



**APRIL 2010**

**YES, THERE REALLY ARE A LOT OF COLLEGE STUDENTS HERE**

What region has the most undergraduate college students per capita?

The Research Triangle? Boston-Cambridge? Austin? San Francisco Bay?

Try again.

Within an hour's drive of the Roanoke, Virginia region are nearly 90,000 undergraduate students at 21 institutions of higher learning, from renowned liberal arts colleges to Virginia Tech, the state's largest research university.

With a total population an hour in any direction from downtown Roanoke of more than 833,000, that means a per-capital undergraduate college student ratio of 0.108.

By comparison, the San Francisco Bay comes in at 0.060, with the Research Triangle at 0.057 and Boston-Cambridge and Austin tied at 0.049.

UNDERGRADUATES PER CAPITA			
Region	2009 Pop. Estimate	Undergrads	Per Capita
Greater Raonoke Region	833,387	89,873	0.108
San Francisco-Oakland	4,302,272	259,045	0.060
Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill	1,589,073	90,278	0.057
Greensboro-High Point-Winston-Salem	1,185,589	66,240	0.056
Austin	1,659,847	82,345	0.049
Boston-Cambridge	4,495,827	223,986	0.049
Richmond	1,230,605	57,425	0.047

The Roanoke region is surrounded by some of Virginia's, and the nation's, most recognized colleges and universities, including two law schools, a school of osteopathic medicine and a new medical school. While many people from the region choose the local colleges and universities for higher education, these institutions also attract diverse student populations from around the United States and the world.

**ACTIVITY IS UP AT THE ROANOKE REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP**

Could this be a sign of an improving economy? Overall year-to-date economic development activity at the Roanoke Regional Partnership is up by more than 52 percent over the same period last year.

Inquiries – an initial request for information from a potential project – have more than doubled. Projects showing interest in the region are up 22 percent and prospect visits are up 25 percent. The activity has come from a variety of sectors, including Finance/Insurance/Real Estate, Transportation, Life Sciences, Plastics and Advanced Manufacturing.

"The combination of available properties and a strong business environment have been attracting these companies to the region," said Beth Doughty, executive director. "It's gratifying to see our activity pick up so far this year."



Have you visited [www.roanoke.org](http://www.roanoke.org) recently? You're not alone. The Roanoke Regional Partnership's website has had 35,000 visitors so far this year – 30,823 of them unique. New visits accounted for 88 percent of all visitors during the period. The most viewed sections were the photo gallery, housing, hiking, and news.

More than two-thirds of the traffic came to the website from our search engine marketing which played off of regional events such as Bassmasters, the Blue Ridge marathon, or Virginia Tech sports. It also continues to benefit from key search terms such as "Roanoke jobs," "places to live," and "Roanoke Va."

"The website is working well giving exposure to the region and raising the visibility," said Beth Doughty, executive director. "The AdWords campaigns in particular make the site more effective."

### A RESOURCE FOR YOU

Put a link to [Roanoke.org](http://Roanoke.org) on your homepage and let us be a resource for your employees, potential employees, customers and suppliers. **And follow us everywhere:**

 facebook

 twitter

 Blogger

### That's News To Us

#### Roanoke Region in the top 40 on Forbes list of Best Places for Business and Careers



Roanoke (39th) ranked in the top 40 among Forbes.com's 200 Best Places for Business and Careers and placed ahead of Virginia Beach (45th) and Richmond (50th).

Roanoke jumped 40 places from the 2009 list. Forbes uses cost of doing business, projected job growth and educational attainment to determine the areas with the most economic opportunity. This is the 12th annual list.

"Roanoke continues to make progress economically, particularly in a climate where so many metros are losing ground," said Beth Doughty, executive director of the Roanoke Regional Partnership. "The Forbes.com ranking is just one more example of Roanoke attracting the attention it deserves."

Roanoke ranked 61st for cost of doing business, based on cost of labor, energy, taxes and office space; 90th for projected job growth, and 140th for educational attainment.

Des Moines, IA placed first. Merced, CA is 200th. Read the whole article.

#### Outside magazine names local adventure-recreation center best

Wilderness Adventure at Eagle Landing near Roanoke has been named to Outside magazine's third annual "Best Places to Work" list. Wilderness Adventure was ranked No. 25 of 50 selected companies. The full list and related story will be published in the May issue of Outside magazine.



#### Roanoke area cited as perfect place to retire

The Roanoke, Virginia area is featured in the March/April 2010 issue of Where to Retire. The magazine cites the low-key lifestyle, energetic downtown, and outdoor recreation as reasons active retirees find the Roanoke area the right fit when looking for a retirement destination.

The six-page article cites Smith Mountain Lake, Salem, and downtown Roanoke as appealing places to live. Roanoke's strong cultural assets such as the Taubman Museum, Jefferson Center, Center in the Square, Art by Night, Opera Roanoke, and Roanoke Symphony Orchestra all are mentioned, as well as Blue Ridge Parkway, Carvin's Cove, Appalachian Trail, and the 22 miles of Roanoke Greenways. Austin, TX and Salem, OR were featured in the same issue.

