



“I want Radford to stand out. It’s a school of opportunities.”

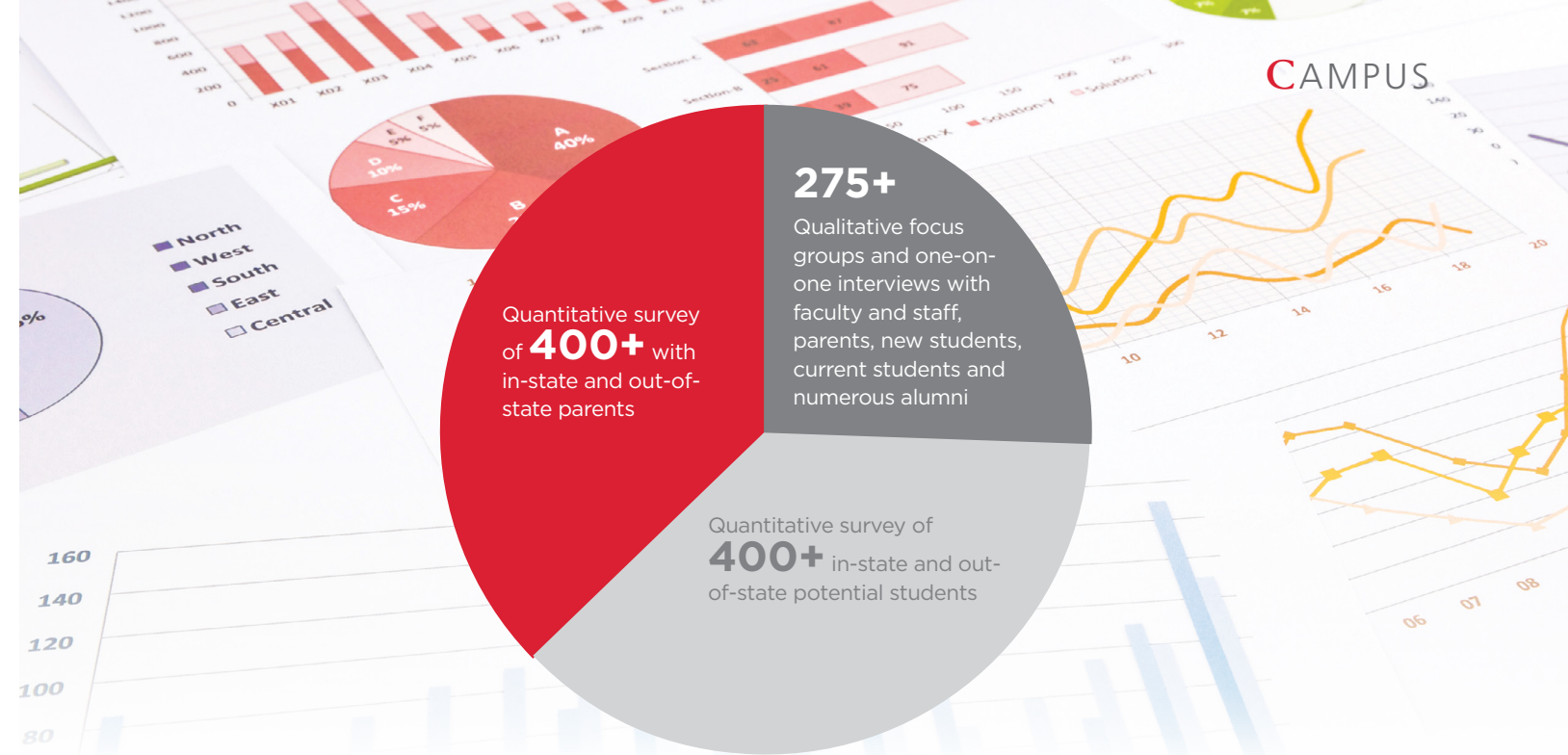


## THE REASON IS RADFORD

Representing the Radford Experience Through Success

By Ann Brown, M.S. '03

**RADFORD UNIVERSITY** has embarked on a branding initiative that defines the university in a way that conveys the success of Radford’s students and generations of graduates. With the assistance of an external higher-education marketing and brand agency, the University’s goals are to define and articulate the Radford experience for prospective students and their parents, current students and parents, faculty and staff, and alumni.



### The three goals of this marketing and branding initiative are:

#### Student recruitment

Colleges across the country are experiencing increased competition for qualified applicants. In recent years, Radford University has experienced success in recruiting new classes, but faces an increasingly competitive market. Many prospects do not consider Radford University because they do not know about the University. Having a cohesive story to tell about the University will help Radford continue to be successful in attracting students who would benefit from the opportunities available to them at Radford University.

#### Alumni pride and support

Consistently, Radford University has heard from alumni that they want to see their alma mater be more proactive and public in telling its story. They want the University to promote what makes the institution special and reflect the transformational experiences that they had as students. This in turn increases the value of their Radford University degrees.

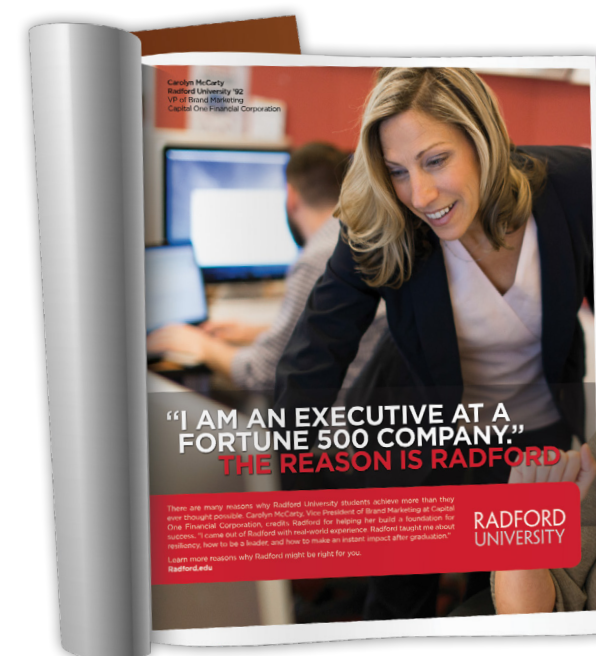
#### Faculty and staff recruitment

Students and alumni know what makes Radford University special – its faculty and staff and their dedication to student success! The university wanted to tell that story in the marketplace to recruit the next generation of faculty and staff who put their students first and can continue the legacy of what makes Radford University unique.

### Who are we?

#### The research behind the brand

The University and its branding partners conducted extensive research through focus groups and surveys into how the institution is viewed by people engaged with the University and those who may have heard of Radford University, but are not connected to it. The goal was to find an underlying theme from what people say about the institution so that the brand campaign tells Radford’s story in a genuine and compelling way for all audiences – prospective students, current students, parents, alumni, and faculty and staff.







### The birth of the brand

Through on- and off-campus research, the group learned that “Radford is the reason” students and alumni discovered their potential and achieved success beyond what they thought possible. “We were very conscientious to listen to alumni groups from various backgrounds, geographical regions and class years. Across all of the many groups of people we spoke to – alumni, students, parents, prospective students and their parents, faculty and staff – there were so many similarities in the reaction to and enthusiasm for Radford University. It was also very clear that Radford University has a proud story to share and this effort will help us find our voice,” said Joe Carpenter, Radford University Vice President for University Relations and Chief Communications Officer.

During the focus groups and interviews, both alumni and upperclassmen said that Radford gives students guidance and a place to develop into self-confident adults prepared to achieve success in life. Current and former students emphasized that Radford is a place where mentors inside and outside the classroom and friends in clubs and organizations helped them find their strengths, passions and career paths. Thirdly, those interviewed stated Radford University’s welcoming and friendly campus is a first and lasting impression for all.

These messages also resonated with potential students and parents, and led to the adoption of the slogan “The Reason is Radford” as the marketing campaign theme for 2015-16 and beyond.



“Radford is a place where you can become who you want to be.”

“The resulting brand is authentic because it articulates Radford University’s success stories based on the real experiences of our students, faculty and alumni.”

President Penelope W. Kyle

### Going public

“Radford University’s branding and marketing initiative is an important undertaking for our institution, and we wanted it to be informed by extensive research, which included listening to those who know our university best. The resulting brand is authentic because it articulates Radford University’s success stories based on the real experiences of our students, faculty and alumni. Implementation of the brand will provide a disciplined framework for us to more effectively tell the inspiring personal stories that represent the tremendous opportunities here at Radford University,” said President Penelope W. Kyle.

“I am excited about the potential impact this initiative can have to introduce Radford University to many new audiences that we have not been able to reach yet,” she continued.

The brand strategy is also being integrated into a cohesive identity across campus, and new print, online and outdoor advertising was launched in the spring. Advertisements have already been placed in media such as the Capitals and Wizards game books, newspapers, magazines, billboards, radio, digital platforms and search engine marketing in several Virginia markets. The full launch of the marketing initiative will occur with the return of students for fall 2015. ■

FORGE YOUR  
FUTURE

RADFORD  
UNIVERSITY  
The Reason is Radford

THE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEAD ON  
CAMPUS TAUGHT ME HOW TO SUCCEED.  
THE REASON IS RADFORD

RADFORD UNIVERSITY

Radford.edu

“We need to let people know that Radford stands for amazing opportunities during and after college.”

### Ideas?

Do you know a student, alumnus, or faculty or staff member who exemplifies Radford University? Please send an email to [TheReasonIsRadford@radford.edu](mailto:TheReasonIsRadford@radford.edu) to nominate someone to be featured in upcoming Radford University “The Reason is Radford” advertisements.