



Good morning, Campus Community,

The Spring '24 semester is well underway, and I'm excited to share some highlights of the wonderful work our faculty and staff have been engaged in:

#### *Languages and Humanities Department*

Dr. Evanda Watts-Martinez led robust programming in January and February in support of National Stalking Awareness and Domestic Violence Awareness Months. These initiatives bring attention to these important issues and impact our campus in meaningful ways.

Over the winter intersession Dr. Rachel Finney continued her tradition of traveling to Guatemala to volunteer her time in support of children receiving medical care. Dr. Finney has taken RBC students on this service trip in the past and we hope to support that experience again in the future.

#### *Natural Sciences and Mathematics Department*

Dr. Katie Bjorkman co-authored an article titled, "Illustrating Student Mathematics Identities Through a Network of Identity Frameworks" which was published in PRIMUS (Problems, Resources, and Issues in Mathematics Undergraduate Studies). This article was selected by the journal as an Editor's Choice for 2024 in the "New Authors" category and we are extremely proud of Dr. Bjorkman's scholarly work.

#### *Social and Behavioral Sciences Department*

Professor Michelle Delano continues to encourage her students to combine art with community engagement. This semester students are working on a mural for Crater Community Hospice (CCH) and an installation of 1Kind Thing into their thrift shops. As part of the project planning process, students will meet with the CEO and Board of Directors of CCH. This is a unique opportunity for

students to engage in experiential learning, while supporting our community and developing relevant skills for the future.

## **A Campus on the Move**

### *University College*

Dr. Ann Ifekwunigwe has scheduled several campus tours in support of our partnership with Transfer Scholars Network (TSN). Last week students traveled to Johns Hopkins University and tomorrow a small group will embark on a tour of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Later in the spring she will escort students to an open house at UVA's School of Engineering as well as a trip to Virginia Wesleyan University in support of our Beacon Scholars program.

### *Spring Break travel*

As part of her work advising the Honors and Promise students, Dr. Jamia Davis will be hosting a trip to New York City, March 12th-15th. This experience will include attending a Broadway play, visiting Rockefeller Center, a trip to the Statue of Liberty, and much more. Students are very excited about this opportunity, and the Honors Program is grateful for the support of RBC's Office of Research and Innovation for supporting this trip.

Dr. Eric Miller received funding from the RBC Foundation Board and the Petersburg Methodist Home for Girls to support the 2024 Alternative Spring Break (ASB). This year's service-learning trip will be to Savannah, Georgia. Students will participate in a beach cleanup, walking tours of historic Savannah, and a once in a lifetime tour of the University of Georgia Marine Education Center and Aquarium, including working in their laboratories.

### *Around Campus*

February kicked off with the "Bland Bazaar" showcasing student clubs and activities. There are currently 18 active clubs and organizations, and this number continues to grow. Thank you to all the faculty and staff who have volunteered to sponsor these groups, it truly means the world to our students.

This Tuesday Student Success hosted another active Transfer Fair. There were nearly 15 transfer institutions represented, with special visits from the University of Mary Washington and Shenandoah University. The Library was buzzing with energy and it was a great opportunity for students to connect with representatives from potential transfer institutions.

*Black History Month*

A robust program of events has been underway during February to honor Black History Month. Student Life, in collaboration with the RBC Foundation, is hosting a powerful three-part movie series including refreshments and post-movie discussion groups. The Office of Residence Life and Housing sponsored the Harmony and Heritage Black History Musical last Friday which included special performances by the Virginia State University Chorale, along with other musical and dance performances. Many departments worked together to make these events a success, and special recognition goes to Terelle Robinson and Isaiah Lucas for their leadership and enthusiasm in producing these programs.

I hope the Spring 2024 semester is going well for you all. I'm in awe of the creativity and dedication of our faculty and staff and look forward to seeing what successes we will share throughout the remainder of the semester!

Best,

Tiffany

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