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It’s possible at The Valley.

These are exciting times at Lebanon Valley College. Our faculty and students are advancing programs and research that improve lives around the world. Our graduates are thriving in their professions and communities. Still, we are not well known. The LVC story remains largely untold.

With an eye toward addressing this problem, we have embarked on a bold new communications initiative to raise LVC’s profile.

We have ambitious goals: to attract more of the brightest students from a wider variety of backgrounds, to showcase for our alumni the incredible things that are happening here today, and to help people everywhere understand that Lebanon Valley College is an incubator of innovation—educating tomorrow’s leaders while making vital contributions to scholarship and civic engagement.

The pages that follow show how every member of the LVC community can play a role in the work ahead.

Together, we can tell Lebanon Valley College’s worthy story. It’s an inspiring one. I hope that you will join me in doing so.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lewis E. Thayne, President
The Purpose of This Book

Let’s tell our story.

LVC can only put its best foot forward when the members of our community (our faculty, administration, admissions staff, alumni, Valley Ambassadors, etc.) speak with a common voice and work together to tell the same story.

This book provides guidance that will help us do just that.

MOVING THE DIAL
These are the goals by which we will measure the success of our efforts:

- Increase awareness of LVC’s rigor and commitment to innovation among all audiences.
- Increase undergraduate applications, conversion rates, and retention rates.
- Increase academic quality and diversity of undergraduate and graduate applicant pool.
- Increase net tuition revenue and fundraising.
- Cultivate engaged, enthusiastic advocacy among students, faculty, staff, and alumni.
Who we are on our best day.

The following are LVC’s most distinguishing characteristics—the qualities that make us who we are. These ideas should form the foundation of all communications on behalf of the College. We’ve included one piece of evidence to back each claim. Each of us must personalize these messages with stories of our own.

**Key Messages**

**Active**
LVC students are multi-dimensional, proudly pursuing and sharing their many passions, talents, and interests—and encouraging those of others.

Founded in 1935 and open to students of any major, LVC’s student-run Wig and Buckle Theater Company produces high-quality plays and musicals for the LVC and central Pennsylvania communities.

**Challenging**
Elevated by a strong liberal arts and sciences core, LVC’s challenging academic programs combine with practical, hands-on experiences to prepare students for exceptional careers and personal success.

All LVC students take at least five writing-intensive courses in subjects throughout the curriculum, graduating with vital communication skills that enhance any career.

**Rooted in Research**
The marketing ideas and supporting tools outlined in this book are the product of thorough quantitative and qualitative research conducted on behalf of the College in recent years by communications firms Creosote Affects, Simpson Scarborough, and North Charles Street Design Organization. Drawing on the opinions and experiences of current and prospective students, faculty, administrators, alumni, and community members, the research is broad and consistent, lending confidence to the current approach.
Community-minded
United by an abiding mutual respect, the people of LVC share a resolve to effect positive change and have a longstanding record of service to local communities.

LVC prepares students for lives of service—by creating opportunities for community outreach, encouraging reflection on the practical benefits of service, and offering recognition for exceptional service commitment. The proof that it works: 23,482 hours served in 2012-2013.

Engaging
LVC students are active participants in their educations—exercising initiative and ownership in pursuing rich intellectual and cocurricular lives.

LVC students don’t have to choose between academics and the passions that move them. One example: Caitlin Murphy ’12 graduated with a triple major, studied abroad in the Netherlands, was heavily involved in service, and was a two-year captain and four-year starter on the women’s basketball team.

Impactful
For LVC students, collaborative research, student-initiated projects, professional internships, overseas study, and service learning are transformative, high-impact experiences that add context to classroom learning, bolster résumés, and lead to extraordinary opportunities.

Providing resources for students and faculty to bring their ideas to life, the Arnold Program for Experiential Education awards up to $50,000 each year to support student/faculty research, independent student research, and student internships around the country and world.

Inclusive
Students and faculty actively engage with, support, and celebrate the perspectives and backgrounds of every member of the LVC community.

A small campus with a big heart, LVC hosts the annual Social Justice Institute—a three-day workshop that gives students a chance to explore the impact of oppression on society, including a daylong trip to visit human and social services agencies in an urban center.
Innovative
LVC’s culture and curriculum foster, support, and reward innovation.

A pioneering initiative that was started in 1948, LVC’s immersive summer research program pairs undergraduates and professors for intensive, grant-funded chemistry and biochemistry research. Students in the program often co-author papers and articles and present at industry conferences—and 75 percent have gone on to earn higher degrees.

Responsive
Sensitive to the changing concerns and challenges of students’ families, the College offers generous financial aid, a scholarship program that predictably rewards students for high school performance, and a commitment to ensuring students graduate in four years.

LVC helps families by offering scholarships to all students in the top 30 percent of their high school graduating classes. Need-based support helps all LVC families who qualify for aid afford an LVC education. Overall, 98 percent of students receive some sort of financial assistance.

Sophisticated
LVC enables each student to customize his or her education through a wide range of academic offerings, specialized programs, practical experiences, and access to resources around the world.

Nikki Abbamont ’14 dreamed of landing a marketing job in the music industry, and LVC responded. From a customized major in entertainment business to leadership roles in planning a national music conference and co-founding a record label, Nikki has gained the experience, skills, and credibility she needs to land a job in this competitive field.

Supportive
With a proactive and devoted staff, LVC responds quickly and well to student needs, ideas, and challenges.

From top-notch peer tutoring to free health and counseling services, LVC offers multiple safety nets to help first-year students adjust to college life and thrive in their academic and personal lives. As a result, 86.5 percent return for their sophomore year.

WHAT’S YOUR LVC STORY?
These descriptors are just the beginning. It’s up to each of us to bring them to life with anecdotes from our own experience. As long as we all draw on the same key messages, we’ll be telling the same story, even as our examples vary.
Talking Points

Our best foot forward.

Straightforward and concise, the statement below lists our most important benefits and our most distinguishing features. Not intended to be printed or spoken verbatim, it is a tool to keep us all mindful of how we wish to position LVC as we communicate on its behalf.

POSITIONING STATEMENT

Through innovative academic programs and challenging learning experiences provided in a diverse and supportive campus environment, Lebanon Valley College offers each student a transformative educational experience. Our graduates are accomplished, confident citizens and leaders well prepared to make meaningful contributions to their professions and communities.

WHO WE HOPE TO REACH

When communicating on behalf of the College, it’s important to know who you’re talking to. The same basic messages can be customized to meet the needs and interests of each of the following key audiences:

- Current and prospective students
- Current and prospective parents
- Trustees/Faculty/Staff
- Alumni
- Donors
- Guidance counselors and other secondary school officials
- Media
- Corporations
- Peer institutions
- Government officials
- Public community
Our results are conclusive.

Beyond facts and figures, colleges are often judged by the quality—and qualities—of their alumni. This statement describes the value of an LVC education by building an appreciation for the characteristics of the men and women who have benefited from it.

THE LVC GRADUATE

The intention of a Lebanon Valley College education is to produce graduates who are . . .

• **Prepared for professional and personal success**—the product of a thorough education rooted in innovative thinking, a practical mindset, and hands-on experience.

• **Intellectually nimble**—able to synthesize disparate ideas and understand complex issues.

• **Proactive and resourceful**—adept at anticipating problems, creating solutions, and willing to work hard to achieve results.

• **Grounded and thoughtful**—aware of the world’s needs, inclined to service, and imbued with a keen sense of social justice.

• **Culturally versant**—familiar with and respectful of people from a range of backgrounds and beliefs.

• **Confident and engaged**—contributing with purpose and distinction to their professions and communities.

HOW WE WANT TO BE SEEN

Any communication on behalf of LVC—whether writing, photography, or conversation—should reflect the following attributes, which describe the tone and personality of our community:

confident optimistic friendly empathetic practical energetic
When you only have a minute.

We’re often called on to describe the College without the luxury of time. This simple set of talking points conveys LVC’s key distinctions in a way that is brief and easy to digest. By design, it is short enough to be shared in the length of a typical elevator ride.

A highly regarded liberal arts college near Hershey, Pennsylvania, Lebanon Valley College is distinguished by:

- Innovative, high-impact, and customizable learning experiences
- Broad and challenging curricular offerings that include in-demand, specialized majors—supported by technology with global reach
- Warm, respectful, and supportive relationships that promote personal growth through creative risk taking
- College-wide devotion to community outreach
- Transparent awarding of generous academic scholarships

Our aim is to educate graduates who are thoughtful, confident, adaptable, and prepared—to excel in their careers and make meaningful contributions to their communities.
A straightforward approach.

One of our most frequent—and perhaps most important—communications is the spoken greeting of an admission officer welcoming a prospective student. This “lobby speech” is meant as a casual and plainspoken introduction to LVC.

LVC is an innovative place that offers unexpected opportunities—including distinctive majors, original research, and customized academic programs.

Students work hard here and have exciting learning experiences in a warm and supportive environment. They have full lives outside of class, doing the things they love and sharing them with friends.

During their four years at LVC, students change in important ways, developing the confidence to know who they are and what they want to do—and gaining the skills and experiences they need to achieve their goals.

Our graduates go on to do amazing things; they get great jobs, take on leadership positions, and make important contributions to their communities.

**HOW WE TURN HEADS**

These are the features of the LVC experience that are most likely to spur interest among target audiences, particularly prospective students, but also College alumni:

- Strong liberal arts integrated with preprofessional programs and opportunities for practical experience
- Distinctive offerings in physical therapy, actuarial science, digital communications, and music recording technology
- Opportunities to work with faculty scholars and to engage with the work of others around the world
- A campus culture of innovation across all disciplines
- An energetic, diverse cocurricular environment
- A beautiful, safe campus within two hours of major metropolitan areas
Expression

Bringing it all to life.

Built on the messages and positioning described on the preceding pages, a theme emerged as a way to channel the excitement of today’s LVC into a series of verbal and visual expressions.

The phrase “It’s Possible at The Valley” demonstrates the dynamism, prestige, and relevance of Lebanon Valley College through stories that highlight the innovative nature of our programs and the impressive accomplishments of our people.

The following pages show how this idea can be used to create excitement about LVC for a variety of audiences and across a range of formats and media.
It’s **possible** at The Valley.
These stories cut through.

As we use stories to create excitement and preference for LVC, we will focus on examples that highlight the remarkable achievement of our students and faculty—stories that promote LVC as relevant, forward-thinking, and innovative.

As we work to identify strong examples, we’ll need the campus community’s assistance. The following criteria describes those that will work best within this theme.

**ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL STORIES**

- **Distinctive.** The story should be compelling by virtue of being unique—and even surprising.

- **Photogenic.** We must be able to capture the essence of the story with images that are arresting, unconventional, and imaginative.

- **Accessible.** The story must be simple and clear enough to make sense—and be meaningful—at a glance.

- **Quantifiable.** Ideally, the story would contain an easily digestible fact or brag that helps make the claim of distinction or importance.

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

We can use social media outlets to promote these stories:

- **Facebook posts** could be used to push users to the LVC website.

- **The @LVC Twitter handle** gives college communicators, students, and alumni an easy way to share exciting LVC stories.

- **College communicators or students might post “At The Valley” stories to the LVC YouTube channel.**

- **LVC photography might be collected on a Flickr page or Pinterest board,** both of which could drive traffic to the LVC website.
Different beats. Many drummers.

Whether mounting a scoring drive, marching to the College fight song, or chanting from the bleachers, LVC students lead lives of spirit and excitement in a place that roots hard for its own.

Lebanon Valley College
Annville, PA | Since 1866

Blowing Our Own Horn
One example of the theme in motion, this magazine ad reveals the energy and spirit of the LVC community.

It’s louder at The Valley.

www.lvc.edu
1-866-LVC-4ADM (1-866-582-4236)
Our efforts will only be successful if they are noticed. To command attention, whether in print or online, we will use eye-catching photography, seeking images that are assertive, unconventional, and surprising.

**Worth (much more than) a thousand words.**

Emphasize photography that highlights the achievements of students and faculty.

Select images that demonstrate genuine relationships and warmth.

Tight cropping on relevant details add energy and distinction to an otherwise ordinary photograph.
USE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Photos for parents should address their interests and concerns.

High-energy shots reveal LVC’s remarkable community spirit.

Conceptual photography tends to be intriguing, demanding a longer look from the passerby.

Photos targeted toward prospective students might be more assertive and even “edgy.”
Many stories. Many ways to tell them.

The idea is extendable to a wide range of audiences, formats, and media.

**BRAND EXPRESSION**

- It will shape admissions communications—from the viewbook to social media to emails.
- It will help us reach out to alumni—influencing the Valley Fund and our next capital campaign.
- It will influence the way we talk about ourselves—in interviews, press releases, speeches, and admissions tours.
- It will be a major theme of our website, an opportunity to showcase our best stories in an online format.
- It will build general awareness of the College through print and online ads, billboards, and signage.

Gathering and telling the stories that showcase who we are on our best days can change the way we think about ourselves—and more importantly, the way people think about us.
If you have questions, suggestions, or stories to share, please contact:

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