationship between Virginia Tech graduates' university experience and long-term outcomes based on their responses to the Virginia Tech Alumni Survey. The results illustrate that, on average, Virginia Tech alumni have great jobs and high well-being, and that they have a strong connection to the university.

Many Virginia Tech alumni have “great jobs,” which Gallup defines as full-time employment for an employer and being engaged at work. Two-thirds of Virginia Tech graduates, including 66% of its male graduates and 68% of its female graduates, work full time for an employer, higher than the national average of 58%, and also higher than alumni of other research universities (as defined by Carnegie) and SCHEV-approved peer institutions. Just 1% of Virginia Tech alumni are unemployed and looking for work.

Employed Virginia Tech alumni are also more likely to be engaged at work than other college graduates nationally. Slightly less than half of Virginia Tech alumni (46%) who are employed full time for an employer are engaged at work, including 44% of male graduates and 47% of female graduates. The overall engagement rate among all alumni is notably higher than both the national average for college graduates (39%) and the average for alumni of research universities (41%) and SCHEV-approved peer institutions (42%). Eight percent of employed Virginia Tech alumni

are actively disengaged at work, somewhat lower than the national average of 12%.

Compared with graduates of other universities, more Virginia Tech alumni have “great lives,” which Gallup defines as thriving in all five well-being elements. One in six Virginia Tech graduates (16%) are thriving in all five well-being elements: purpose, social, financial, community and physical, higher than the national average of 10% among college graduates.

The Corps of Cadets, Virginia Tech’s student military and citizen leader community, leads the way in well-being. More than one-quarter of cadets (28%) are thriving in all five elements, nearly three times the national average for college graduates. Given the program’s focus on leadership, it is not surprising that 52% of the Corps respondents indicate that they felt well-prepared for life after college.

A high proportion of Virginia Tech alumni are emotionally attached to their university, particularly compared with alumni from other schools. More than four in 10 (42%)

Virginia Tech alumni feel emotionally attached to the university, more than twice as high as the national average (18%). More than half strongly agree that Virginia Tech was the perfect school for them and that they couldn't imagine a world without it, one of the two component questions. This may be related to how well they feel Virginia Tech prepared them for life outside of college.

Nationally, the odds of graduates being emotionally attached to their alma mater are nearly nine times higher if graduates feel their school prepared them well for life outside of college. Forty-three percent of Virginia Tech alumni feel they were well-prepared for life after college, compared with 29% nationally. **Some of Gallup's most important findings include:**

#### **GREAT EXPERIENCES: ALUMNI ATTACHMENT**

- More than four in 10 (42%) Virginia Tech alumni are emotionally attached to their university, far exceeding the rate among college graduates nationally (18%), as well as the rate among graduates of other research institutions (20%).
- More than half of Virginia Tech alumni strongly agree that the university was the perfect school for them (53%) and that they can't imagine a world without it (52%).
- Virginia Tech alumni who participated in co-curricular activities are more than twice as likely to score as emotionally attached, according to two questions that measure graduates' sense of connection to their school.
- The odds of Virginia Tech graduates being emotionally attached to their alma mater are more than five times higher if they strongly agree that their school prepared them well for life outside of college, and are nearly six times higher if they strongly agree that their college was passionate about the long-term success of its students.
- Forty-three percent of Virginia Tech graduates strongly agree that the university prepared them well for life after college.
- Alumni who strongly agree that their professors cared about them as a person are four times as likely to have

an emotional attachment to Virginia Tech as those who do not strongly agree that they had this experience.

#### **GREAT LIVES: WELL-BEING**

- One in six (16%) Virginia Tech alumni are thriving in all five well-being elements, compared with 10% nationally, 11% in other research universities and 12% in SCHEV-approved peer institutions.
- Just 12% of Virginia Tech alumni are not thriving in any of the five well-being areas, compared with 18% nationally and 16% among the SCHEV-approved peer institutions and research university comparison groups.
- Virginia Tech graduates exceed the national average, as well as graduates of SCHEV-approved peer institutions and research universities, in each element of well-being: 60% are thriving in purpose well-being, 57% in social well-being, 56% in financial well-being, 52% in community well-being and 41% in physical well-being.
- Corps of Cadets alumni are highly likely to be thriving in all elements of well-being: 73% are thriving in purpose well-being, and 74% are thriving in financial well-being.
- Virginia Tech alumni who volunteer their time are more likely to be thriving in all elements of well-being than those who do not. Nearly one-quarter of alumni (23%) who volunteer more than 20 hours a week are thriving in all five elements, compared with 10% of those who do not volunteer at all. Even one to five hours of volunteering a month is positively related with higher well-being.

## **GREAT JOBS: WORKPLACE ENGAGEMENT**

- Two-thirds of Virginia Tech alumni are currently employed full time for an employer, higher than the national average (58%). Virginia Tech alumni are very unlikely to be unemployed; only 1% are unemployed and looking for work.
- Almost half of employed Virginia Tech graduates (46%) are engaged at their workplaces, compared with 39% of national college graduates.
- Forty-three percent of alumni agree that Virginia Tech prepared them well for life outside of college, well above the national average of 29% and the average of 28% for other research universities.
- Eighteen percent feel they had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals. Those who had a mentor are more than twice as likely to be engaged at work.
- Twenty-seven percent say they were extremely active in co-curricular organizations while at Virginia Tech. Students who were active in these organizations are nearly twice as likely to be engaged at work.
- Thirty percent of Virginia Tech alumni had an internship or job that allowed them to apply what they learned in the classroom. Participation in internships is also increasing; 42% of recent alumni (2010-2014) say they had an internship while at Virginia Tech.



GREAT EXPERIENCES:

# ALUMNI ATTACHMENT

Gallup explores the connection between the “customers of higher education” and their alma mater by looking at their level of agreement with two questions: “I can’t imagine a world without [College name]” and “[College name] was the perfect school for people like me.” Graduates who strongly agree with both items are considered “emotionally attached” to their alma mater. Slightly more than half of the respondents strongly agree that Virginia Tech was the perfect school for them (53%) and that they can’t imagine a world without it (52%).

Virginia Tech alumni are more likely to be emotionally attached to their university than alumni of other universities, either in the national sample or compared with peer institutions, such as other research universities or SCHEV-approved peer institutions. More than four in 10 (42%) Virginia Tech graduates are emotionally attached to their alma mater, which is more than double the average of all college graduates nationwide (18%). Far fewer Virginia Tech alumni are emotionally unattached (3%) than the national average (9%). The majority of all students fall

somewhere in between and are neither emotionally attached nor emotionally unattached.

In the national study, the odds of graduates being emotionally attached to their alma mater are nearly nine times higher if graduates strongly agree that their school prepared them well for life outside of college, and the odds are more than eight times higher if they strongly agree that their college was passionate about the long-term success of its students.

## ALUMNI ATTACHMENT

	VIRGINIA TECH	NATIONAL GPI	RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES	SCHEV-APPROVED PEER INSTITUTIONS
Emotionally Attached	42%	18%	20%	23%
Emotionally Unattached	3%	9%	9%	7%
Others (Neither Emotionally Attached nor Emotionally Unattached)	55%	73%	71%	70%



Nearly one-quarter of Virginia Tech graduates strongly agree that their university was passionate about the long-term success of its students, which is on par with the national Gallup-Purdue Index average but somewhat higher than their SCHEV-approved peer institutions (17%) and other research universities (18%).

### Virginia Tech is passionate about the long-term success of its students.

% Strongly agree

VIRGINIA TECH	NATIONAL GPI	RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES	SCHEV-APPROVED PEER INSTITUTIONS
24%	24%	18%	17%

Virginia Tech alumni are far more likely to believe their university prepared them well for life outside of college (43%) than are college graduates nationally (29%), graduates of other research universities (28%) or SCHEV-approved peer comparison schools (30%).

### Virginia Tech prepared me well for life outside of college.

% Strongly agree

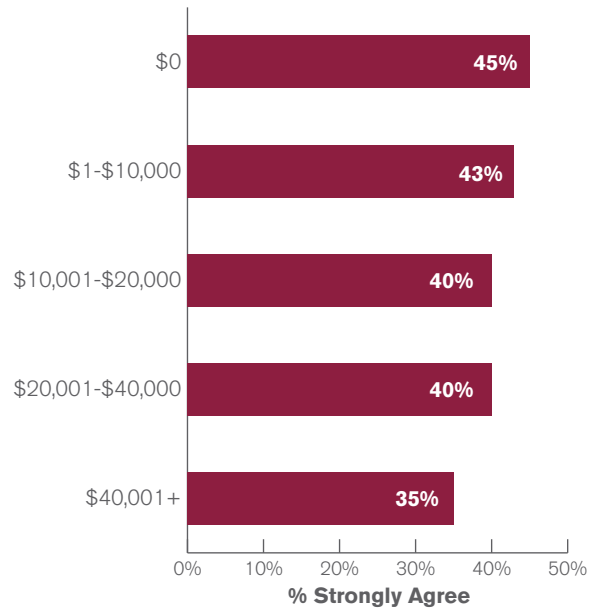
VIRGINIA TECH	NATIONAL GPI	RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES	SCHEV-APPROVED PEER INSTITUTIONS
43%	29%	28%	30%

#### STUDENT LOANS AFFECT FEELINGS OF PREPAREDNESS FOR LIFE AFTER COLLEGE

Overall, about two in five Virginia Tech alumni (38%) report taking out loans to fund their education, which is lower than the national average and the percentage at other research institutions (48% and 45%, respectively). One in five (21%) Virginia Tech graduates report borrowing more than \$10,000 in loans.

More recent graduates (1990 through 2014) report taking out larger loans. Nearly half of those alumni (46%) took out loans, while more than one-third (37%) report borrowing \$10,000 or more. Of recent graduates, those with smaller loans are significantly more likely to feel well-prepared for life outside of college.

#### VIRGINIA TECH PREPARED ME WELL FOR LIFE OUTSIDE OF COLLEGE. (BY LOAN AMOUNT FOR RECENT GRADS, 1990-2014)



**More than half (52%) of the Corps of Cadets respondents strongly agree that their university prepared them well for life after college.**

Additionally, involvement in co-curricular activities is a positive indicator of alumni attachment. More than half (52%) of the Corps of Cadets respondents strongly agree that their university prepared them well for life after college.

Graduates who are emotionally attached to their college or university are more likely to be thriving in all elements of well-being and more likely to be engaged at work.



GREAT LIVES

# WELL-BEING

Virginia Tech alumni are more likely than the national college graduate comparison group, as well as graduates in their SCHEV-approved peer institution and research university cohorts, to be thriving in every element of their well-being. Roughly one in six (16%) are thriving in all five well-being elements, compared with 10% nationally. Additionally, 12% are not thriving in any of the elements, which is lower than the national average as well as their SCHEV-approved peer institution and research university cohorts.

## Well-Being Elements

THRIVING IN	VIRGINIA TECH	NATIONAL GPI	RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES	SCHEV-APPROVED PEER INSTITUTIONS
No Elements	12%	18%	16%	16%
One Element	16%	20%	20%	18%
Two Elements	19%	18%	18%	18%
Three Elements	19%	18%	18%	19%
Four Elements	19%	15%	16%	16%
Five Elements	16%	10%	11%	12%

Three in five Virginia Tech graduates (60%) are thriving in purpose well-being, meaning the majority of Virginia Tech alumni like what they do each and every day and are motivated to achieve their goals.






Fifty-seven percent of Virginia Tech alumni are thriving in their social well-being. Graduates thriving in social well-being have strong support relationships and love in their life. Virginia Tech's graduates' thriving levels in the social well-being element are higher than all college graduates nationwide (49%).

Similarly, 56% of Virginia Tech alumni are thriving in the element that is more traditionally associated with their long-term success — financial well-being. Virginia Tech

graduates lead the national average (42%), meaning that more Virginia Tech graduates feel financially secure, and fewer are worrying about money.

A little more than half of Virginia Tech alumni (52%) are thriving in community well-being, slightly higher than the national average (46%), indicating that at least half of the graduates like where they live and have pride in their community.

In line with the national average, Virginia Tech alumni are least likely to be thriving in their physical well-being. Four in 10 (41%) are considered thriving in their physical well-being, slightly higher than the national average (35%) or their SCHEV-approved peer institution and research university cohorts.

	VIRGINIA TECH	NATIONAL GPI	RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES	SCHEV-APPROVED PEER INSTITUTIONS
 <b>PURPOSE WELL-BEING</b>	60%	52%	52%	54%
 <b>SOCIAL WELL-BEING</b>	57%	49%	50%	49%
 <b>FINANCIAL WELL-BEING</b>	56%	42%	46%	47%
 <b>COMMUNITY WELL-BEING</b>	52%	46%	47%	49%
 <b>PHYSICAL WELL-BEING</b>	41%	35%	35%	37%

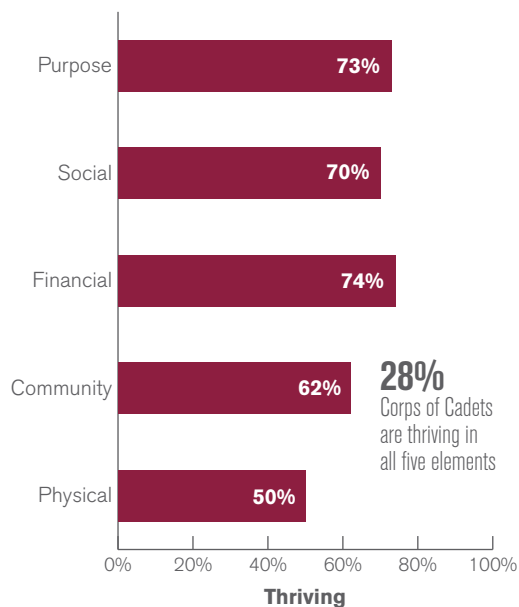
Of particular note, 28% of the Corps of Cadets respondents are thriving in all five elements, almost triple the national average of college graduates. Corps alumni are particularly likely to be thriving in financial well-being.

Virginia Tech graduates who participated in NCAA athletics are also more likely to report thriving in the various well-being elements, with 19% thriving in all five

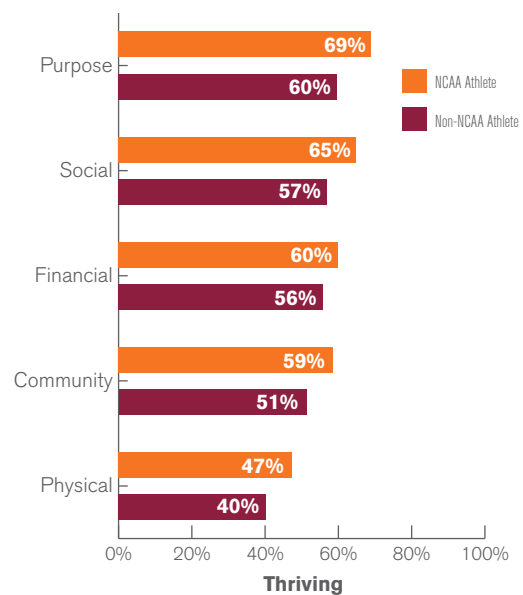
elements. Former student-athletes are particularly likely to be thriving in purpose (69%) and social (65%) well-being.

Virginia Tech's well-being statistics are positive considering the strong relationship between employee engagement and well-being. According to the national study, college graduates are nearly five times more likely to be thriving in all five elements of well-being if they are engaged at work.

CORPS OF CADETS WELL-BEING



STUDENT-ATHLETE WELL-BEING



GREAT JOBS

# WORKPLACE ENGAGEMENT

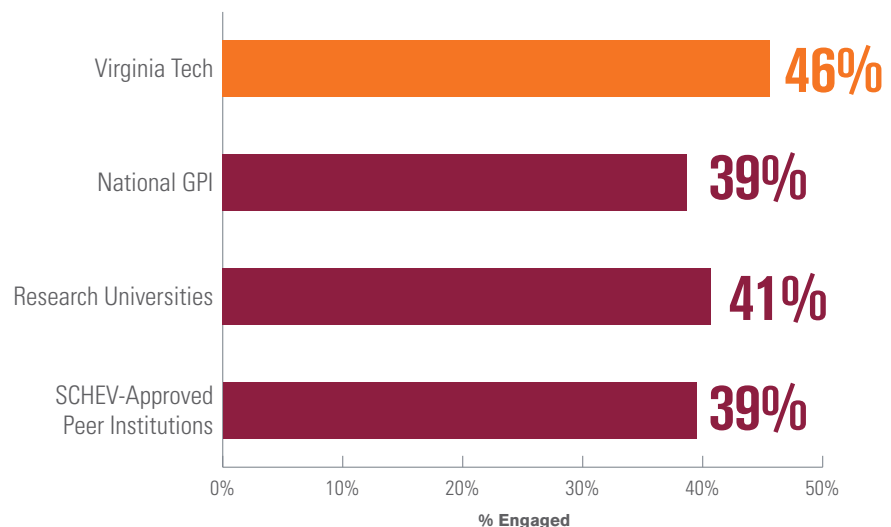
Two-thirds of Virginia Tech alumni, including 66% of men and 68% of women, are currently employed full time for an employer, which is higher than the national average (58%). Virginia Tech alumni are also more likely to be employed than graduates of SCHEV-approved peer schools or other research universities. Additionally, 1% of Virginia Tech alumni are unemployed and looking for work, compared with 3% of other college graduates.

	VIRGINIA TECH	NATIONAL GPI	RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES	SCHEV-APPROVED PEER INSTITUTIONS
Employed Full Time (Employer)	67%	58%	59%	59%
Employed Full Time (Self)	4%	5%	6%	6%
Employed Part Time, Do Not Want Full Time	9%	11%	11%	10%
Unemployed	1%	3%	2%	3%
Employed Part Time, Want Full Time	3%	5%	5%	4%
Not in Workforce	16%	18%	17%	18%

While the overall employment numbers are positive for Virginia Tech alumni, the aim of a university is not just to prepare their students for a job but to prepare them for a good job — that is, a full-time job for an employer where they are engaged at work. Virginia Tech graduates outperform their peers in this area as well.

Nearly half of Virginia Tech alumni (46%) who are employed full time for

EMPLOYED VIRGINIA TECH ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT



an employer are engaged at work, higher than the 39% of college graduates nationwide who are engaged. Additionally, 8% of Virginia Tech alumni are actively disengaged at work, lower than the national average of 12%. Virginia Tech alumni are also doing better on employee engagement compared with their SCHEV-approved peer institution or research university cohorts.

This higher level of engagement among working Virginia Tech graduates is important for employers because engaged workers are the lifeblood of their organizations. Gallup workplace engagement studies show that business or work units that score in the top half of their organization in employee engagement have nearly double the odds of success (based on a composite of financial, customer retention, safety, quality, shrinkage and absenteeism metrics) compared with those in the bottom half.

Compared with bottom-quartile units, top-quartile units have:

- 10% higher customer loyalty/engagement
- 22% higher profitability
- 21% higher productivity
- 25% lower turnover for high-turnover companies (those with 60% or higher annualized turnover)
- 65% lower turnover for low-turnover companies (those with 40% or lower annualized turnover)
- 48% fewer safety incidents
- 28% less shrinkage
- 37% lower absenteeism
- 41% fewer patient safety incidents
- 41% fewer quality incidents (defects)

The national Gallup-Purdue Index shows that employed graduates who are engaged at work have much greater odds of thriving in all five elements of well-being.

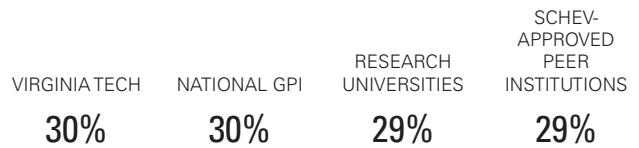
**EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: AN AREA OF FUTURE FOCUS**

Employed Virginia Tech alumni currently enjoy relatively high levels of engagement within the workforce. Findings from the national Gallup-Purdue Index indicate that strong relationships exist between having deep and meaningful

experiential college learning opportunities and feeling supported during the undergraduate experience and employee engagement later in life. In the national study, graduates who strongly agree that they had internships or jobs where they were able to apply what they were learning in the classroom, were actively involved in co-curricular activities or organizations and worked on a project that took a semester or more to complete had two times greater odds of being engaged at work than those who did not strongly agree that they had these experiences. (See <http://www.gallup.com/poll/182306/big-six-college-experiences-linked-life-preparedness.aspx>.)

**While attending Virginia Tech, I had an internship or job that allowed me to apply what I was learning in the classroom.**

% Strongly agree



Seven percent of Virginia Tech alumni strongly agree that they had all three experiences, which is largely comparable to both the national average and their peer institutions. Roughly three in 10 strongly agree that they had an internship or job (30%) or worked on a project that took one semester or more to complete (31%), both in line with the national average and their peer institutions.

Knowing the importance of applied internships or jobs, as well as involvement in long-term projects, this may be a future area of emphasis for Virginia Tech.

Participation in internships or academically relevant jobs has substantially increased in recent years, with 42% of the most recent graduates (2010-2014) strongly agreeing that they had such a job. A similar increase is seen among college graduates nationally.

## While attending Virginia Tech, I had a project that took one semester or more to complete.

% Strongly agree

VIRGINIA TECH	NATIONAL GPI	RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES	SCHEV-APPROVED PEER INSTITUTIONS
31%	32%	31%	29%

Applied learning on the job or in the classroom is not the only form of experiential learning that is important. Being active in co-curricular activities and organizations may also predict student success after college, and this is one area in which Virginia Tech stands out. More than one-quarter (27%) strongly agree that they were extremely active in co-curricular activities and organizations while attending Virginia Tech, compared with the national average of 20%. If Virginia Tech alumni strongly agree that they were extremely active in co-curricular activities as undergraduates, their odds of being engaged at work were 1.7 times higher, and their odds of thriving in purpose well-being were 1.6 times higher.

## I was extremely active in extracurricular activities and organizations while attending Virginia Tech.

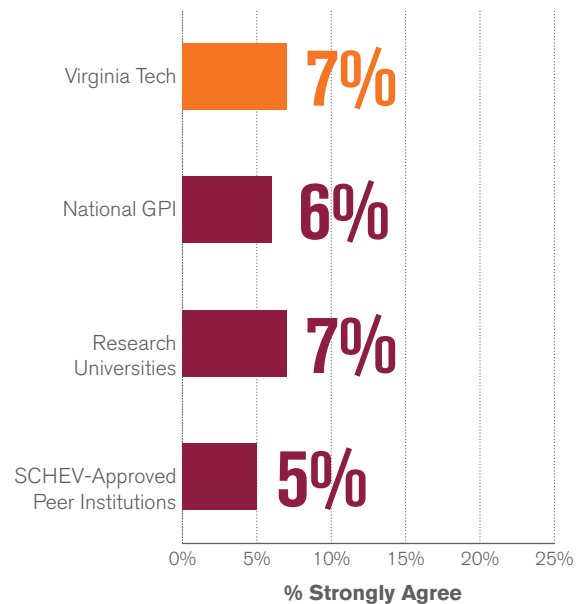
% Strongly agree

VIRGINIA TECH	NATIONAL GPI	RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES	SCHEV-APPROVED PEER INSTITUTIONS
27%	20%	19%	17%

The ability to provide a student with all three experiences is important, as Gallup's findings show that students are two times more likely to be engaged at work if they strongly agree that they experienced all three of these during their undergraduate years. While Virginia Tech graduates compare favorably with other graduates on the co-curricular metric, they are on par with alumni of other universities in experiencing all three.

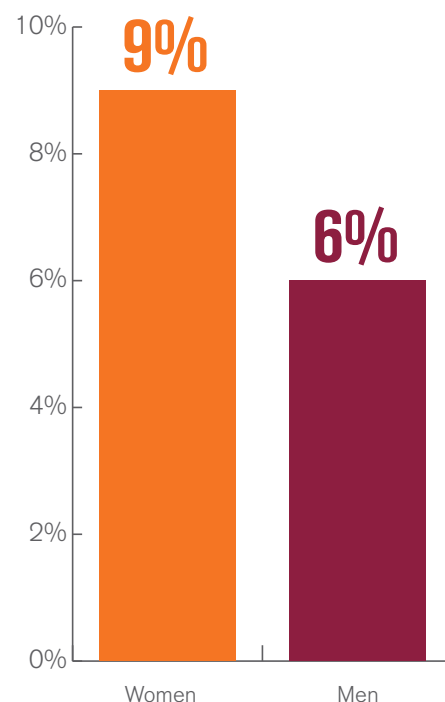
## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

EXPERIENCED INTERNSHIP/JOB, SEMESTER OR MORE PROJECT AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES



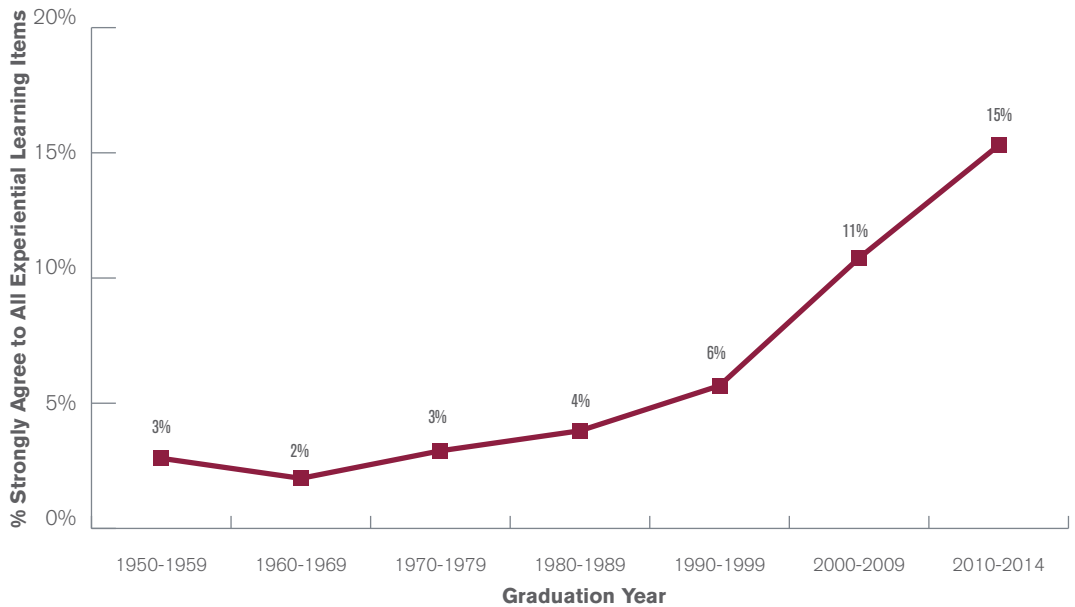
Female Virginia Tech graduates are significantly more likely than male graduates to agree that they had experiential learning opportunities. Nine percent of female graduates say they experienced all three opportunities, compared with 6% of male graduates.

## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING BY GENDER



Additionally, recent graduates are significantly more likely to agree that they had experiential learning opportunities while at Virginia Tech. About one in seven recent graduates — 15% of those who graduated between 2010 and 2014 — say they had experiential learning opportunities, compared with 6% of Virginia Tech students who graduated in the 1990s.

ALUMNI WHO HAD EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES, BY DECADE



**VIRGINIA TECH GRADUATES LOWER ON EMOTIONAL SUPPORT**

Experiential learning is not the only metric that is related to future success. Nationally, students who recall receiving support from professors and mentors while attending a college are more likely to be thriving in all five elements of well-being and are more than twice as likely to be engaged in the workplace.

Gallup measures this support with three questions related to professors and mentorship: whether professors at their school cared about them as people, whether they had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams and whether they had at least one professor who made them excited about learning.

Twenty-three percent of Virginia Tech alumni strongly agree that professors cared about them as a person, slightly lower than the national average (27%) but significantly higher than their peers in the SCHEV-approved peer institution (13%) and research university cohorts (16%).

**My professors at Virginia Tech cared about me as a person.**

% Strongly agree

VIRGINIA TECH	NATIONAL GPI	RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES	SCHEV-APPROVED PEER INSTITUTIONS
23%	27%	16%	13%

Virginia Tech alumni also slightly trail the national average in having had a mentor who encouraged their goals and dreams but are roughly on par with their peer institutions.

**While attending Virginia Tech, I had a mentor who encouraged me to pursue my goals and dreams.**

% Strongly agree

VIRGINIA TECH	NATIONAL GPI	RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES	SCHEV-APPROVED PEER INSTITUTIONS
18%	22%	18%	17%

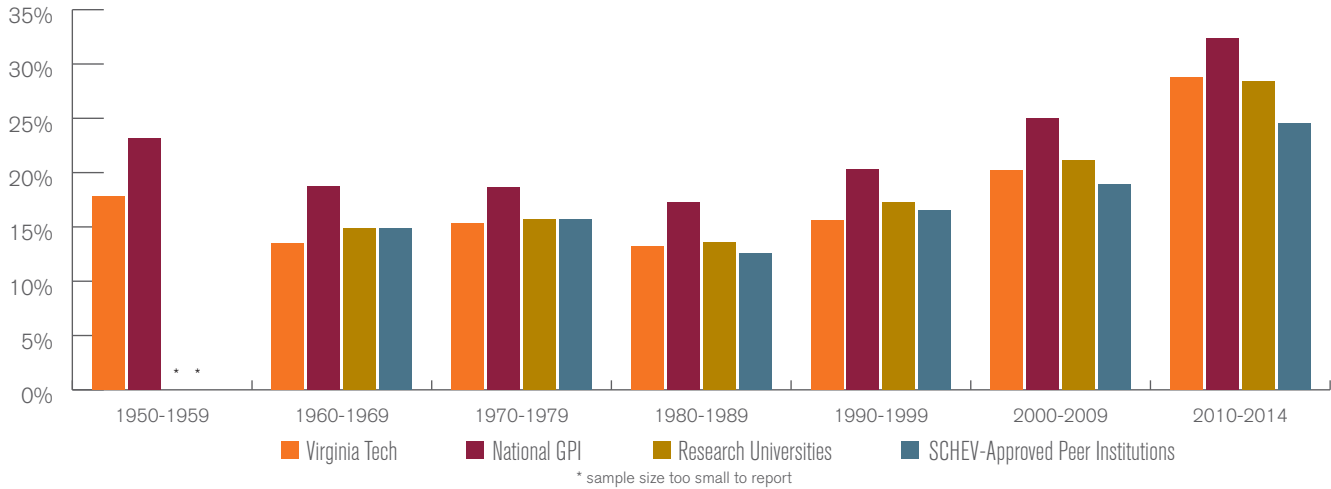
Two-thirds of Virginia Tech alumni strongly agree that they had at least one professor who made them excited about learning, which is slightly higher than the national average for college graduates.

**I had at least one professor at Virginia Tech who made me excited about learning.**

% Strongly agree

VIRGINIA TECH	NATIONAL GPI	RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES	SCHEV-APPROVED PEER INSTITUTIONS
66%	63%	61%	61%

HAD A MENTOR RELATIONSHIP AS UNDERGRADUATE  
(% STRONGLY AGREE)



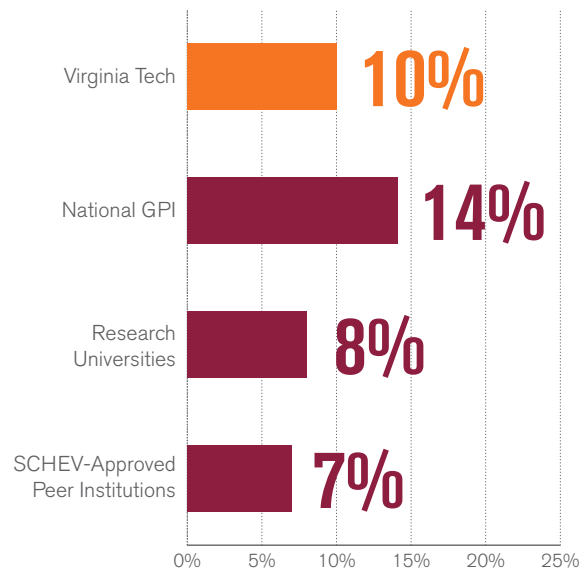
While Virginia Tech alumni are less likely than national college graduates to strongly agree that they had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams during their undergraduate experience, more recent graduates are more likely than older graduates to have had this experience.

Nearly three in 10 (29%) recent Virginia Tech graduates (2010-2014) strongly agree that they had this critical mentor relationship during their undergraduate experience, on par with the 25% of alumni from SCHEV-approved peer institutions and other research universities (28%). Virginia Tech still lags behind the national average of recent graduates, however.

One in 10 Virginia Tech alumni say they felt supported by professors and mentors, defined as strongly agreeing with all three statements. This is lower than the national average for college graduates (14%) but still higher than their SCHEV-approved peer institution or research university cohorts.

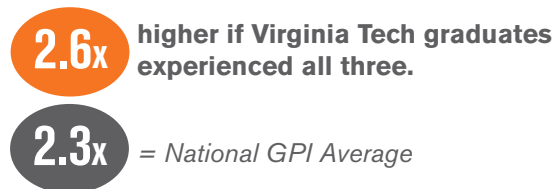
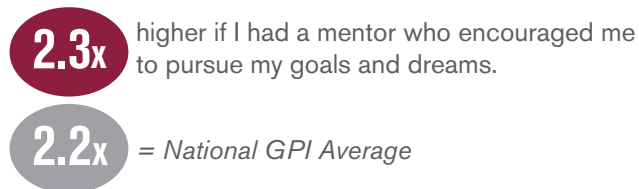
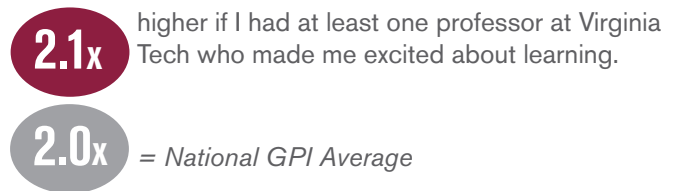
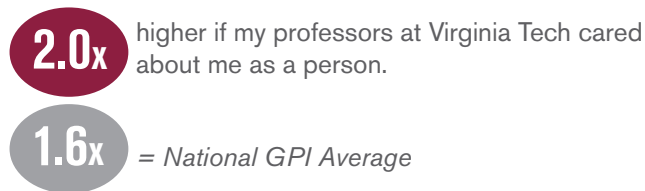
The support that graduates recall receiving from their institution as students can be important well into their postgraduate career. Alumni are twice as likely to be engaged at work if they believe professors cared about them as a person, and are more than twice as likely to be engaged at work if they say they had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals.

EXPERIENCED SUPPORT





# If supported, the odds of Virginia Tech alumni being engaged at work are:



## UT PROSIM (THAT I MAY SERVE)

Virginia Tech's motto Ut Prosim (That I May Serve) is a timeless ideal for the school's land-grant values of discovery, learning and engagement, which serve as a strong foundation. It also represents a service ethos that has permeated the university for more than 100 years. Community service, or volunteerism, is just one important element of that ideal. Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their feelings about and involvement in community service. Nearly half of all Virginia Tech alumni strongly agree they can help individuals in need through community service, and four in 10 strongly agree they can make a difference in their community.

## Through community service ...

	% STRONGLY AGREE
I can help individuals in need.	<b>47%</b>
I can make a difference in my community.	<b>40%</b>
I can apply my knowledge in ways that solve "real-life" problems.	<b>34%</b>
I can help promote social change.	<b>30%</b>

Respondents were also asked about the average number of hours per month they spend in unpaid community service. Virginia Tech alumni donate a significant amount of their time. More than three-quarters of alumni (76%) report volunteering at least one hour a month, and one in seven (14%) volunteer more than 20 hours a month. Older graduates are more likely to volunteer a significant

amount of their time. Of recent graduates (2010-2014), 73% volunteer at least one hour a month, and 8% volunteer more than 20 hours a month. These numbers are self-reported and may be exaggerated due to social desirability.

## Participation in unpaid community service or volunteer activities in last 12 months

GRADUATION YEAR	# HOURS VOLUNTEERED PER MONTH (ON AVERAGE)				
	0	1-5	6-10	11-20	20+
1950-59	27%	26%	18%	11%	19%
1960-69	24%	26%	18%	12%	20%
1970-79	22%	32%	17%	11%	17%
1980-89	17%	37%	18%	11%	18%
1990-99	20%	41%	16%	9%	14%
2000-09	30%	42%	13%	6%	9%
2010-14	28%	44%	15%	6%	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>14%</b>

Generally speaking, the more time respondents spend participating in unpaid community service or volunteer activities, the more likely they are to be thriving in each of the five well-being elements. Those who volunteer at least one hour a month are substantially more likely to be thriving in community well-being than those who do not volunteer at all.

Alumni who spend more time volunteering are also more likely to be thriving in a greater number of well-being elements. Nearly one-quarter of those who volunteer more than 20 hours a month (23%) are thriving in all five elements, compared with 10% of those who do not volunteer at all.

## **FINAL THOUGHTS**

Virginia Tech appears to have set its graduates up for success based on several metrics, measured by a holistic look at life. One in six alumni are thriving in all five elements of well-being, including 60% thriving in purpose well-being and 57% in social well-being. Two-thirds of Virginia Tech alumni are currently employed full time for an employer, higher than the national average.

Virginia Tech alumni also rate their current life a 7.9 on a 10-point scale, where 10 is the best possible life,<sup>1</sup> compared with 7.4 among college graduates nationally. In addition, Virginia Tech alumni expect that their lives will get better, rating their lives in five years at 8.7 on the 10-point scale, compared with 8.3 among college graduates in general.

These results, coupled with positive outcomes on both well-being and employee engagement, indicate that graduates are achieving in many different areas. The results also indicate that the university has room to evolve and improve student outcomes further, particularly in the area of the college experiences it offers and encourages among its student body. This research is an important step in identifying these areas for improvement.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on the Cantril Self-Anchoring Striving Scale



# METHODOLOGY

Results for the Virginia Tech study are based on Web surveys conducted March 10–April 1, 2015, with a sample of 13,994 Virginia Tech undergraduate alumni. The sample of alumni email addresses was provided by Virginia Tech. Alumni were included in the study if the institution had an email address on file.

Virginia Tech records indicate approximately 99,741 alumni were invited to participate in the study. Of those, 13,994 completed the survey.

Results for the Gallup-Purdue Index, the study used for comparison purposes, are based on Web surveys conducted Feb. 4–March 7, 2014, with a random sample of 29,560 respondents with a bachelor's degree or higher, aged 18 and older, with Internet access, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia.

The Gallup-Purdue Index sample was compiled from two sources: the Gallup Panel and the Gallup Daily tracking survey. The Gallup Panel is a proprietary, probability-based longitudinal panel of U.S. adults who are selected using random-digit-dial (RDD) and address-based sampling methods. The Gallup Panel is not an opt-in panel. The Gallup Panel includes 60,000 individuals, and Panel members can be surveyed by phone, mail or Web. Gallup Panel members with a college degree and access to the Internet were invited to take the Gallup-Purdue Index survey online. The Gallup Daily tracking survey sample includes national adults with a minimum quota of 50% cellphone respondents and 50% landline respondents, with additional minimum quotas by time zone within region. Landline and cellular telephone numbers are selected using RDD methods. Landline respondents are chosen at random within each household on the basis of which member had the most recent birthday. Gallup Daily tracking survey respondents with a college degree, who agreed to future

contact, were invited to take the Gallup-Purdue Index survey online.

Gallup-Purdue Index interviews are conducted via the Web, in English only. Samples are weighted to correct for unequal selection probability and nonresponse. The data are weighted to match national demographics of gender, age, race, Hispanic ethnicity, education and region. Demographic weighting targets are based on the most recent Current Population Survey figures for the aged 18 and older U.S. bachelor's degree or higher population.

All reported margins of sampling error for the Gallup-Purdue Index of all college graduates include the computed design effects for weighting.

For results based on the total sample of those with a bachelor's degree or higher, the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 0.9$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on employee engagement of those with a bachelor's degree or higher, the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 1.0$  percentage point at the 95% confidence level.

In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.

For complete Gallup-Purdue Index results, visit <http://products.gallup.com/168857/gallup-purdue-index-inaugural-national-report.aspx>.



## ABOUT VIRGINIA TECH

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, better known as Virginia Tech, is a public land-grant university with a 2,600-acre main campus in Blacksburg, Virginia, as well as educational facilities in six regions and a study abroad site in Switzerland. The commonwealth's third-largest university and a leading research institution, Virginia Tech is nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains and offers more than 250 undergraduate and graduate degree programs to more than 31,000 students and manages a research portfolio of more than \$496 million. The university fulfills its land-grant mission of transforming knowledge to practice through technological leadership and by fueling economic growth and job creation locally, regionally and across Virginia.

As a public land-grant university serving the Commonwealth of Virginia, the nation and the world community, the discovery and dissemination of new knowledge are central to its mission. Through its focus on teaching and learning, research and discovery, and outreach and engagement, the university creates, conveys and applies knowledge to expand personal growth and opportunity, advance social and community development, foster economic competitiveness and improve the quality of life.

Virginia Tech attracts motivated, high-achieving students, staff and faculty who excel in an academically energized, technologically creative and culturally inclusive learning community. The university's bold spirit, climate of innovation and service, open boundaries of study and research, and entrepreneurial approach positively transform lives and communities.



## **ABOUT GALLUP**

Gallup delivers forward-thinking research, analytics and advice to help leaders solve their most pressing problems. Combining more than 75 years of experience with its global reach, Gallup knows more about the attitudes and behaviors of the world's constituents, employees and customers than any other organization. Gallup consultants help private and public sector organizations boost organic growth through measurement tools, strategic advice and education. Gallup's 2,000 professionals deliver services at client organizations, through the Web and in nearly 40 offices around the world.

## **ABOUT HEALTHWAYS**

Healthways is an independent, global well-being company that provides comprehensive improvement solutions to increase performance and lower healthcare costs in its client populations. Dedicated to creating a healthier world one person at a time, Healthways uses the science of well-being and behavior change to produce and measure well-being improvement for its customers. Healthways provides personalized support to individuals to optimize each participant's health and productivity and to reduce health-related costs, and also advises leaders on how to maximize well-being across an organization.

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