

Academic Affairs / Student Experience

Departments across campus are sharply focused on increasing student retention, graduation, and persistence rates. These metrics are part of all conversations and remain top of mind as academic programming and campus engagement events are created. Below are a few highlights of some of the amazing work being done towards advancing these goals:

Academic Affairs

Languages and Humanities Department

Dr. Jamia Davis successfully defended and published her dissertation, *A Qualitative Study Examining Teachers' Perspectives of Online Instructional Challenges During the COVID-19 Pandemic Within a Rural Title I School*, which has been copyrighted by the Library of Congress.

Dr. Evanda Watts-Martinez continues her cross-disciplinary work with Dr. Adam Zucconi for the Virginia Museum for History and Culture (VMHC). RBC is one of five schools in Virginia participating in this public research opportunity. The culmination of this work will include a traveling exhibit, an installation at the VMHC, and publications in relevant journals and magazines.

Natural Sciences and Mathematics Department

Professor Fuller is researching barriers faced by first generation college students, after receiving the first Faculty Research Incentive Grant. This work focuses on identifying areas where RBC can better meet the needs of first-generation college students and complements the efforts of faculty and staff working with the First Scholars Network.

Social and Behavioral Sciences Department

Dr. David McCarthy continues work on his next book, examining the history of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) during the 1980s. While on sabbatical, Dr. McCarthy spent time analyzing primary sources and secondary literature which advanced his progress significantly on this project. I know many of us are looking forward to the publication of his next book after listening to Dr. McCarthy's participation in NPR's *On The Media* podcast last January.

Student Experience

Focus on transfer

RBC is one of only two, two-year schools to partner with Transfer Scholars Network and this semester over 75 of our students have been invited to join the network based on their academic achievements, leadership, and service. Students have expressed a desire to visit some of the four-year schools in the TSN and Dr. Ann Ifekwunigwe is developing a transfer trip to support this request.

Building community

Professor Delano and Terelle Robinson, Associate Director of Government Relations & Student Life, partnered with the Lamb Arts Fest in Hopewell to have some of our talented students show their artwork. They assisted students with planning their participation in the festival and supporting the local community.