

About Us

Mary Baldwin University (MBU) is a small, private university enrolling about 2,000 students at the undergraduate and graduate levels in in-seat and online programs.

The university is organized into three academic colleges: the Gold College of Arts and Sciences, the Murphy Deming College of Health Sciences, and the Palmer College of Professional Studies. MBU offers more than 40 programs of study supported by traditional classroom teaching, online, and work experience. Mary Baldwin emphasizes high ethical standards and the development of critical, creative, and reflective reasoning as the foundation for fulfilling and meaningful lives in the fast-changing new economy.

Founded in 1842, MBU began with a then-revolutionary idea: that women, like men, should be well educated. Long-time headmistress and namesake Mary Julia Baldwin devoted her life to that mission, stewarding the institution through the Civil War and transforming it into a thriving women's college by the end of her remarkable life.

MBU has continued the proud legacy of revolutionary thinking and innovation to serve its students as the world changes. In 1977, Mary Baldwin was the first college in Virginia to create a program for women and men to earn their degrees later in life. The Program for the Exceptionally Gifted was founded in 1985, one of a handful of programs in the United States designed to enable students as young as 13 to pursue college degrees. In 1995, the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership established the nation's first and only all-female corps of cadets.

In 2014, the College of Health Sciences opened, reflecting MBU's dedication to interprofessional health care education, advanced instructional technology, and establishing one of the nation's first dozen doctoral programs in occupational therapy. In 2016, the institution became a university recognizing its bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs. Expanding on its long tradition of student-centered excellence, in 2017, MBU welcomed the first residential men to campus. In early 2022, MBU announced the creation of the Palmer College of Professional Studies, poised to deliver career-focused online and hybrid educational experiences that prepare students to meet the needs of the new economy.

Among the university's many accolades, Mary Baldwin is recognized for its commitment to affordability and outcomes, listed among the nation's Top Performers for Social Mobility by *U.S. News & World Report*, and as a leader among all colleges and universities in the United States for its community and national service by *Washington Monthly*.

MBU's entrepreneurial spirit continues to fuel growth and momentum, underpinned by a radical belief and commitment to student potential and the power of education to change students' lives, their families, communities, and the world.