

THE SPIRE HALLS VISION

Reimagining Higher Education in a Changing World

Educational Foundation

Spire Halls represents a fundamental reimagining of higher education—applying timeless educational principles to prepare students for today's rapidly evolving world. Located in the heart of the dynamic Northern Virginia region, our post-high school program addresses a growing critical gap in higher education through a model that cultivates intellectual rigor, personal agency, and whole-person, purposeful living.

Founded by David and Robin Fouse, established business and community leaders with deep experience in developing young people, Spire Halls prepares students for more than knowledge work that often fails to engage purpose and meaning. Our approach emphasizes whole-person learning that prepares young people not just to think critically (mind), but to understand how their faith (soul) and physical life (body) are inextricably connected in that person they hope to become.

Spire Halls' college courses are fully accredited through our university partnership with Southeastern University. We focus on the technical and highly practical skills of communication and entrepreneurship that students need in today's fast-evolving world, regardless of career direction. All courses are taught in a tutorial-style learning environment that encourages critical thinking, dynamic dialogue, and practical application—an educational approach as old as civilization yet perfectly suited for developing the adaptable, thoughtful leaders needed in our technological age.

THE EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE

The Global Context: Disruption and Work

The world is undergoing a profound transformation at an unprecedented pace. While technological disruptions from artificial intelligence to automation may seem uniquely modern, they represent the latest chapter in humanity's ongoing adaptation to new tools and possibilities. Just as the transition from horse-drawn carriages to automobiles fundamentally reshaped society and the economy, today's technological shifts demand education that develops not just specific skills, but the capacity to adapt, create, and lead through change. The accelerating impact of emerging technologies on the global workforce intensifies the urgency of our mission.

By the Numbers: The Current State of Education and Work

Higher Education Challenges: • Undergraduate enrollment has declined approximately 8.5% since 2010 (National Center for Education Statistics) • The percentage of high school graduates immediately enrolling in college has fallen from 70% in 2016 to 62% in 2022 (Education Data) • Student loan debt has reached \$1.75 trillion, leading many families to question the traditional model (Federal Reserve) • Only 62% of students who begin college complete their degree within six years (National Student Clearinghouse)

The Skills Gap: • Only 34% of current students believe they will graduate with the skills needed for job market success (Strada Education Network) • 55% of employers report that recent graduates lack necessary interpersonal and communication skills (Society for Human Resource Management) • 53% of employers say college graduates lack problem-solving skills (PayScale) • AI spending will grow to over \$550 billion in 2024, with an expected AI talent gap of 50% (Reuters)

College Enrollment Patterns: • The greatest number of college students are enrolled at public four-year universities (7.9 million), followed by public two-year colleges (4.8 million) (BestColleges) • Among recent high school graduates enrolled in college, 3 out of 4 attend 4-year colleges (Bureau of Labor Statistics) • Female students are 86.4% more likely to attend 4-year institutions compared to males (Education Data) • Undergraduate enrollment in bachelor's degree programs increased by 2.9% in fall 2024, though these numbers still remain below 2019 levels (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center)

The Whole Person Development Gap:

• **Faith and Religious Practice Decline:** From 1986 to 2016, the percentage of college students with no religious affiliation tripled, going from 10% to 31%, while those attending religious services dropped from 85% to 69% (Deseret News) • Studies show two-thirds (66%) of teenagers who regularly attend church drop out for at least a year between the ages of 18 and 22, with 47% of those who attended college citing the move to college as a contributing factor (Lifeway Research)

• **Physical Activity Decline:** College years show a significant decline in physical activity, with research demonstrating that "the transition from high school to college years" results in a drop from 65% to 38% of students engaging in regular vigorous physical activity (PMC)

Critical Market Gaps:

• **The Traditional College Alternative Gap** - Need for focused, career-relevant education
• **The Skills-Workplace Readiness Gap** - Employers seek graduates with practical capabilities
• **The Faith/Physical/Academic Integration Gap** - Few programs holistically developing mind, body, and soul. Options are even more limited in the two-year accredited program space.

THE SPIRE HALLS APPROACH

Distinctive Educational Model

Spire Halls delivers college-accredited courses through a tutorial-style learning environment that encourages critical thinking and dynamic dialogue. All courses are accredited by Southeastern University (SEU) under their regional accreditation, ensuring academic credibility and transferability.

Core Methodological Elements:

- Question-driven learning over passive consumption of information
- Development of students' ability to articulate and defend ideas clearly
- Collaborative discovery through rigorous discussion
- Direct connection of academic concepts to practical application and ethical considerations

Students begin their Spire Halls journey with a foundational prerequisite course exploring our integrated mind, body, and soul philosophy. This course establishes the theoretical and practical framework for how disciplined physical development, intellectual rigor, and soul formation work together to develop whole-person excellence and purpose-driven living.

What Sets Us Apart:

Education for Agency and Purpose: Our approach develops students who take ownership of their learning and future, recognizing that meaningful work and purposeful living require competence and character. This integration of intellectual rigor with character formation prepares graduates to navigate complexity with more than their technical skills.

Community Rootedness: Unlike traditional colleges that often separate students from their support systems, Spire Halls:

- Keeps students connected to their local community, family, and faith organizations
- Leverages Northern Virginia's professional ecosystem for mentorship and internships
- Engages local leaders as instructors, bringing real-world expertise into the classroom
- Builds intergenerational connections between students and established professionals

Future-Focused Skill Development: Our curriculum prioritizes capabilities with enduring value despite technological disruption:

- Critical thinking and ethical decision-making
- Communication across diverse audiences and platforms
- Collaboration and team leadership
- Creative problem-solving and innovation
- Discipline, perseverance, and adaptability
- Financial literacy and resource stewardship

Experiential Learning Integration: Every course incorporates experiential learning through:

- Real-world projects connected to local businesses
- Guest speakers from relevant industries
- Site visits to Northern Virginia's dynamic business ecosystem
- Service-learning opportunities in the community

Holistic Development: Recognizing that excellence requires developing the whole person, our educational model incorporates:

- Mind: Intellectual formation through rigorous academic engagement
- Body: Physical formation through disciplined activity and training
- Soul: Spiritual growth through the pursuit of a Biblical basis for purpose and meaning

All Spire Halls students must fulfill a structured physical development requirement as an integral part of their education. While participation in Spire Running is the preferred pathway that most fully integrates with our educational philosophy, students may also fulfill this requirement through approved alternative physical development programs that align with our holistic approach. All students, regardless of their chosen physical program, will participate in regular integration sessions connecting physical development principles to academic and soul formation.

The lessons of disciplined physical activity—goal-setting, perseverance, teamwork, and resilience—are integrated throughout our curriculum, not as a separate program but as complementary aspects of comprehensive human development.

Learning Environment

The Spire Halls learning environment is designed to foster collaboration, presentation skills, and professional development:

- Open-concept classroom spaces with flexible configurations
- Glass-enclosed meeting rooms for small group discussions and project work
- Professional presentation stage for developing public speaking confidence
- On-site coffee shop creating informal learning and mentorship opportunities
- Technology integration supporting both in-person and digital collaboration

Assessment and Standards

All students will be assessed according to SEU's accredited academic standards, ensuring:

- Rigorous evaluation of learning outcomes
- Transferable credits for continued education
- Documented achievement for employer credibility
- Regular performance feedback aligned with professional expectations

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Founding Leadership

David and Robin Fouse, Co-Founders bring a powerful combination of business acumen, leadership experience, and community impact to Spire Halls:

- **Entrepreneurial Leadership:** David is a Partner at Pinkston, a leading strategic communications firm he helped grow from a startup to an industry leader
- **Community Impact:** As founders and leaders of Spire Running for over a decade, they have established a proven track record of developing hundreds of young people through integrated physical, mental, and spiritual formation – including summer camps, teaching high school classes, book discussion groups, and more
- **Professional Network:** Extensive connections across diverse industries and thought leadership spheres

Core Leadership Structure

In our initial phase, Spire Halls will maintain a lean leadership structure focused on essential functions:

- **Executive Leadership** (David and Robin Fouse) - Overall vision, strategic direction, and community engagement
- **Academic Oversight** - Partnership with Southeastern University (SEU) to ensure accreditation standards and academic quality
- **Faculty** - Current course offerings and faculty information available at spirerunning.com/courses

As the program develops, the leadership team will expand to include an advisory board of industry, academic, and faith leaders to provide guidance and connections for our students.

CONCLUSION

In a world of accelerating change, Spire Halls offers an educational approach that develops not just what students know, but who they are becoming. By integrating intellectual rigor, character formation, and practical application, we prepare the next generation to navigate complexity with confidence, create value with integrity, and lead with purpose.

Our strategic location in Northern Virginia, partnership with SEU for accreditation, and innovative integration of mind, body, and soul create a compelling educational alternative for students and families seeking more than traditional college can provide. The statistics are clear: traditional higher education is facing a crisis of confidence, while employers increasingly seek

graduates who can think critically, adapt quickly, and apply knowledge in real-world settings—precisely the outcomes our model is designed to produce.

We invite educators, parents, business leaders, and forward-thinking funders to join us in revitalizing higher education for a time of unprecedented challenge and opportunity—creating an educational model that responds to today's realities while preparing students for tomorrow's possibilities.

For current course offerings, faculty information, and enrollment details, visit spirerunning.com/education