



REPORT OF THE W&M STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

February 2023

Sydney Thayer

BOARD OF VISITORS, STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Gwen Galleher, Taylor Fox, Marley Fishburn, Max Beers

BOARD OF VISITORS, COMMITTEE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Since the last board meeting in November, Williamsburg has been relatively quiet. Students wrapped up the fall semester with final exams in December and headed home for winter break. As we look ahead to the new semester, Student Assembly is looking forward to sponsoring a wide variety of different campus events and activities that will promote community and student engagement.

Charter Day Festivities

In celebration of Charter Day, Student Assembly is excited to be hosting our Second Annual Green & Gold Bash on Friday, February 9th. At the bash students will be able to celebrate W&M's 331st birthday by enjoying food, dancing, giveaways, and activities. Students will also have the opportunity to elect a Royal Court from a pool of nominees representing different Recognized Student Organizations. Students who are looking to continue the birthday celebration into the weekend will also have the opportunity to ice skate for free at the rink in Colonial Williamsburg on Saturday night.

In addition to the Green & Gold Bash, we are looking forward to hopefully seeing more student engagement with this year's Charter Day Ceremony. At the end of last semester student organizations were given the opportunity to send W&M birthday wishes which are now being compiled into a video that will help us celebrate Charter Day. We are also excited to note that some of our performance based organizations on campus will be highlighted during the Charter Day Ceremony.

Continued Engagement & Accessibility

Last semester, Student Assembly worked hard to increase our outreach efforts with the student body. Our hope is to continue those efforts this semester by hosting a series of office hours where a team of Student Assembly representatives from our different realms of engagement will come together on a regular basis and make themselves available to the student body. Our hope is that these office hours will continue to meet students where they are and encourage them to share with us their frustrations and experiences so that we know how to best support them.

We know from experience that directly engaging with the student body is the best way to understand their concerns. Last year we heard lots of feedback about students' frustrations with an increased fee charged to students who got locked out of their door rooms or lost their dorm room keys.

Recognizing the increased financial burden, Student Assembly purchased “keypers”, which are wallets-like sleeves that can be attached to the back of a cell phone. These sleeves have a slot that can hold both student ID cards and student’s dorm room keys, helping them keep track of their belongings and decreasing the likelihood that they will get locked out of their room and be required to pay a fee. The keypers have proven to be very popular among students and we continue to pass them out at our events and at new student orientation following the Community Values Pledge.

Campus Wide Events

Even though we are in the early days of this semester, our Student Assembly calendar is already packed with a wide variety of different events. On Saturday, February 17th Student Assembly will be hosting the Seventh Annual Sankofa Gala which is a formal event that invites students to celebrate Black Excellence

On Friday, April 5th we will be hosting the Art & Hatsuye Ball, which will give students an opportunity to celebrate and showcase Asian American art and creativity at W&M. In April we are also excited to be sponsoring the Spring Concert and are looking forward to hosting our second Earth Day Bash!

Allocating the Student Activities Fee

One of Student Assembly’s primary functions is overseeing the distribution of the Student Activities Fee. Over the past semester we have been able to allocate lots of funds to both Recognized Student Organizations and towards our own Student Assembly sponsored community initiatives. Last semester Recognized Student Organizations received \$141,000 through our Organization Budget Allocation Process. This money supported campus programming put on by a variety of different student organizations. These allocations can range from purchasing a new tea kettle for the W&M Tea Society, to helping fund a guest speaker who was brought to campus by the Innocence Club, an organization which aims to fight wrongful convictions through education and advocacy.

In addition to these allocations, we have also allocated \$375,000 from our Student Assembly Reserves. This includes purchasing energy pods, standing desks, and a new hybrid mini van that can be rented out and used by Recognized Student Organizations.

Addressing Campus Safety

As I mentioned in my November report, we are continuing to explore opportunities to address safety concerns on and around campus. We currently have a team of representatives who are working with Student Leadership Development in the Office of Student Affairs, the President’s Office and concerned students to explore how we can best support the safety of our community for

both pedestrians and drivers. My hope is that by the April board meeting we will have outlined a more direct response and I will have more updates to share with you all.