



Good morning, and best wishes to faculty and students for a successful semester. I trust that spring break has brought renewed energy and focus to all! As the Spring '24 semester is well underway, I am excited to share some highlights of the wonderful work our faculty and staff have been engaged in:

Congratulations, Dr. Birdsong!

Receiving the prestigious American Council on Education (ACE) Fellowship is an exemplary accomplishment, congratulations to Chief Academic Officer Dr. Tiffany Birdsong. As stated by President Sydow, the ACE Fellows program is one of the nation's most competitive professional development experiences for college and university administrators who aspire to executive-level positions in academia. Over the course of her decade of service to RBC, Dr. Birdsong has distinguished herself as an exceptional leader, and as an ACE Fellow, her many talents will receive national recognition.

[RBC Staffer Selected As 2024-25 ACE Fellow | Richard Bland College](#)

Research Incentive Awards!

Congratulations and please ask for more details from:

- Dr. David Morgan (Physics): 3-D Visualization in Science & Math.
- Dr. Mary Gurnik (Chemistry), Radio-Carbon Dating

- Professor Michelle Delano (Art): Create & Apply Learning of STEAM Lab Art.

Athletic Strategic Plan

Kudos to Mr. Scott Newton, Director of Athletics for undertaking the creation of a new strategic plan for RBC athletics. RBC's athletic mission is to provide students with the ability to develop academically, professionally, and athletically with three core values: accountability, integrity, and success. Stay tuned for future updates.

International Richard Bland College (iRBC)

Student Success Program

iRBC is an exclusive opportunity for our international students to become successful in their stay at RBC. International students receive individualized academic advising, class preparation and educational tutoring if needed to ensure their success in transfer opportunities. More options for campus engagement rounds out a complete journey for our international students. To date, the College has successfully engaged with agents from Australia, India, Southwest China, Eastern Coast China, South Korea, Spain and France. An iRBC agent campus visit has been scheduled to take place April 18 & 19, 2024.

I-RBC will utilize this program as a catalyst to build an **outbound** RBC program with the full support and engagement of administration, faculty, students and the community. The goal of

this program is to establish experiential learning opportunities for RBC students to study abroad. The first program promotes research in biodiversity in Madagascar with a student launch scheduled for 2025/26. The long-term goal is to provide a customized US exchange delivery approach to increase young adults' access to and successful utilization of the global exchange program. *Coming Soon* - iRBC will develop a study abroad program in London supporting student success through high impact practices through project-based research to enhance cultural competence within a global perspective to support the growth of experiential learning through literature arts.

RBC new Experiential Learning Opportunities:

New York with Dr. Jamia Davis - Dr. Jamia Davis hosted a trip to New York City, March 12th-15th for Promise and Honors students. This experience included attending a Broadway play, visiting Rockefeller Center, a trip to the Statue of Liberty, and much more.

Utah with Dr. Katie Heffernan – This May Dr. Heffernan will lead a team of faculty and students to a Burpee Museum expedition to the Badlands of Hanksville, Utah to participate in fossil excavations. Team members prospect for new bones eroding out of the hills and learn how to excavate fossils properly and how to protect them for their journey back to the Burpee paleontology lab where they will be cleaned by skilled fossil preparators for research and exhibit.

Canary Islands with Dr. Mary Gurnick- This semester Dr. Gurnick traveled to the Canary Islands with VCU faculty and students for a

research project that included soil sampling and GPS mapping of ancient gardens on the island. Dr. Gurnick assisted with differentiating ancient pastures from agricultural areas. During this trip, Dr. Gurnick reviewed the layout to see if it is feasible for RBC to start a similar trip through the iRBC program.

Miami with Dr. Porterfield – Dr. Porterfield will be meeting with several integrated behavioral and primary healthcare agencies and a nonprofit male nursing agency to examine clinical and experiential opportunities for RBC faculty, staff and students linked to maternal and child health research and engagement points.

I hope you all are enjoying this beautiful spring weather this week! I look forward to the remainder of the Spring semester and our culminating event, RBC Commencement on May 16!

Thanks for your continued support!

Kim

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