

## *Staff Employee of the Week*

### **Mark Helms**

**Mark Helms** has been employed in [Facilities Services](#) since 1986. Throughout his time at the university, Helms has developed, presented, and executed programs that have improved several key operational areas, including the Quarry and Housekeeping Services, according to Sherwood Wilson, vice president for administrative services.

As Director of Facilities Operations, Helms has created an apprenticeship program to address difficulties in recruiting and retaining well-qualified, experienced trade staff. According to Wilson, this program allows the university to train and engage individuals who are interested in specific trades, but who may not yet have the proficiency needed. In addition to providing workforce training opportunities for the local community, this program also serves as a recruitment and professional development tool for Facilities Services.



“Helm’s progressive thinking has also led to more efficient snow removal methods and the provision of uniforms for Facilities Operations’ staff,” stated Kim Briele, associate director of engineering operations. “He has been a key player in implementing a new model for preventative maintenance of major equipment and a work order system designed to track these activities and associated costs. With his constant review of new methods, tools and products, Helm always makes sure Virginia Tech is using the most efficient and sustainable practices.”

John Beach, director of utilities and strategic initiatives, believes the leadership skills demonstrated by Helms have helped provide the essential support services necessary to establish Virginia Tech’s position as an internationally known research institution.