



University *of* Richmond

Appendix: Workshop Report



Workshop Report

THE LEARNING SPACE PROCESS

The Classroom Master Plan process was expanded so that it became a learning space master plan – to allow the study to consider each of the venues and support services that help create a rich learning experience for UR students. Empirical information is paramount to identifying the right space planning metrics.

Ayers Saint Gross' on-campus work at the University began in February 2013 and was completed by the end of the year. The process was designed to engage a wide group of campus constituents and utilized a variety of methods to explore the potential for improved learning environments. Activities included five intensive on-campus workshops with faculty, staff and students; workshop agendas included listening sessions, presentations with discussion, and participatory visioning exercises. Additionally, the CMPC scheduled individual interviews with 185 faculty

members.

These meetings helped to understand the goals of the University of Richmond and the efforts already underway to support teaching excellence and enhanced student learning.

Participant Schools

- Jepson School of Leadership Studies
- School of Arts & Sciences*
- Robbins School of Business
- School of Law
- School of Professional & Continuing Studies

*Members of the Art Departments participated in the Study, but Art and Art History classrooms and labs are the subject of another study, the Art Initiative, which began in 2013.



Members of the Classroom Master Plan Committee meet with Ayers Saint Gross to review data gathered during the classroom audit process.

Workshop Report

PEDAGOGY WORKSHOP FACILITATION

Ayers Saint Gross and the Classroom Master Plan Committee (CMPC) were engaged through five, two-day sessions, several WebEx conferences, and campus tours. Workshop visits were organized to meet with representatives of the schools, academic departments, the CMPC and the University's Classroom Committee and other stakeholders. These activities helped facilitate an understanding of the pedagogical changes likely or desirable in specific disciplinary areas. This also helped identify where improved learning space was needed to better support long term programmatic goals.

Each visit was carefully planned with an agenda to facilitate attendance, and included focus groups, interview sessions, walking tours and concept development. During each visit, the consultant team engaged the University community in dialogue, fact finding and decision making.

The following was accomplished through these sessions:

- Workshops engaged representative faculty of each school about pedagogy and aspirations for new types of spaces to support future teaching
- Workshops engaged representatives from learning support services to define emerging learner needs, usage patterns and identify future service strategy needs to effectively support new ways of teaching. These included representatives from groups supporting curriculum development, innovation in pedagogy, information services, academic computing, and library.
- In-person faculty interviews by members of the

CMPC received broad input on pedagogical and teaching space preferences for the general classrooms.

- Workshops with representative student groups helped to understand the way students use existing campus spaces for learning and study, and about their preferences for learning environments.
- A classroom audit assessed every existing classroom's physical, environmental and technological characteristics. In total, 168 rooms were documented.
- A utilization study assessed how existing spaces supported projected class scheduling needs and informed a "right-sizing" exercise
- Two open forums were held with the campus community, in September and November to provide opportunities for the broader faculty community to hear about the study's progress and provide input.

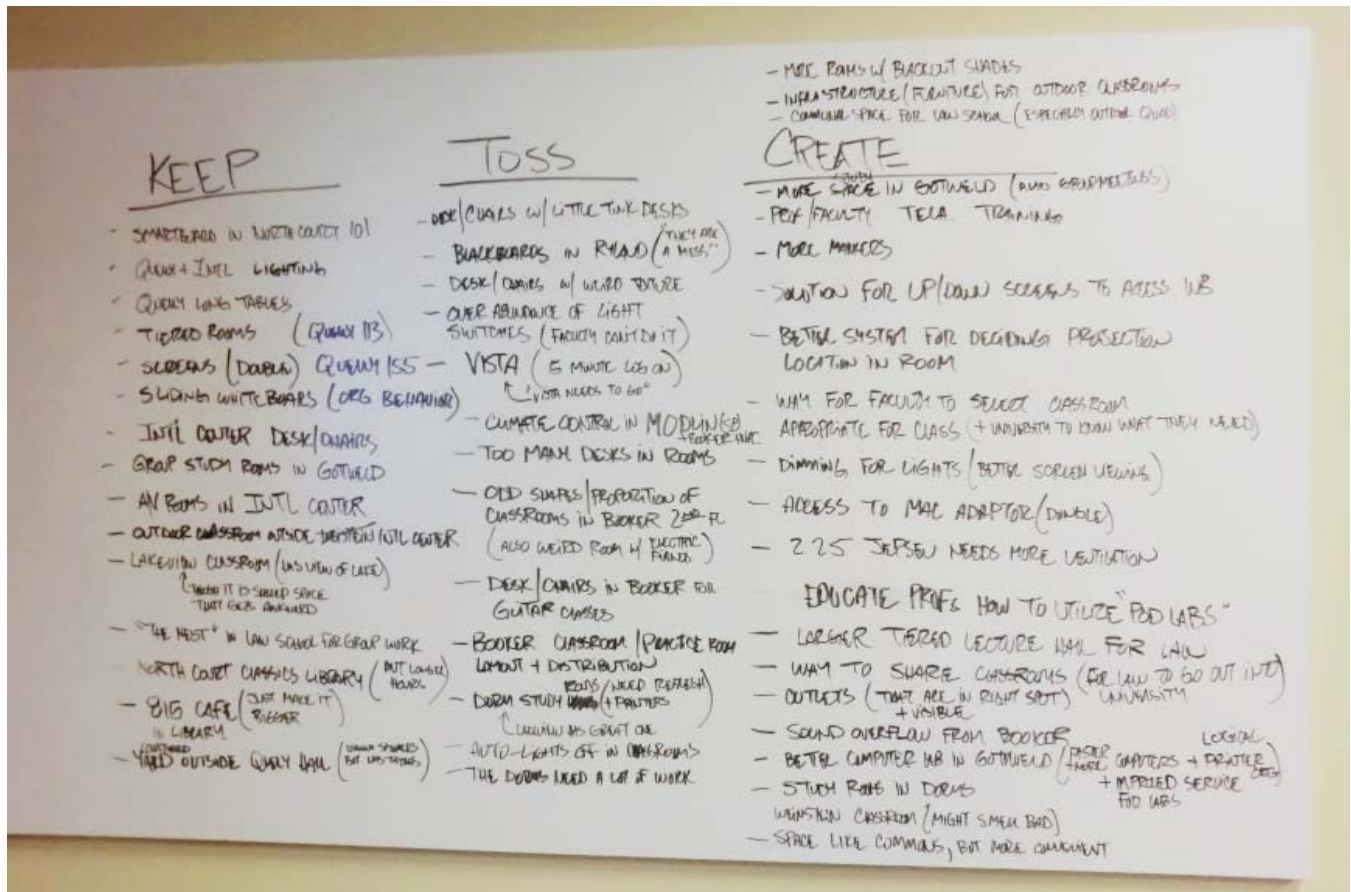
HIGHLIGHTS OF WORKSHOP 1

This initial workshop included listening sessions and briefing interviews with representative faculty and leadership from each of the schools to initiate discussion on:

- Current programs and pedagogy, and aspirations for future pedagogical approaches
- Reflection on how effective the existing teaching spaces are performing
- Future teaching and learning space needs and aspirations
- Informal learning space needs
- Define key planning challenges and measures of success



Feedback from faculty during the workshop is incorporated into an overlay of the campus map, and the use of outdoor spaces for formal and informal instruction is discussed.



The workshops help to identify what the faculty feel is working well, what they would like to change, and what they desire to create better teaching environments.

HIGHLIGHTS OF WORKSHOP 2

The second workshop continued the outline of Workshop 1 with focused session topics defined for discussion of challenges, successes and trends for Seminar, Classroom and Lecture Spaces, Learning Spaces for Science, Learning Spaces for the Arts and Informal Learning Spaces.

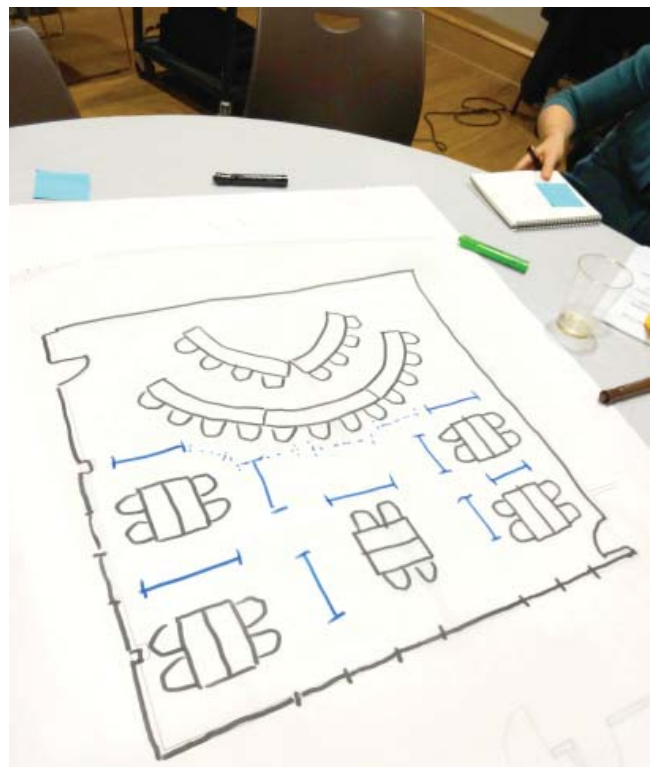


Ayers Saint Gross leads a discussion with faculty representatives and members of the Classroom Master Plan Committee

After the topics in Workshop 2 were covered, two “visioning sessions” were organized, one for faculty, and a second for students. These hands-on brain-storming exercises had multiple teams of five to eight participants reflect on the earlier discussions to develop solutions for optimal learning spaces. Participants were presented with current University spaces being considered for renovation and given representative furniture “to scale” along with post-it notes and a variety of colored markers. Each group developed one or more drawings representing their ideas for a learning space that would best meet their needs.



Faculty explore different classroom configurations to support their teaching styles during the visioning sessions



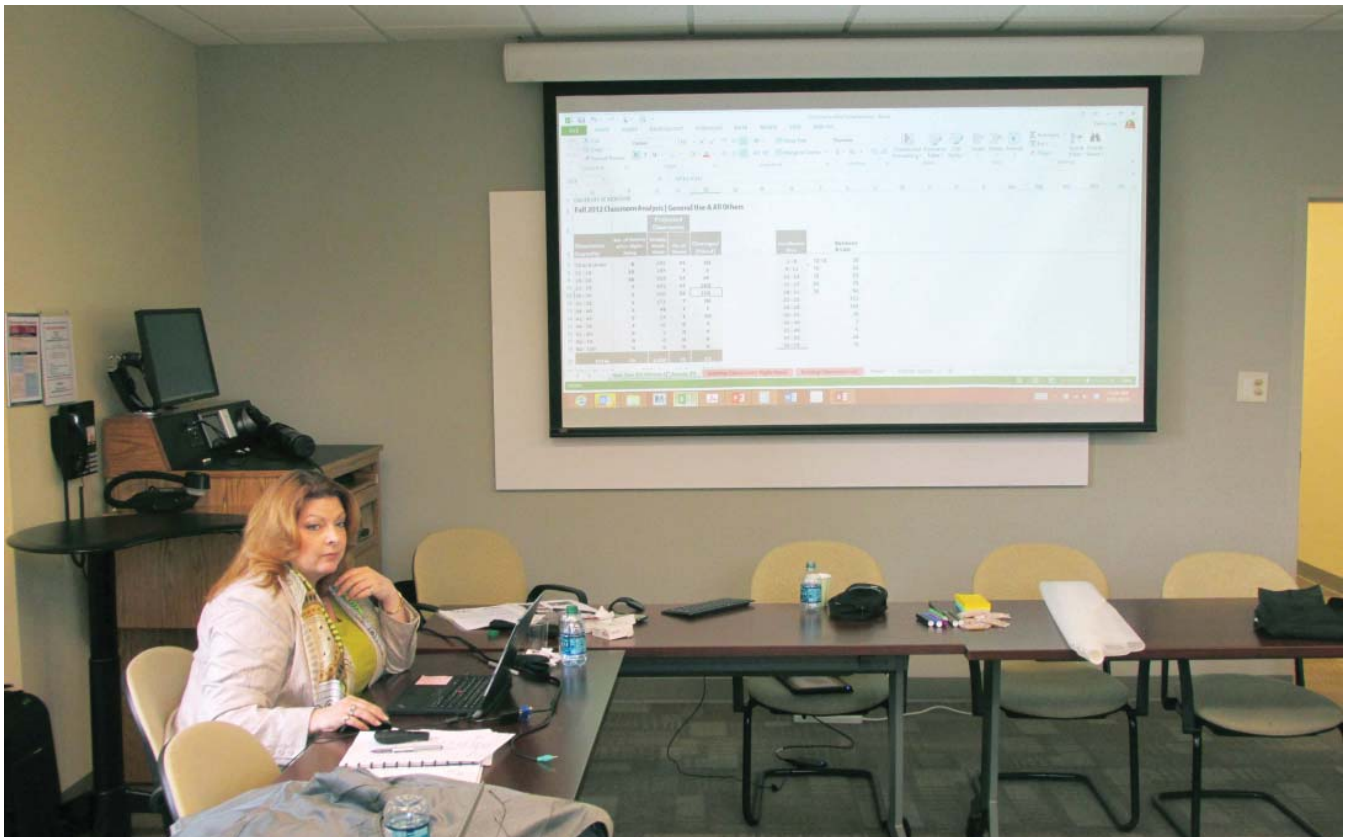
Students participating in the workshop session imagine a space that will support flexible furniture arrangements and more collaborative work.

HIGHLIGHTS OF WORKSHOP 3

The third workshop focused on several important topics, such as the results of the one on one interviews with key faculty members, reviewing key policy issues affecting class scheduling and the use of technology, and potential adjustments to the utilization of space and size of classes, which the team has since called “right-sizing” of the classrooms.

The “right-sizing” discussion was related to the University’s decision to maintain current enrollment levels. The “Utilization Review”

exercise discussed in the Appendix prompted a conversation of “classroom mix” on campus, and “right sizing” of classrooms to student seat counts. An outcome of this lengthy discussion was the ability to highlight several candidate rooms that might be renovated or improved to fill shortcomings or provide alternate environments for learning.



An Ayers Saint Gross representative presents the group with utilization data to aid in the “right-sizing” discussion

HIGHLIGHTS OF WORKSHOP 4

The compilation of the information from the classroom audit provided information about the degree of uniformity and kinds of attributes of each of the classroom spaces on campus. It also shed light on the physical and technological constraints that exists in some of the spaces. The presentation of the audit findings during this workshop served as the backdrop to an exploratory conversation with the technology consultant about trends and new developments in teaching and learning software and hardware, and how the University may want to explore some of those concepts and the related hardware in the future.

The discussion of the Candidate Rooms lead to consideration of classroom spaces that were either underutilized, poorly configured, or outdated. Of the initial candidates, four spaces were selected for near term consideration: Adams Auditorium, Jepson G24 A & B, Jepson 120 and Jepson 106. Factors that lead to this list included availability for renovation, historically low utilization, existing physical constraints and obsolete physical attributes.



The Classroom Master Plan Committee reviews the audit report with Ayers Saint Gross

HIGHLIGHTS OF WORKSHOP 5

The focus of the final workshop was to confirm the list of the final four candidate spaces and set a tentative plan for implementation. The committee felt that the first candidate for renovation in the summer of 2014 should be the Adams Auditorium in the Media Resource Center of Boatwright Library and its associated support spaces,

because the combined rooms presented a large amount of space that was marginally functional at best, and they provide an opportunity to make a significant contribution to the campus inventory as two spaces, along with some dedicated classroom storage space, one of the popular feedback items highlighted in the discussions with faculty.

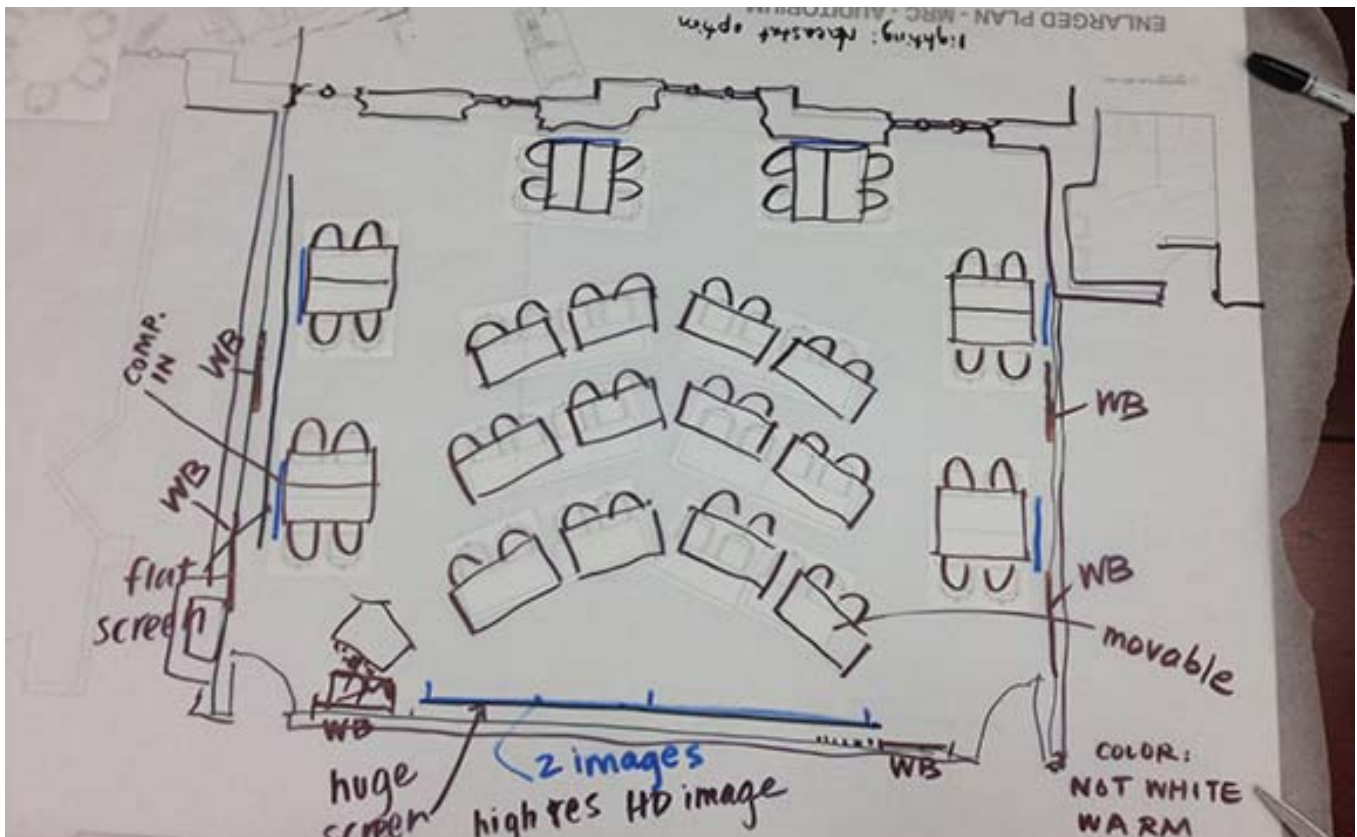


Faculty participate in the design and furniture reconfiguration possibilities associated with the Adams Auditorium space

Two visioning sessions with faculty members were organized for later in Workshop 5 to test the assumptions for creating two rooms from the MRC Adams Auditorium space, and to explore what uses those spaces could accommodate. This highly successful effort reinforced the idea that a new, large collaborative space should be created to serve as an academic teaching space that may also occasionally support events, and that the adjacent remaining space could be either a general seminar room, a space designed to support high

quality film viewing, or perhaps a space flexible enough to allow faculty to try different teaching styles.

The sketches of the Visioning Sessions were tested as detailed concepts by the architects. From this evaluation the consensus is that the renovated space, adjacent to the lobby, should be one large collaborative space - the “Incubator” classroom, with adjacent storage.



This concept drawing highlights the growing interest in the use of high resolution, high definition projection systems, multiple movable white boards, and the use of LCD panels for displaying project work at collaborative worktables.

Workshop Report

CAMPUS COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS

Faculty Participation

While the workshops allowed the committee and Ayers Saint Gross to gather significant feedback, there remained the goal of hearing from as many faculty in each school and department as possible. The committee decided that conducting a survey would risk a low response rate and that it would not collect the nuances of faculty opinion sufficiently. Instead, the committee determined to meet with every academic department or school. This method substantially expanded and improved the input already received from the workshops.

To conduct the interviews, three committee members attended each departmental or school meeting, with one person appointed to take notes. After each meeting, a summary of the notes was sent to the department for review and comments to ensure that faculty concerns and comments were accurately represented. Faculty who could not attend the meeting were asked to add their thoughts to the departmental summary. In one case, a department elected to poll its faculty and provide a summary document in lieu of a face-to-face meeting. In addition, in November 2013, the Classroom Master Plan Committee and Ayers Saint Gross held an open meeting for University faculty and staff at which we presented our findings and invited further comments and conversation. The notes below are a summary of this input.

Throughout the conversations, common themes emerged. Some departments discussed the importance of classroom adjacency to departmental offices, as faculty frequently need to

bring materials to class for that day's discussion. In other cases, specific classrooms were equipped with features needed for a class. Faculty understood that by putting the emphasis on the location of a class, the schedule would have to be more flexible.

A majority of faculty indicated a requirement for flexible classrooms. They desired furniture that was lightweight and easy to reconfigure with sufficient flat surfaces for writing and other class materials. Faculty expressed an interest in having standardized furniture configurations that would be fixed for the semester by agreement of the faculty teaching in the space. This is a cultural expectation already in some buildings, such as the Gottwald Science Center. Fixed configurations would alleviate the need to take class time to move furniture. One faculty member indicated that she scheduled her class in the earliest class time slot on the class schedule, reserving three classroom spaces with different configurations. By opting to teach at a time fewer rooms are in use, this instructor was able to keep furniture fixed, while moving the entire class to nearby classrooms as the instructional activities changed.

Faculty also indicated that some of their classes were scheduled in rooms that had more chairs than their class required. The unused furniture in some cases made it difficult to perform class activities, such as writing on boards on side walls or having students sit more closely together to facilitate discussion.

Several departments expressed an interest in

having access to larger classrooms that support collaborative work and activities. They would like one or more rooms that could be reserved together that provide:

- Space for movement
- Sufficient space for viewing multi-media as a class, with space for students to breakout into groups with no furniture moving required
- Storage space, including space to store student projects
- Higher ceilings in some situations
- Ability to share and interact among instructor and student screens/displays

Classroom environmental conditions were the subject of much discussion:

- Projector resolution and image quality
- Ambient lighting control with window shades
- Lighting zones and controls
- Reduced mechanical noise
- Placement and number of screens
- Lectern and placement of technology controls, and portable controllers such as iPads for faculty use
- More Mac computers integrated into the lectern, as more faculty adopt Macs over PCs
- Classroom PCs with slow logon times (this has been noted and addressed)
- More power outlets
- Acoustics and sound control
- There is some interest in having the entire wall to write on, rather than board space
- Shape of the room is important — rooms that are more square are more desirable
- Some rooms have too much furniture

While a small number of faculty indicated an

interest in having technology-free classrooms, the majority of faculty continue to incorporate the use of technology and multi-media equipment in their teaching. We discussed how to improve the many attributes that contribute to a successful technology-enhanced classroom.

University of Richmond faculty expressed an interest in class capture and the ability to record student presentations and performances. In addition, more faculty every year are using video conferencing capabilities and/or Skype to connect their class with others outside of the classroom.

Student Participation

The participation of the Richmond student body in this effort was imperative. Beginning with Workshop One, students participated in the listening sessions and briefings about new instructional and technology trends. Several groups of students also participated in the Visioning Sessions, offering the same thought-provoking analyses of the potential of the University's classrooms of the future. The students provided insight and commentary that often paralleled the faculty's comments.

Regarding other aspects of the learning environment, the students often reinforced concerns regarding deficiencies related to room attributes noted elsewhere in this document. In addition to the conversations related to classrooms, the students expressed support for strategically adding informal learning places throughout the campus and for making minor improvements to several of the existing settings. In general, the students who participated were very supportive of the overall environment and culture of the University.



Gottwald's lobby is open and has extremely comfortable seating. Nice combination of brick and glass to feel modern



Sam Abrahams
Mathematical Economics

●● TSIDE THE LIBRARY

I have a dog. It's hard to study and to watch over the dog on campus. However, when Spring comes and it is warm, the tables outside the library are perfect. However, if they could be externally heated and be provided with artificial light, they would be more utilized. Other suggestions include more ebc. outputs for charging laptops, some sort of cover for when it rains and more comfortable outdoor furniture (the existing ones are very garden-like and not practical to study). The view is great and if this place could be improved, it would be amazing.



1040 Hull Street, Suite 100
Baltimore, MD 21230
410.347.8500



28 Westhampton Way
Richmond, VA 23173
804.289.8000