



## Richard Bland College

of WILLIAM & MARY

### REPORT OF THE RBC STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE November 2023

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W&M Board of Visitors, RBC Student Representative

#### Introduction

The student body of Richard Bland College is composed of enthusiastic and determined students who want to change their lives through higher education. Many students who attend RBC did not have the best high school experience, so it is a welcome surprise when they get to Richard Bland and receive personalized guidance and an amazing education.

Residential students have expressed appreciation for their living-learning communities and the friends they have made. Because they are encouraged by the Office of Residence Life & Housing staff to be involved with other students, and because they are on campus throughout the week, it can be hard not to make friends as a residential student. For commuter students the Richard Bland experience can be different. I remember when I was a commuter last year, I did not have much involvement with other students because I was not really encouraged to interact with anyone. It was only when I became a student leader that I began meeting more people. Now one may say that it is the student leader's responsibility to involve other students. While I agree with that partially, I also believe that there should be more opportunities for commuter students to be involved in campus activities. Richard Bland has gotten better with this by offering more student-worker positions and adding more student assembly positions, but not many commuter students are taking on these newly created leadership roles. This year, we have only one commuter who is a Student Assembly leader, and that is our Commuter Representative.

#### RBC Student Assembly

Every year there is a group of about 15-20 students who take on way too many tasks and tend to get overwhelmed by all their responsibilities. We still need to consider that these are full-time students; some are honors students, athletes, dual enrollment, and residential assistants; and some are working part-time. These students are responsible for leading events on campus, getting students involved, bridging the gaps between faculty and students, and even

between different departments and offices at Richard Bland. The Student Assembly is trying to get more students involved in planning and volunteering at events and is considering forming committees to help with this task.

Recently, members of the Student Assembly had the opportunity to meet with Virginia Deputy Secretary of Education Nicholas Kent. Mr. Kent asked students about their high school experience, the reason they chose Richard Bland, and how they liked their experience on campus. Overall, the message the students gave the Deputy Secretary of Education was how they felt academically unprepared coming out of high school. Through guidance from their RBC professors and learner mentors, they have improved their academic skills and are better prepared for the future. Students also expressed how they loved the community they had on campus.

Student Assembly hosted Spirit Week activities the last week of October. On Monday of Spirit Week, students wore pink in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The next day students wore their Halloween costumes, and on Wednesday students showed their school spirit by wearing green. Thursday was Twin Day, and on Friday students wore purple for Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month. One area for improvement is for Student Assembly to better advertise and communicate their upcoming campus events to increase student participation. There have been some challenges in getting events on the calendar, especially ones that need collaboration with other offices and departments on campus.

The Student Assembly has maintained a strong relationship with the Virginia 21 organization. Virginia 21 held a Trivia and Game night focused on teaching students the voting process, important dates they should know, and VA21. At "Political Palooza" students learned about the legislative process through fun activities, interactive tables with voter registration information, information about the upcoming election, and the VA21 civic engagement organization.

## Clubs

- Ignite Campus Ministries Club - Ignite Ministries has weekly meetings and is doing weekly church visits. This club offers a safe community for some of our Christian students.
- Journalism Club - The Journalism Club is currently working on creating a collaboration with the Flat Hat Newspaper at William and Mary.
- Flag Football Club
- Soccer Club
- ESFC (Exemplar Student Fitness Club) - The ESFC Club has bi-weekly meetings. The club has increased student engagement and interpersonal growth. The club has multiple leaders who take turns running the club's meetings so everyone involved can have proper guidance as needed.
- Business Startup Club (Underdogs Club)

- Anime Club
- Mental Health Diaries Club
- Agriculture and Wildlife Club

### **Housing and Residence Life**

The Office of Residence Life & Housing team held a “Spooky Party” for Halloween. This event attracted about 80-100 students. Each student who attended dressed up in a Halloween costume and participated in a costume contest. Multiple Residence Life events prompted interpersonal growth and student engagement, such as “Midterm Madness,” “Flying for Calmness,” and “Rainbow Reflection.” Midterm Madness involved handing out school supplies to students, providing study tips, and making stress balls. Flying for Calmness had students making kites and flying them together. Rainbow Reflection took place on National Coming Out Day. At this event, students tie-dyed clothes and learned the history of this annual celebration.

Residence Life also hosted a Battle of the Halls. Patriot and Freedom residents competed against each other in a Trivia Night. Patriot won with 38 points against Freedom’s 32 points.

### **Athletics**

The Richard Bland men's soccer team finished the season at 13-4-3 overall, 10-2-2 in conference play, and ended the season as Region 10 Division I Champions. Men’s soccer will compete for the NJCAA title.

Women’s Volleyball is also on their way to Nationals for the second year in a row, having secured the Regional Championship. They are 31-6 overall.

Women’s soccer finished the season with 0-11-1 overall.

Men’s Basketball is at 0-3 overall.