

ENVISIONING GUILFORD COLLEGE 2027

GUILFORD COLLEGE'S STRATEGIC PLAN

October 2023



WELCOME TO
GUILFORD COLLEGE

PREFACE

Envisioning Guilford College 2027 is a strategic plan for Guilford College and provides a roadmap for activity and achievement through 2027. A planning team launched the process to develop this plan in the spring of 2022, with several community meetings, focus groups, and surveys.

The planning process was undertaken with acknowledgment of elements conducted through earlier strategic planning efforts, which included deliberation on the mission and values of Guilford. After some initial discussion, participants concluded that the mission and seven Core Values of the College, articulated in 2002 as part of the Strategic Long-Range Plan 2005-2010 (SLRP I) process, continue to fit the College's vision. The seven Core Values are: **Community, Diversity, Equality, Excellence, Integrity, Justice** and **Stewardship**

The plan was also undertaken with an acknowledgment that at the end of 2027, Guilford will be 10 years away from the 200th anniversary of its founding. Our hope is that the plan will position the institution for success for the next generation.

Understanding Our Why

What is it about Guilford College that makes it so special, and how might we build on these characteristics? We begin this plan with some reflections on the "Why of Guilford."

For many, the sense of community has attracted people to this place. It is a combination of our values, our size as an institution and who we attract that all add to the notion of the "Why of Guilford."

The second area that surfaced is the common experience among Guilfordians. Sharing stories of Guilford's community is key to building strong emotional connections and relationships. Guilford has played a critical part in adding to the life narratives of thousands of individuals, and a part of our goal is to find ways to further contribute to the narratives. These stories differ some across generations, but there is a common thread of community that will resonate with many Guilfordians.

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY

Founded by members of The Religious Society of Friends in 1837 as The New Garden Boarding School, Guilford College has a long history as a liberal arts institution that has embodied the integration of core Quaker principles in much of what it does – from the provision of a quality liberal arts-based education to exploring and implementing ways that



it can have a significant impact on Greensboro, surrounding communities and the nation.

Much of this plan was developed with an awareness that, throughout its history, the College has found itself rearticulating how its Quaker principles are incorporated into mission and practice. These moments inform not only the past but also our present and future. As a result, over the next several years, during the implementation phase of *Envisioning Guilford College 2027*, Guilford will reflect deeply on and build on the stories of who we are as a community. We'll also rethink how we capture and share our stories as an institution committed to meaningful enhancement in the quality of lives of members of our community and the world.

Conversations with students and alumni over the years have reinforced much of what we know and appreciate about the school.

"We cherish that we are small. We cherish that we are values-driven."

"When you leave Guilford, you think differently than when you came here."

"Achieving hard things is possible."

With steadfast conviction, our students and alumni know Guilford to be not just a college but also a community that inspires diversity of thought and purpose in our next generation of leaders.

That sense of community compels Guilfordians to support and encourage one another. This strategic plan is focused on ways that we can continue to foster and inspire that community while welcoming others.

This plan is focused on strengthening our institution for future generations. For a number of reasons, we believe that Guilford is essential to our greater society.



The Social Impact of Guilford

Over the years, Guilford College has reinforced its notions of social impact, whether through the creation of new student experiences, engaging with the community or engaging its students in the immediate region or the broader world. Part of our plan is focused on finding ways to continue to build on the impact members of our community can make.

An alum recently noted, “Guilford changes your life and equips you with the skills to change the world.” We want members of our community to actively work on making change, locally and internationally, to continue to enhance the conditions for as many people as possible.

PLAN FOCUS

This plan focuses on two primary goals:

- **Enhancing opportunities for students:** Our students are the center of everything we do at Guilford College. We exist because of them. As a result, our work must be focused on ensuring a quality liberal-arts centered, educational experience, which ultimately prepares them for whatever educational, professional, and personal journeys lay before them.
- **Strengthening the institution:** The next several years must be focused on developing strategies for strengthening Guilford to ensure its long-term success as an important higher education institution in the nation.

PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

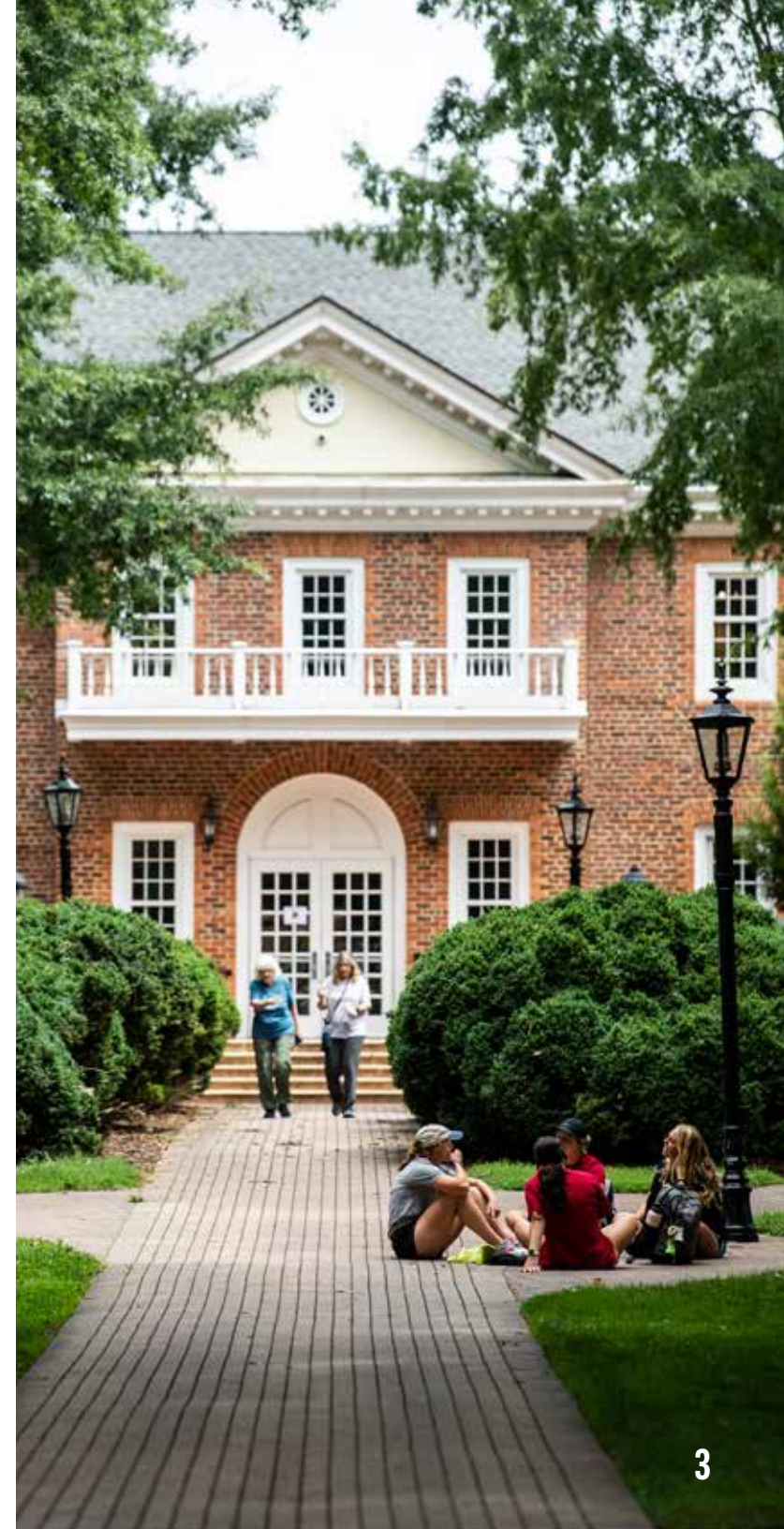
In October 2022, several priorities were shared with students, faculty, staff, and alumni. These priorities surfaced from work that came out of focus groups and surveys. Members of the community were asked to provide input in relation to the priorities. The priorities identified include:

PRIORITY 1 - SUPPORT LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH SOUND FINANCIAL PROCESSES AND PRACTICES:

Guilford will continuously improve outcomes through actions that support cost savings, reinvestment and long-term institutional sustainability.

PRIORITY 2 - RECOMMIT TO ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT AND STUDENT SUCCESS:

Guilford will attract students whose educational goals and commitment align with the College’s mission and values, and will engage them in exceptional, high-quality learning that leads to high levels of student retention, academic completion, and success after college (as defined by themselves).



PRIORITY 3 - ENHANCE OUR COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING OPERATIONS:

Guilford will be known for providing unique, high-quality educational opportunities while also supporting local, national and global change through dialogue, research and scholarship. We will deliver our communications through current and effective methods that develop and sustain positive and productive relationships with students and families, alumni and friends, current and retired faculty and staff, corporate, governmental, nonprofit and academic leaders and media.

PRIORITY 4 - FOSTER A POSITIVE WORKING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR CAMPUS:

Guilford will be a college and employer of choice, and will benefit from strong student, faculty and staff relationships and high-quality educational experiences, as well as retention and success.

PRIORITY 5 - CULTIVATE PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT ATTAINMENT OF OUR MISSION:

Guilford will serve as an educational anchor institution in Greensboro, the Triad and beyond by connecting its resources, students and alumni to meet challenges that intersect with its mission, purpose and role in the community.

DISCERNMENT, REFLECTION AND QUERY

Discernment, reflection, and query are important at Guilford. This plan considers the importance of discernment and reflection as Quaker practices we can deeply draw upon and learn from. We will dedicate substantial time during the first year of this plan to discern and reflect on who we are as an institution, the type of institution we want to be and how we express this to the world.

Much of the discernment and reflection will center on our Core Values, with a goal of helping us better cement these values into Guilford's systems.





QUERIES

The Quaker process of *query* will be core to the College's operations during the implementation of *Envisioning Guilford College 2027*. The query process will be led by Friends Center and focus on three main areas. First, we will explore the ongoing relationships between Quaker testimonies and Guilford. What do these testimonies mean to our institution? How will we use them?

Second, we will examine how Guilford's seven Core Values affect what the College does in its day-to-day realities, its goal setting, and its mission achievement.

Third, we will reflect on questions that have been identified related to Guilford's processes. Some important queries that will be explored during the early phase of the implementation cycle are:

- **What is the Why of Guilford?** This query occurred in the Fall of 2023, engaging students, faculty, staff, alumni, and members of the broader community. Through a series of virtual and in-person interactions, the aim was to build a broad and shareable understanding of why Guilford is important to so many people, and how to share its value among members of a broader community.
- **What does it mean to be a liberal arts institution?** This query was addressed in a forum attended by alumni, faculty, staff and student representatives during Homecoming & Family Weekend Oct. 1, 2023, and through a series of virtual interactions.
- **What does it mean to be a Quaker-founded institution?** This query occurred in a session led by Friends Center with trustees, faculty, staff and student representatives during the meeting of the Board of Trustees meeting Oct. 28, 2023.
- **How should Guilford handle transformation, especially when considering factors of diversity and inclusion?** This query was addressed in a session led by Transformation & Inclusion staff with trustees, faculty, staff and student representatives during the meeting of the Board of Trustees Oct. 26, 2023.
- **What is the role of innovation at Guilford?** This query occurred as part of the Innovation & Entrepreneurship Forum with leaders in the AI field and campus representatives Oct. 12, 2023.
- **What does it mean to be an anchor institution?** This query will likely occur in conjunction with the February 2024 Board of Trustees meeting.

The query processes that will be undertaken will be explored in a public way, and reflections stemming from the queries will be shared widely.



CYCLES OF THE PLAN

Many strategic planning processes have a clear delineation between the beginning and the end of the planning cycle. The end of the planning period normally signifies the beginning of an implementation phase (which later leads to an evaluation phase). This plan has been developed with an iterative and collaborative process in mind, with frequent reviews for modification based on achievement of shorter-term goals.

Ultimately, this plan will encourage on-going learning by members of the community on how we can grow and develop in a way that enhances Guilford's impact on students. The plan will also frequently explore factors of measurement (metrics) and feel (asking provocative questions that lead to accurate conclusions and new learning).

WHAT WE ARE ULTIMATELY MOVING TOWARD

Our community of students, faculty, staff and alumni has come to value Guilford as an institution that develops ethically-grounded and community-minded leaders in a wide range of sectors. This plan galvanizes the work of our institution as it continues to provide a liberal arts education with a goal of producing students who are making important contributions in the broader world.

PRIORITY 1: SUPPORT LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH SOUND FINANCIAL PROCESSES AND PRACTICES

Sound financial processes that consider Guilford's strategies for enhancing revenue streams and ensuring responsible fiscal management are central to Guilford's success. The College will continuously improve outcomes through financial processes that support cost savings, reinvestment and long-term institutional sustainability.



GOAL 1a: IDENTIFY ALTERNATE AND NEW REVENUE STREAMS AND BUILD PROCESSES FOR VETTING THE STREAMS:

Guilford College currently has two major sources or “streams” of income – tuition and fees from students and donations from benefactors. Guilford will develop a “third stream” of revenue for the institution. This new stream will include various earned-income opportunities to support segments of the College.

GOAL 1b: ENHANCE ADVANCEMENT OPERATIONS AND STRATEGY:

Guilford’s Advancement Office remains relatively small and continues to rebuild to increase donor engagement efforts that lead to financial contributions. Guilford will embark on a multi-year fundraising campaign designed to support the College’s long-range strategic priorities.

In anticipation of the College’s next comprehensive fundraising campaign, enhancements must take place in the Advancement Office. Critical components of this goal will include:

- Establishment of a new organizational model for the Advancement Office that will allow for a broader distribution of management responsibilities and a simultaneous increase in attention to the College’s most important prospects.
- Investment in increasing major gifts and planned giving staff to assist in securing leadership and major gifts in the near term and well into the future.
- Enhancement of its internal operations capacity (administrative, research, data analytics, communication, etc.) to identify, engage, cultivate and steward individuals to build mutually beneficial relationships that result in significant philanthropy.
- Establishing a highly effective annual giving staff to increase the number of new relationships while strengthening existing relationships.
- Development of a campaign plan to determine campaign priorities, objectives and goals, a detailed timetable for implementation and resources to support the campaign.
- Develop a planned giving program that encourages alumni and friends to make donations of their assets through bequests, charitable gift vehicles, qualified retirement accounts, real estate and life insurance.

GOAL 1c: IDENTIFY AND IMPLEMENT A FEASIBLE DISCOUNT RATE:

We will develop and implement a strategy for reducing the non-funded discount rate for the College. The non-funded discount rate is a category of financial assistance that Guilford provides its students. It is considered non-funded because the support is based on resources from the institution and not resources from donors. The higher the non-funded institutional discount rate, the fewer resources Guilford has to address other needs of the institution. Our long-term goal is to provide financial support to students who need it, while minimizing the support that doesn't come from philanthropic sources. Ultimately, we would like to build our funded discount support through increasing scholarship assistance raised through external resources.

GOAL 1d: DEVELOP ONGOING EFFICIENCY REVIEWS AND EFFICIENCY INCENTIVES:

Guilford will develop a process for conducting ongoing efficiency reviews. This will entail building processes to identify where we can be more efficient in our expenditures.

Part of this strategy will be to offer an incentive program for members of the Guilford community to identify places where the College can do a better job of conserving resources.

GOAL 1e: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES FOR GROWING THE GUILFORD ENDOWMENT:

Guilford's endowment must grow significantly over the next several years. The growth process will need to establish clear goals for increasing the value of the endowment and focus on increasing support for endowed scholarships and faculty positions.

GOAL 1f: BUILD STRATEGIES FOR CONTINUED GROWTH IN ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION:

Enrollment should be determined by targets based on institutional capacity. This will involve the active engagement of the Office of Admission and Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness. We will work with our broader community to determine what the targets are, based on institutional capacity.

GOAL 1g: ENHANCE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSION:

Guilford will enhance its grant submission rates. This will require expanding the team of internal grant specialists and external consultants to assist with the process. The College will also establish a negotiated indirect rate for federal awards.

GOAL 1h: REVISIT/RELAUNCH ADULT/CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM:

We will develop opportunities for re-establishing a continuing/adult education program. The plan will include targets for growth and revenue projections for the program.



PRIORITY 2: RECOMMIT TO ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT AND STUDENT SUCCESS

Guilford will attract students whose educational goals and commitments align with the College's mission and values. We will raise our students' already exceptional learning experiences. This will lead to increased rates of student retention and completion and translate into even more success by students after college. The College will also make efforts to increase financial assistance opportunities. Initiatives realized under this section of the plan will be promoted in partnership with the Office of Communications and Marketing to share the College's academic and other achievements.

GOAL 2a: ENHANCE OUR ACADEMIC PROGRAMS:

Committing to giving all of our students a signature learning experience before they graduate is vital to Guilford's success. The College will ensure this by providing every incoming student who remains in good academic standing an ethical leadership experience and, grounded in the Quaker heritage and values of the College, a curricular experience focused on stewardship, peace or justice.

Developing new undergraduate and graduate programs that are appealing to current and future students, that our faculty are excited about, and that will further the mission of the College is central to this plan. Also critical is growing our current programs and their enhancement of intellectual curiosity and skills of our students.

GOAL 2b: CONTINUE TO ENHANCE THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE:

The Guilford student experience in and out of the classroom plays an important role in our plan. Having a greater understanding of and enhancing our students' individual and collective experiences will help us accomplish our mission.

Achieving this goal will require building a team to assist with understanding our students' many experiences. This will be accomplished through a specific *Knowing our Students Project* that faculty, staff and students will conduct and update on a regular basis. Some questions framing the work of this team will include:

- What data are important in improving our understanding of our students?



- What divisions/offices might help us better understand our students?
- What specific research initiatives can be undertaken to enhance our understanding of the student experience?

One of the central strategies is the creation of an **Office of Transformation and Inclusion**. This office will be charged with using what we learn about our students to ensure the College is meeting the needs and building and celebrating the success of all students.

GOAL 2c: CONTINUALLY BUILD OPPORTUNITIES FOR AND WITH STUDENTS:

Faculty, staff, and alumni must continually create opportunities for and with students focused on achieving long-term success and well being. We will do so through the creation of distinctive experiences that uphold the College's Core Values with initiatives on community service, social justice and inclusion.

Guilford will support students, with attentive staff and necessary resources, throughout their journey in growing self-awareness, leadership, and discernment.

Leadership development for students will be supported through programs that provide them with training and support. Examples of such programs include The Quaker Leadership Scholars Program, Multicultural Leadership Scholars Program, Bonner Leaders Program, Principled Problem Solving Scholars and Ethical Leadership Program.

In addition, we will leverage the support of Intercollegiate Athletics. Guilford provides many opportunities for student-athletes to compete at the highest levels of NCAA Division III. Just as important, the Athletics Department emphasizes and provides learning opportunities and programming that exceeds most peer institutions. These opportunities uphold the College's Core Values with initiatives on community service, social justice, equality and inclusion.

Finally, we will leverage partnerships with our student organizations, including student government, to increase leadership development opportunities for students.



GOAL 2d: ENSURE STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADUATES OBTAIN TIMELY AND EXCELLENT SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYMENT, INTERNSHIPS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND GRADUATE SCHOOL:

Career, Academic, and Personal Exploration (CAPE) will create a visible space as a “career and graduate school center” within their area. The office will expand its role to offer career guidance, fellowship opportunities, internship opportunities, and support for attending graduate school. The office will collaborate with alumni partners to discover and shape opportunities for students.

GOAL 2e: ENHANCE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS:

We will focus on enhancing financial assistance for students. Our work collaborating with partners will develop initiatives for additional scholarships and other forms of financial support.

We will make raising support for scholarships a central part of our Advancement targets for 2023 and beyond. We will also increase on-campus and off-campus work-study jobs (and other forms of employment).



PRIORITY 3: ENHANCE OUR COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING OPERATIONS

We will deliver regular and conscientious communications that develop and sustain positive and productive relationships with students and families, alumni and friends, current and retired faculty and staff, corporate, governmental, nonprofit and academic leaders and media.

Our vision of effective communication is about relationship building, and it starts with unity of understanding and message on campus. Our faculty, staff, students and alumni are our frontline ambassadors. As a result, we need to develop, affirm, and provide needed training for supporting the development of opportunities for promoting the institution.

GOAL 3A: ENHANCE THE BROAD UNDERSTANDING OF WHO WE ARE AS AN INSTITUTION - BUILDING AND COMMUNICATING THE GUILFORD DISTINCTIVENESS:

We will ensure that prospective students and their families know what distinguishes Guilford from other institutions in order to attract best-fit students and increased support for the College. Through digital-first communications and marketing, we will focus efforts on telling the story of Guilford from the perspective of current students, faculty and staff, as well as alumni and friends. Marketing with authentic messaging will engage not only prospective students and families but a range of stakeholders, and will contribute to stronger enrollment and retention as well as philanthropic investment.

GOAL 2B: RAISE VISIBILITY IN LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA:

We will generate articles/op-eds in key markets that increase the visibility of Guilford. We will identify and gain commitments from faculty and staff experts to serve as resources for local, national and international media placements on trending topics (particularly those that showcase Guilford's strengths and interests).

GOAL 3c: INCREASE GUILFORD'S RECRUITMENT FROM PRESENT AND NEW MARKETS:

We will grow Guilford's outreach into several markets where we are already recruiting students. We will also expand Guilford's outreach into several new recruiting markets.

GOAL 3d: IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS WITH EXTERNAL CONSTITUENTS:

We will examine how others experience our main website, and our signature digital and print publications. We will measure the effectiveness of social media in telling the Guilford story. We will include our stakeholders in developing solutions and taking actions to make improvements.

GOAL 3e: IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS WITH INTERNAL CONSTITUENTS:

We will strengthen our own communications with key internal constituents (including students, faculty, staff).



PRIORITY 4: FOSTER A POSITIVE WORKING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR CAMPUS

Guilford will be the College and employer of choice for students, faculty and staff, and will benefit from strong student, faculty and staff relationships and high-quality educational experiences, as well as retention and success. We will use our Core Values to build an opportunity for employees to be recognized, developed and retained as critical members of the Guilford community. The College will focus on recruitment, retention, and development of the most talented and diverse workforce possible at all levels.

GOAL 4A: EARN CERTIFICATION AS A GREAT PLACE TO WORK:

Guilford will develop a “Community of Care” – highlighting the exceptional relationships built between students, faculty and staff as a distinctive Guilford quality. Much of this relationship building will entail a robust approach of positive, meaningful interaction in all aspects of the College’s operations. The ways in which employees engage students, the manner in which the College engages, develops and retains employees, the method of management and supervision of staff by leaders, and the opportunities created for employees to be involved in their community and College sponsored functions will all play a contributing role in defining the Guilford faculty and staff.



GOAL 4B: CREATE STRATEGIES FOR GROWING OUR CAPABILITIES AS A LEARNING/REFLECTIVE INSTITUTION:

We will develop strategies for continuous reflection on Guilford as a learning organization, through the creation of ongoing training in faculty and staff development and the continuous professional development for all members of our community (faculty, staff, students and alumni).

We will build into all major activities ways to assess what went well and what can be improved, and begin planning for the next iteration while those lessons are fresh in mind. We will develop opportunities for continuing education for faculty/staff at all stages of their careers, especially those in early stages. Some of this work will include exploring ways that we can support staff who are interested in obtaining their graduate degrees.

We will increase support for faculty and staff to attend conferences and bring back to the College what they have learned.

We will develop Guilford-based leadership programs for faculty and staff such as an Executive Leadership Fellowship Program and a Manager/Supervisor Development Program. The Executive Leadership Fellowship Program will engage an inaugural cohort of 10 to 15 leaders selected and identified as agents of change for the institution. Those leaders will be chosen based on their abilities to lead, motivate and develop teams to establish institutional change. The Manager/Supervisor Development Program will support all managers at Guilford College in their leadership roles.

We will develop concentrated training programs with internal and external partners in areas such as sales and marketing, fundraising, finance, diversity/equity/inclusion, evaluation and assessment and cyber awareness.





PRIORITY 5: CULTIVATE PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT OUR MISSION

Guilford will serve as an educational anchor institution in Greensboro, the Triad and beyond by connecting its institutional resources, students and alumni to meet challenges intersecting with our mission and purpose.

GOAL 5a: DEVELOP AN OFFICE OF CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

The **Office of Campus and Community Engagement (OCCE)** will be a central hub of Guilford College's vision to promote positive change in the world by working in partnership with community organizations, including nonprofits, schools, businesses, and others. This office will build on the work of centers such as Bonner, CPPSET, and Friends Center in focusing on community-engaged learning as a premier, high-impact practice that connects curricular and co-curricular learning objectives to community service and impact for Guilford students, faculty, staff, and community partners.

The office will also serve as an administrative hub for community partnerships and a central clearinghouse for community engagement opportunities. It will strengthen relationships with long-standing partners and will build new relationships that meet the College's strategic priorities. These relationships are critically important to Guilford's ability to operate as a trusted, reciprocating partner and in providing meaningful experiential learning opportunities for students. As such, it will be the foundation of Guilford's Anchor Institution Strategy. As a practical matter, it will maintain a complete list of current partnerships.

As an administrative hub, the OCCE will solicit and review reports of all community partnerships both within and outside the office to understand the status of those relationships with the College. This office will also celebrate community engaged learning campus-wide and serve to build Guilford's anchor institution focus.

GOAL 5b: FOCUS ON SEVERAL KEY PARTNERSHIP AREAS:

We will frame much of our partnership building in seven areas: intergroup/intercultural relations, community economic development, the arts and humanities, education, urban opportunities and challenges, environmental well-being and sustainability, and international partnerships.

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