



WILLIAM & MARY

CHARTERED 1693

W&M Staff Liaison Report

Submitted by Taylor Locks, PPFA President

On behalf of Professional and Professional Faculty Assembly (PPFA) and Staff Assembly (SA)

November 2023

At the start of this month, the Assemblies hosted “Cocoa and Cornhole” on the Sunken Gardens. The event was the first collaborative social held since the pandemic. We were excited that President Rowe stopped by the event. Representatives shared how much they appreciate her support of the assemblies. The PPFA and SA will collaborate again in December on its annual food drive. This year, we aim to surpass 500 lbs of donations.

Representatives from SA, PPFA, and staff affinity groups appreciated the opportunity to share feedback with the Rector a few weeks ago. Some of the issues discussed with the Rector include bereavement leave and inequities in the tuition policies. The challenges associated with the Educational Assistance and Tuition Reimbursement programs are not new. While we advertise tuition reimbursement as a benefit of working at William & Mary, it is not consistently available. Departments have unequal resources with which to support educational assistance. SA and PPFA are committed to finding a solution once a new COO is named. We recognize that a sustainable solution must support employees’ educational goals, consider university budget constraints, and adhere to state policy.

Employees remain concerned with the continued vacancies in the COO and CPO positions. Since the previous meeting, employees shared positive feedback regarding the appointments and changes in University Operations. However, the second failed search for the COO position and the continued postponement of the CPO search contribute to the perception that William & Mary cannot attract talent. This perception is contributing to low morale. These concerns have been brought to President Rowe and Tawanda Johnson directly. We appreciate their engagement with assembly leadership on tough questions and that President Rowe has taken opportunities to address questions publicly, including at the November 10 PPFA meeting.

Like students and faculty, employees have concerns related to pedestrian safety. Separate from the tragic accident last month, numerous construction projects on campus are increasing the number of students engaging in unsafe pedestrian behavior—particularly for students who use e-scooters, e-skateboards, and e-bikes. Staff frequently report inappropriate use of the devices, such as riding in the middle of the road or the wrong direction to bypass construction. These situations present challenges to both drivers and pedestrians. Training or guidance could benefit both drivers and the users of such devices.

Employees are excited for the upcoming Thanksgiving recognition leave and the additional time to spend with family and friends. As we enter the season of gratitude, we appreciate the essential employees who remain on campus and serve on-call during breaks and holidays. Thanks to their hard work, many can enjoy rest and start the spring semester rejuvenated.