



Richard Bland College

of WILLIAM & MARY

REPORT OF THE RBC STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE September 2023

Kylie McCoy

W&M Board of Visitors, RBC Student Representative

Introduction

My name is Kylie McCoy, and I am a sophomore at Richard Bland College. I grew up in Henrico, Virginia and am currently living at Richard Bland College where I work as a Residential Assistant. I plan to major in biology with the intent to have a career in water quality and water quality policy making. I started college at 17 after graduating from a small school with 7 other people in my senior class. When I got my high school diploma, I immediately started working for my family in their water treatment company. I was not incentivized to go to college by my family, but I wanted to achieve a higher education. I only applied to Richard Bland. I saw its small and remote campus and figured I would try it out.

A month into my first year, I became the Commuter Representative in the RBC Student Assembly. At the start of the spring semester, I started the Journalism Club with the intent of bringing more attention to events for commuter students. I started working with the Office of Marketing and Communications on campus a little while after and focused on bridging the gap between students and faculty with the hope of creating better coordination between them.

Today, I continue to have regular meetings with Marketing and Communications staff. I lead the Journalism Club, which publishes a newsletter every two weeks featuring news about athletics, club events, residential events, and more. Additionally, I am the current vice president of student assembly. As vice president, I oversee and manage club activity as well as Student Assembly events. All these responsibilities have prepared me to be an efficient and insightful representative of the entire student body.

Aside from being an overachiever in college, I have plenty of hobbies to keep me busy. I love to paint with oils and watercolors. I like to bake, sew, and crochet. I study chemistry, physics, and biology in my free time to further my understanding of the workings of the universe, and I would love to transfer to William & Mary or MIT like my great-grandfather did.

RBC Student Assembly

The Student Assembly held its first meeting of the new academic year. Four elected positions have yet to be filled: First-year Student Representative, Second-year Student Representative, Historian, and Residential Representative. Elections will be completed by the end of September. This year, we have a new elected position for Athletic Representative. We also have our first Dual-Enrollment student serving in the Student Assembly as the Commuter Representative.

Currently, the Student Assembly is working to develop a Rotaract Club on campus, which would be sponsored by the Petersburg Breakfast Rotary Club. This would bring more community engagement and build stronger relationships with the Petersburg Rotary Club and Virginia State University.

Virginia 21 is another organization Student Assembly has been working with to help students know how to register to vote and where they can vote. Through this partnership, we emphasize the importance of voting to everyone on campus, which is especially crucial because of the presidential election next year.

Clubs

During the fall 2023 Welcome Week, a club fair was set up outside of McNeer Hall. This was a perfect place to attract students' attention and get them interested in joining clubs. There was a sizable number that signed up for the following:

- Ignite Campus Ministries Club
- Journalism Club
- Flag Football Club
- Soccer Club
- ESFC (Exemplar Student Fitness Club)
- Business Startup Club (Underdogs Club)
- Anime Club
- Mental Health Diaries Club
- Agriculture and Wildlife Club

Clubs plan to host one event per month and will have a proper constitution to ensure that clubs may continue even after the current sophomores who are leading these clubs leave.

Welcome Week

We had a successful fall 2023 Welcome Week, featuring events like Speed Friending in the library and an RBC Family Reunion. The RBC Family Reunion had a club fair, tables populated by area business representatives, snow cones, and a tie dye station. There were so many people that we ran out of tickets for free snow cones. Each club ended up getting around 15-20 applicants, and almost everyone on campus was wearing their tie die shirt a couple of days

afterward. RBC faculty and staff did an amazing job engaging with and getting to know their students as well.

During Welcome Week, RBC's volleyball team won their first home game on August 30 against Hartford. There were also two successful events sponsored by Residence Life: Reggae Rock in Parsons Café, which served Jamaican Cuisine, and a Big Bland Block Party, which provided snacks, music, and plenty of games.

Housing and Residence Life

The Office of Housing and Residence Life has been working hard since before students moved in not only to accommodate their housing needs but to create a genuine community that changes each resident for the better. One example of their commitment to community engagement is the Battle of the Halls; every few weeks Freedom and Patriot compete to see which hall is better. The first battle was a kickball event where 30 to 40 players from each hall competed, and there were plenty of people to spectate and cheer outside the field. Freedom won, but Patriot has a chance to redeem themselves at the dodgeball event on 9/21/2023.

Athletics

Men's soccer has a good lead with 5-1 overall and 4-1 in conference.

Women's soccer has had a rough start at 0-2 overall.

Women's volleyball is at 13-3 overall.

OBX Trip

Dr. Miller, who teaches biology and environmental science, led a trip to Outer Banks, North Carolina during spring break of last semester. I had the opportunity to go and experience not only the lovely trip to the beach but the learning outcomes he planned as well. We were able to have a behind-the-scenes tour of the Jennette's Pier North Carolina Aquarium where we learned about the feeding processes, quarantine operations, and the animal ambassadors they have on hand. We learned about the history of the Roanoke Colony, and we went kayaking and cold plunging. We hiked around Pea Island and drove around the trails where we saw eagles, river otters, and plenty of interesting flora.

History 297 Research Fellowship

Dr. Dan Franke has had History 297 (Research Fellowship) approved by the Instructional Programs and Curriculum Committee. This course would give students a chance to assist teachers in research opportunities that align with their academic field, although this one would be history focused. There could be additional 297 courses developed for different subject matter and led by other professors, especially STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) focused ones. This would enable STEM majors to have actual research and projects completed in their field not only to further their understanding but to give them an edge in transfer applications.

I plan to utilize a survey or panel to gather student opinions about the opportunity for faculty-

led research. Anecdotally, there is an overwhelmingly positive response from students.

Important Updates

Sherman has gone missing, and no one can find him. Sherman is the campus cat, and everyone is very worried for him and his safety. On a more positive note, there are 2 new cats that have popped up in the area.

The Transfer Scholars Network (TSN), led by Dr. Ann Ifekwunigwe, enables academically competitive students to have a better chance at being accepted into an Ivy League or other highly selective university. Several students are exploring this program, and they are extremely happy to have this opportunity.

Student activity is on the rise from what people have observed; however, people have also observed that students' schedules are busier and more complicated this semester. I have also received complaints from students who have no time to get lunch in between classes. A lot of class schedules do not allow time for a healthy mealtime, so some students either eat in class or skip lunch altogether. We will discuss this and other concerns with President Sydow at the annual Student Leaders event that she hosts.