



INFORMATION SERVICE  
GEORGE MASON COLLEGE  
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA  
FAIRFAX  
TELEPHONE 591-4600, EXT. 208

For Further Information, call Bill  
McDowell, Director of Information  
Services, George Mason University,  
591-4600, ext. 208, or (home) 273-6882

## HOLTON SIGNS GEORGE MASON SEPARATION BILL

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

RICHMOND, April 7 -- Gov. Linwood A. Holton signed into law today the bill which separates George Mason College from the University of Virginia. The bill also changed the name of the college to George Mason University and established a 16-member governing Board of Visitors for the Northern Virginia university.

Governor Holton did not name the members of the Board of Visitors today at the brief bill signing ceremony. He is expected to select the university's first Board when he returns from a trade mission to Japan and Australia later this month.

The bill Governor Holton signed today was introduced into the General Assembly in late January by Del. James M. Thomson (D-Alex.). The bill was co-sponsored by every Northern Virginia member of the General Assembly.

The separation of George Mason from the University of Virginia was part of Thomson's platform in his successful reelection campaign last fall. The bill won the unanimous approval of both the state Senate and the House of Delegates.

A large delegation from George Mason and the General Assembly was present for today's ceremonies. Members of the General Assembly included Thomson and

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Frank E. Mann, Alexandria members of the House of Delegates; Del. David A. Sutherland from McLean; Del. Warren E. Barry from Springfield; Senator Selwyn H. Smith of Prince William County; and Del. Warren J. Davis from Fairfax.

Ralph Eisenberg, assistant provost at the University of Virginia, was also on hand representing UVa President Edgar F. Shannon Jr.

Representing George Mason's Advisory Board were John C. Wood, Board chairman and former mayor of Fairfax, B. Powell Harrison Jr., an insurance executive from Leesburg; and C. Hunton Tiffany, a banker in Warrenton.

Chancellor Lorin A. Thompson headed the George Mason delegation which included Robert C. Krug, dean of the faculty; Nancy Brooks, assistant professor of Spanish and secretary of the general faculty; and four students.

The students, led by James Corrigan, president of the Student Government, included Tim Watson, Student Government treasurer; Ann O'Grady, Student Government senator; and Marion Tisdale.

The separation of George Mason today from UVa marked still another milepost in the university's rapid growth as a major institution of higher education in the Washington area and as a regional university in Virginia.

George Mason first came into existence in 1957 as "University College," connected with the University of Virginia's Northern Virginia Center. The college was located in a renovated elementary school building at Bailey's Crossroads and in the fall of 1957 had an enrollment of 17 students.

By late 1959, the name "University College" had been replaced by "George Mason College of the University of Virginia." George Mason's enrollment had

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grown to 102 students, and John N.G. Finley, the former director of the Northern Virginia Center, had assumed the full-time directorship of George Mason.

In June 1960, George Mason's connections with the Northern Virginia Center were severed and it took its place among UVA's community colleges.

In 1964, George Mason moved from its temporary location at Bailey's Crossroads into four new buildings located on 147 acres of land given to the college by the City of Fairfax. By then Finley had retired, and Dr. Robert H. Reid had been named as his successor in January of 1964. By the fall of 1964, George Mason's enrollment had grown to 356 students.

In 1966, the General Assembly authorized George Mason to become a four-year, degree-granting institution and gave it a further mandate to expand into a regional university of major proportions. That same year Lorin A. Thompson was named as the College's first chancellor.

Today, George Mason University commands an enrollment of more than 3,000 students enrolled in both undergraduate and graduate degree programs. This fall the university will open its second school -- the College of Professional Studies -- which will take its place alongside the College of Arts and Sciences.

George Mason now has a campus which encompasses 572 acres, and through the George Mason Foundation has acquired old Fairfax High School which will serve for now as the temporary home of the College of Professional Studies.

In December 1971, George Mason received its first separate accreditation from the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges.

According to the university's Master Plan, George Mason by 1985 should have an enrollment of 15,000 students and be comprised of six "cluster colleges,"

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each with its own academic facility, dormitories and student center.

In the 1972-74 biennium, beginning July 1, George Mason will begin a \$10.5 million dollar building program which will include a badly needed addition to its library, a new classroom building which eventually will house the College of Professional Studies, and the first phase of a central heating and cooling plant.

The university's first gymnasium is in the final stages of completion and work has just begun on a central student union building.