The University takes its founding date of 1838 from the year the medical department of Hampden-Sydney College opened in Richmond. The medical department secured its independence in 1854 and became the Medical College of Virginia (MCV). In 1860, MCV became state-affiliated. VCU's Monroe Park Campus began in 1917 as the Richmond School of Social Work and Public Health. In 1925, it became the Richmond division of the College of William and Mary; and in 1939, its name was changed to Richmond Professional Institute (RPI). RPI separated from William and Mary in 1962 to become an independent state institution. In 1968, MCV and RPI merged to become Virginia Commonwealth University.

Special Collections and Archives at Tompkins-McCaw Library for the Health Sciences houses many resources that document the history of the institution as well as the history of health care in Virginia. Some useful web sites are:

- Special Collections and Archives, Tompkins-McCaw Library for the Health Sciences
  [http://www.library.vcu.edu/research/special-collections/tompkins-mccaw/](http://www.library.vcu.edu/research/special-collections/tompkins-mccaw/)

- History of the Medical College of Virginia Research Guide
  [http://guides.library.vcu.edu/c.php?g=47957](http://guides.library.vcu.edu/c.php?g=47957)

- History of Medicine Research Guide
  [http://guides.library.vcu.edu/content.php?pid=113474](http://guides.library.vcu.edu/content.php?pid=113474)

- The First 125 Years of the Medical College of Virginia
  [http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/vcu_books/2/](http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/vcu_books/2/)

- VCU-Related Digital Collections (includes yearbooks, alumni publications, and other items)

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