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Virginia Tech engineering undergraduate program ranked 14th in U.S.

BLACKSBURG, Va., Aug. 19, 2005 —Virginia Tech's College of Engineering jumped to a ranking of 14th in *U.S. News & World Report's* "America's Best Colleges 2006" survey released today. Eight of the college's individual undergraduate programs are ranked among the top 25 in their fields.

The Virginia Tech College of Engineering, which traditionally is ranked by the survey among the top 20 of all accredited engineering schools in the nation that offer doctorates, rose in the rankings from 19th a year ago to 14th this year, tied with the engineering colleges at Johns Hopkins University, Northwestern University and Texas A&M University.

Among engineering schools at public institutions, the Virginia Tech engineering college shares the rank of eighth with Texas A&M. Engineering college rankings are based solely on a peer survey of deans and senior faculty at the more than 550 schools accredited by the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology.

"I've never been one to get excited over small changes in the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings, but it was gratifying to see the five point jump for the Virginia Tech College of Engineering in the new rankings of undergraduate programs," said Richard Benson, who became dean of the college on Aug. 10.

"Our rank of 14th puts us squarely among the finest engineering colleges in the nation, and speaks to the notice we're receiving for our innovative work as educators," said Benson, formerly head of mechanical and nuclear engineering at Pennsylvania State University. "This trend will continue. Virginia Tech will always be at the forefront of engineering education — attracting and graduating engineering students of unsurpassed skill."

Eight of Virginia Tech's undergraduate engineering disciplines are ranked in the top 25 nationally, based on the survey of deans and senior faculty:

Aerospace engineering — 16th;
Chemical engineering — 25th;
Civil engineering — 11th;
Electrical engineering — 19th;
Environmental engineering — 11th;
Industrial engineering — 6th;
Materials engineering — 14th;
Mechanical engineering — 15th.

Among national universities, Virginia Tech stepped back one ranking slot from last year, now sharing the 78th slot with Baylor University, Clemson University, North Carolina State University, St. Louis University and University of Colorado. Last year, Virginia Tech was one of seven universities tied for the rank of 74th.

All of the universities ranked in the top 20 this year are privately funded schools, with the exception of the University of California-Berkeley. Among publicly funded universities, Virginia Tech is ranked 33rd along with Clemson, Colorado and North Carolina State.

U.S. News & World Report bases the university rankings on data gathered from a national survey of schools. The magazine uses a number of criteria, including peer assessment, retention, faculty resources, student selectivity, financial resources, graduation rates and alumni giving.