

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY



VCU

About Virginia Commonwealth University

Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) is a public research university located in downtown Richmond, Virginia. VCU has a total enrollment of over 30,000 students.

The Situation

The VCU Police Department has reduced officer-involved use of force by 84%, has increased de-escalation efforts, and is working to fairly and impartially treat every member of the community equally. VCU also deployed LiveSafe to ensure that students were able to access safety resources and submit tips. Despite officer training and policy changes, BIPOC (black, indigenous, and people of color) students still may not feel safe around police.

The Solution

As calls for social justice and police reform increased across the country, VCU alumnus Terry Everett and the VCU Police worked together to develop a system for police accountability at VCU. A "Check Police" button was added into the LiveSafe App, enabling users to report concerns about officer conduct and receive real-time response and intervention.

The Result

With the "Check Police" button, VCU students will hopefully feel safer during police interactions. VCU Police dispatchers monitor LiveSafe submissions around the clock to assess officer feedback and easily send backup when needed. This accountability feature also prevents escalation and empowers bystanders to easily communicate with police authority figures when help is needed.

"America wants much more accountability over policing, [and] this concept allows that oversight and can actually make officer-citizen encounters safer for citizens."

- John Venuti, Associate Vice President for Public Safety and VCU
& VCU Health and Chief of Police

