



# WILLIAM & MARY

CHARTERED 1693

## **W&M Staff Liaison Report**

Submitted by Candice Vinson

Staff Liaison, W&M Staff Assembly Past President

On behalf of the W&M Staff Assembly (WMSA) and  
Professional and Professional Faculty Assembly (PPFA)

**September 2024**

As we kick off the new semester, staff members are energized and optimistic. The beginning of the academic term brings a renewed sense of purpose and enthusiasm. Staff across campus are excited to welcome back and reconnect with students. This positive outlook is fostering a motivating atmosphere as we enter the new academic year.

Additionally, the inaugural Professional Development Days led by the staff and faculty that run W&M's 2024 Professional Development Initiative have been well-received, with more than 70% of all staff and faculty on campus attending one of the two days hosted either at Busch Gardens or in Phi Beta Kappa Memorial Hall's Glenn Close Theatre. Many have also signed up and attended the W&M Better Arguments Workshops to continue the conversation and dive more in depth on how to implement these strategies in their work and beyond. Staff appreciate the opportunities for growth, learning, fostering better communication with others, and the recognition leave that leadership provided to those that attended. The positive feedback reflects the value staff place on meaningful conversations and professional development.

However, this optimism is tempered by ongoing concerns. Parking remains a significant issue, with staff expressing understandable frustration over permit costs and a persistent shortage of spaces as construction and other events happen around campus. Staff are more inquisitive now than ever to know where their parking fees go, as many pay around \$400 or more per year to be able to park on campus. Entire parking lots being blocked off has exacerbated these problems, creating considerable inconvenience and stress. Many staff members feel that the current parking situation is impacting their overall job satisfaction and work-life balance. Possible solutions include supervisors encouraging more work from home days during times when staff

will face limited parking, and flexibility in hours for those that have to work in the office to work a slightly different schedule than is typical.

Construction projects on campus have also become a source of frustration beyond the loss of parking. While staff understand the long-term benefits of these developments, including enhanced facilities and infrastructure, the daily disruptions caused by noise, sewage leaks, and the presence of debris on the roads leading to flat tires are challenging. There is hope that once these projects are completed, the improvements will make a meaningful difference to the campus environment.

Additionally, the resurgence of COVID-19 and other sicknesses like the flu, colds, and whopping cough are causing anxiety among staff. Concerns about health and safety, along with the potential impact on campus operations, are significant stressors. There is a collective hope that continued vigilance and effective management will help mitigate these concerns as students are welcomed back to campus.

The recent changes in leadership are met with cautious optimism. Staff are hopeful that new leadership will address some of the long-standing issues, but the impact of these changes remains to be seen. Similarly, the prolonged delay in the class and compensation review is causing growing impatience. Staff are eager for clarity and resolution, as this issue directly affects their morale and financial well-being, and this process is over a year in the making and has already been halted at least once.

On a final positive note, there is a strong sense of hope that the ongoing efforts and initiatives will lead to improvements campus wide. Staff are optimistic that the combined impact of new leadership, completed construction projects, and work flexibility in the face of hindrances will create a more supportive and productive work environment. The enthusiasm for the new semester and the positive reception of professional development activities underscore the resilience and dedication of our staff.

While there are rational concerns about parking, construction disruptions, sickness spreading through campus, and unresolved policies, overall staff sentiment remains hopeful. Addressing these issues effectively and in a timely manner will be essential for maintaining morale for staff and by proxy our students, ensuring a positive and productive work environment as we all move forward into the fall 2024 semester.