

Richard Bland College of William & Mary
Racial Justice & Equity Task Force
Fall Progress Report



December 16, 2020

Evanda Watts-Martinez, Co-Chair
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Richard Bland College of William & Mary
Racial Justice & Equity Task Force

The mark of an ideologically and operationally solid institution is its ability to respond to its community's concerns in ways that encourage an inward look at its values, policies, procedures, and systems. Such institutions tend to focus on the concerns and listen to the voices of employees while allowing an experience of awakening to expand the scope of its organizational thinking around transformation. During the Fall 2020 semester, the global concerns brought on by the COVID-19 Pandemic along with our nation's perceptions of racial justice, equity, and inclusion during a controversial, and often times, confounding election year have brought forth unprecedented realities and undue stress to our nation, localities, communities, and to our campus. Richard Bland College is among the higher education institutions in our country that has positioned itself to deal with layers of complex social issues through the utilization of campus experts and members who worked diligently to ensure that its operations function in alignment with the vision of helping students seize their potential. Along with other committees on campus, the College created two task forces in response to the changes in the world by modifying its learning environment and academic spaces to deliver on its promise to provide a quality education in inclusive and safe locations. This was Richard Bland College's acknowledgement of the existing dual pandemics—the Coronavirus and racism.

As Racial Justice and Equity Task Force members, we were tasked to take an internal look at the ways racism existed in the past and present in the systems and structures of Richard Bland College. In our exploration of the historical and current structure, policies, procedures, and systems of the College, the perceptions and the voices of the past and present campus members were captured using qualitative questionnaires, quantitative survey instruments, listening sessions, and personal interviews. It was, indeed, these voices that have led to a campus awakening. Although much of the preliminary findings were, at times, difficult to digest, these exploratory steps are indicative of the courage and strength of our college community and its desire to discover solutions leading to endless possibilities for an optimistic institutional future.

The purpose of this report is to summarize the task force's member and non-member contributions, current progress, and the data collection steps that occurred during the Fall 2020 semester. The Fall 2020 semester has been productive for members of the Richard Bland College Racial Justice & Equity Task Force. As co-chairs, we are proud of the positive impact that has already been made on campus. The progress of the Richard Bland College Racial Justice & Equity Task Force could not have been made without a committed and collaborative team of campus and community leaders who are connected by a shared vision of multiculturalism, inclusion, and equity. The work of each task force member continues to be informed by life experiences, scholarly research, and a lexicon of anti-racism terminologies, which have been highlighted and discussed at the beginning of our meetings. The growth-oriented experiences occurring during the team's monthly gatherings have led to recognizable and meaningful

progress among members, as can be seen in Section A of this report. The Co-Chairs of the Racial Justice and Equity Task Force express their gratitude for being selected to carry out President Sydow's bold vision in partnership with intelligent and resilient colleagues and community members who value people's differences. The members of the RJ&E Task Force stand in solidarity with those who refuse to remain silent as actions of injustice exclude, negate, or nullify individuals or add names to the list of fatal hashtags on social media. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We hope that our work will play a major role in eradicating all forms of existing overt and aversive racist behaviors and injustices. We also hope that our sphere of influence can lead to reform, healing, and transformation within the systems and structures of Richard Bland College.

Section A: Member Progress Updates

<p>Dr. Sydow President</p> <p>Chief Student Advocate & RJ&E Visionary</p>	<p>As co-chairs, we remain passionate about the direction that the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force is moving and realize that there would be no campus evolution without the vision, strength in leadership, support, and the continued reassurance of President Debbie Sydow. In June 2020, Dr. Sydow established the task force and has continued to funnel research and relevant information that enabled members to connect with community-oriented groups such as the Heights Baptist Church's LOVE 804 Project. This organization aids and provides humanitarian services to agencies and the community, including local college students. Dr. Sydow's thoughtful approach to and passion for humanitarian service in all communities encouraged the Racial Justice and Equity's indefinite partnership with LOVE 804. Our gratitude for this beneficial community connection is extended to President Sydow for her intentions to dismantle any and all forms of discrimination and disparities that hinder the growth and reduces the value of difference on the RBC campus. We are appreciative of her infectious optimism, passion for inclusion, and generosity throughout this busy semester.</p>
<p>Del. Lashrecse Aird</p> <p>Richard Bland College Chief of Staff</p> <p>Virginia House of Delegates 63rd District</p>	<p>Since the inception of the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force Ms. Lashrecse Aird played a vital role in conceptualizing the framework of our exploration. Her service as liaison has been much appreciated especially considering her daily balance of a demanding professional schedule and attention to her civic responsibilities as a Virginia State Delegate. Delegate Aird's focus on many issues affecting the Commonwealth, including those aligned with social justice, has led to much needed changes in the State of Virginia. At the end of October 2020, Governor Ralph Northam officially signed the Breonna's Law which was passed in response to Breonna Taylor, an Emergency Technician who was fatally shot in her home by police in Louisville, Kentucky. Delegate Aird supported the bill that bans no-knock warrants. The adoption of law provides some assurance that other families do not experience the loss of life that Breonna's family has suffered. Del. Lashrecse Aird's contributions to the Commonwealth and to the RBC Racial Justice & Equity Task Force at Richard Bland College have been invaluable.</p>
<p>Cassandra Standberry</p> <p>Director of Human Resources & Chief Diversity Office</p>	<p>Ms. Cassandra Standberry has provided excellent and insightful information that clarified and added depth to our understanding of Richard Bland College's anti-discrimination policies from the standpoint of Human Resources. Our work with Cassandra has been rewarding throughout the review of procedures, structure, and systems of RBC. We remain enthusiastic about working with a Human Resources Director whose advanced competence and intuitive sense of fairness add value to the racial justice momentum as we work to level the playing field and mobilize and retain members of the campus community. Ms. Standberry has inspired a deeper sense of purpose within the task force through a draft of an in-depth diversity statement that will poise us to focus on identifying the implicit blind</p>

	spots and addressing the perceptions of discrimination while educating the Richard Bland College community on components of anti-racism, inclusion, and equity in the academic and workplaces.
Lisa Pond Executive Assistant to the President & RBC FOIA Officer	The work of the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force has been ongoing and having Ms. Lisa Pond as a team member continues to be pleasure. Lisa's willingness to fully utilize her artful communication skills and savvy technological talents to move us forward has been beneficial. The information coming to the task force is often funneled to Lisa. She continues to have keen eye for detail and accuracy, and her data organization skills have allowed the task force to develop an effective system for archiving data and information relative to our exploration on the task force's TEAMS site. Ms. Pond continues to contribute to the team in remarkable ways by providing advice and direction during times when formatting reports and organizing information flowing to campus leaders and stakeholders become our first priority. Ms. Pond's work on the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force supported the efficiency of the presentations delivered to top-level campus administrators and the William & Mary Board of Visitors.
Dr. Earnhardt Assistant Professor of English and Chair of Languages and Humanities	Dr. Earnhardt went beyond the call of duty as a task force member and a workgroup leader. He created a qualitative instrument designed to solicit faculty perspectives on diversity in the academic setting. Further, Eric encouraged faculty engagement in the task force experience on campus. His continued commitment to racial justice and inclusion was reflected in a recent presentation to faculty on <i>Ways to Engage in Antiracist Classroom Writing Assessment</i> . His presentation of Arizona State University's Dr. Asao B. Inoue writing assessment model considered seven ecological components of writing that can be re-envisioned in writing courses. Shared in the presentation of Inoue's model were views of writing assessments that move the learning ecology toward an anti-racist experience. An observation of a labor-based grading contract system was shared with our faculty who became familiar with an assessment of writing using the Labor-Based Grading Model, which reduces unequal racialized power dynamics. This model facilitates a writing ecology with more than one dominant set of language standards, thus allowing students to more fully exercise their own language in the classroom that requires more negotiating language differences in student writing. As our nation focuses on inclusion, it will be no surprise to discover how this labor-based anti-racist model catches on college and university campuses that are re-thinking how dimension-based rubrics, opposed to standard based models, may be included in the curriculum.
Nate Jellerson Manager of Projects & Telecommunications	Nate Jellerson's impressive contributions to the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force led to a Teams site, which houses much of our information and posts that keep us growth-oriented as a group. He has been a viable team member who continues to show his commitment to social justice work through his faithful attendance and engagement in all meeting and programs. Nate's loyalty to the RJ& E charge is demonstrated through his knowledge and high-ability levels in the area of IT. This fall he collaborated with Eric Earnhardt on the faculty questionnaire through the creation of a Formstack online document, which allowed for the collection of qualitative data from faculty. This collaborative leadership effort has allowed us to better understand how faculty define diversity (and its value) and the level of diversity existing in professors' curricula. We were also able to determine the extent to which issues of race and ethnicity in their courses have been discussed, the ways issues of racism have been handled, and the degree to which students of different races and ethnicities needed and have sought academic support to-date. The ability to create a mechanism for collecting qualitative data collection was time consuming and enormous. Therefore, we are grateful to Nate for utilizing his remarkable expertise, patience, and flexibility throughout this process.
Candi Pearson	Ms. Candi Pearson served as the workgroup leader for the area of business and finance.

Accounts Payable Manager	Her outstanding oversight of data collection from the Business and Finance Departments on campus has enabled an expanded view of the ways that future budget considerations may support the cause and continue the momentum of the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force. We are looking forward to working with Candi and further tapping into her wisdom and utilizing her observation skills we move forward with identifying racial and other forms of disparities among groups on the campus of Richard Bland College.
Jeff Brown Director of Special Projects and Operations	We extend our gratitude to Mr. Jeff Brown and Chief Thomas Travis for their leadership in the Department of Campus Safety and Police. Without the significant contributions of Mr. Brown who chaired the Richard Bland College Safe & Security Task Force, the work of the Racial Justice and Equity Task Force could not have advanced in a safe and healthy environment. Both Mr. Jeff Brown and Chief Thomas Travis were appointed to the task force in their roles as law enforcement experts. With policing being at the core of today's racial justice concerns, their phenomenal contributions to our team have led to discussions on the community policing, which has been the model followed for several years at Richard Bland College. Their community-oriented safety and law-enforcement approaches have established trusting relationships between campus officers and the community at a time that calls for a cultural shift in law-enforcement agencies. The approaches of the RBC Safety and Police Department are grounded in a strong human diversity statement that empowers officers to use their diversity and inclusion training, empathy, emotional intelligence, bias awareness, and knowledge of equitable and moral treatment of community members on a campus that is closely following a Safe & Security Plan during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Mr. Jeff Brown and Chief Thomas Travis have gracefully shared their remarkable expertise and views on contextualizing transformational policing during and beyond the current global pandemic. We will work with Chief Travis to hold campus trainings on community and transformational policing during the upcoming semesters.
Thomas Travis Director of Campus Safety & Chief of Police	
Dr. Maria Dezenburg Provost	With the rising importance of Covid-19 awareness and human activism, it has been rewarding to have professionals to encourage us to thrive while moving through our exploration. Maria has extended her meaningful support and often shared words of encouragement to the members of the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force at every stage of our campus study. She has been receptive and focused on our efforts while offering sincere praise for the direction and pace of our work. We greatly appreciate her support, openness, and flexibility.
Shawn Holt Workgroup Member Professor of Biology	As a workgroup participant in the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force, Dr. Shawn Holt has taken interest and became aligned with the cause of the task force since July 2021. He has not only provided support through his wisdom and efforts, but also revealed why this work is important to him. We are most appreciative for the time he has taken to research a survey instrument for our exploration and to establish a connection with Ms. Danielle Fitz-Hugh, President of the Chesterfield County Chamber of Commerce.
Jamia Hines Workgroup Member Instructor of Communication	Dr. Eric Earnhardt invited Professor Jamia Hines into the racial justice process. She has created a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Toolbox, which was uploaded by Shelly Gresham, to Canvas—the College's Learning Management System. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion or DEI toolbox includes a training slide-deck with audio support for instructors in search of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategies that respond to the needs of all learners, particularly students of color. Jamia's background knowledge on learning diversity in education has added another lens to our study.
Ramona Taylor Legal Counsel	As the College's Legal Counsel, Attorney Ramona Taylor has served as an important part of the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force's foundation. She reviewed documents pertinent to our exploration including the TOCAR information and the Informed Consent Form that was forwarded to participants of the exploration. In addition, Ramona has kept her "ears to the

Senior Assistant Attorney General Office of Attorney General	ground” and remains observant as streams of federal and state legislation were created to impact racial justice work. Specifically, she forwarded, shared, reviewed, and discussed the White House’s September 22, 2020 Executive Order on Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping that covered government contractors and specific grant recipients which established that contractors and grant recipients could not use workplace training that “inculcates in its employee” forms of race or sex stereotyping or scapegoating. The Order also prohibits the sharing of concepts that one race or sex is inherently superior to another or by virtue of his or her race, an individual is inherently racist, sexist, oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously and other related or similar ideologies.
Kevin Massengill	It has been an honor to have Mr. Kevin Massengill on the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force. This semester, he has worked around a difficult schedule to regularly engaged in our process. Further, he brought his personal and professional thought-provoking insight into our work as a team. In his role of County Administrator in Dinwiddie, Virginia, Kevin is currently overseeing the Task Force for Racial Reconciliation, which functions on an advisory level and includes a cross-section of county and community leaders. Kevin has already created spaces for genuine conversations about racial reconciliation and developed actionable recommendations that would assist with the development of individual and community accountability. We are delighted that Kevin will continue to share his knowledge, experiences, and expertise with us. Given his professional background, we will rely on him to recommend ways to bring in the spirit of inclusion and the reality of equity into our campus policies, procedures, and systems. We are also looking forward to working with Kevin during the planning phase of our campus study and tapping into his network to bring speakers on the Richard Bland College campus.
Lucious Edwards	Having Mr. Lucious Edwards’ archival, special collections, and historical knowledge and expertise with us on Racial Justice & Equity Task Force is advantageous to our team and to this campus study that as understanding more about the life of Statemen Richard Bland and the historical account of his namesake college would add substance and extra layers of substantial information to our final report. Mr. Lucious Edwards will lead us to a collection of information and provide reference services necessary to again access to some of the obscure historical account of Richard Bland College.
Thomas Addington Instructor of English & Coordinator of the Honors, Promise, and PTK Programs Co-Chair, Racial Justice & Equity Task Force Evanda Watts-Martinez Director of Counseling Services Co-Chair, Racial Justice & Equity Task Force	<p>Dr. Thomas Addington and Dr. Evanda Watts-Martinez accepted the appointment as Co-Chairs of the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force in July 2020. We understand that our leadership role on the task force is in response to President Sydow’s charge to identify, confront, and alleviate racism and discrimination through a process that positions the College to articulate and communicate a multicultural institutional identity that values, supports, and uplift every member of the campus community.</p> <p>The Phases of the Campus Study</p> <p>As co-chairs, we established the conditions and structure needed to begin the assessment of RBC’s historical and present record of racial inequality and began to unpack elements of oppression and privilege through a seven-phase process that includes:</p> <p>Phase 1-<u>The Exploratory</u> or the examination of policies, procedures, and practices of all campus departments.</p> <p>Phase 2 <u>Planning</u> – Sequencing action steps toward the RJ&E charge.</p> <p>Phase 3: <u>Implementation/Monitoring</u>- A focused execution and observation of the RJ&E initiatives.</p> <p>Phase 4: <u>Assessment</u> – Evaluating progress linked to program execution</p> <p>Phase 5: <u>Administrative Review</u> – Submission of drafts to campus leaders for review</p> <p>Phase 6: <u>Final Draft Update</u> – Adjust documents based on feedback from campus leaders</p>

	<p>Phase 7: <u>Submission of Final Report</u></p> <p>Prior to moving into Phase 1, the co-chairs articulated a vision deriving from the purpose and goals established for the RJ&E Task Force. From the vision, three questions were posed to guide the exploration in Phase I.</p> <p>Vision of the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force The vision of the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force is:</p> <p><i>In response to various concerns regarding racial inequality including the lack of representation of color at Richard Bland College of William and Mary, the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force will determine instances in which persistent inequities and lack of inclusiveness may have been carried out within each College department's policies, procedures, and structures. With students as RBC's priority, it is necessary to examine whether learners of color feel equitably supported in the classroom and their experiences of accessing and receiving academic support services. In consideration of these concerns, it is important to explore the impact on the retention and achievement of students of color these inequities may have had.</i></p> <p>Population & Units of Analysis = Group Experiences in the RBC Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former RBC Students of Color • Present RBC Students of Color • Former RBC Employees of Color • Present RBC Employees of Color <p>The historical assessment involves soliciting the perspectives of the former students and employees of RBC. The present assessment entails capturing the learning and workplace experiences of current students and employees. To-date, data have been collected from former and current RBC employees. Survey administration is in process for current and former RBC students. It is expected this process will be completed by April 2, 2020.</p> <p>Guiding Questions The task force co-chairs entered into the Phase I Exploration with three questions guiding their study. The questions considered provided focus and a scope for our study.</p> <p><u>Question 1:</u> How have equity and inclusion been fostered in the structures, systems, policies, and procedures within and across departments on the Richard Bland College Campus?</p> <p><u>Question 2:</u> If nurturing students' potential demonstrates enthusiastic, student-focused service, how are retention and achievement of students of color impacted on RBC's richly diverse campus, in which a disproportionate number of employees represent their race and culture?</p> <p><u>Question 3:</u> What are the appropriate steps to build an anti-racist learning and working environment in which equity and inclusion serve as core values that inform and inspire Richard Bland College's transformation into a multicultural, student-centric, and family-friendly campus?</p> <p>Exploration Approaches and Instruments</p>
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	<p>The co-chairs and members of the RBC Racial Justice & Equity Task Force began responding to the guiding questions using exploratory approaches for information gathering including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p><i>Departmental Questionnaire</i> A campus questionnaire inclusive of points of interest that prompt a reflection on and response to departments' procedure, policies, and systems.</p> <p><i>TOCAR Survey - Quantitative Measure</i> The Training Our Campus Against Racism (TOCAR) survey was used to capture current and former students and employees' perceptions of racism, discrimination, equity, and inclusion on campus.</p> <p><i>RBC Faculty Questionnaire – Qualitative Measure</i> This instrument gauges the sense that faculty have about the level of success, hardship, interaction, etc., experienced by students of various ethnicities and enables an understanding of the levels to which student achievement tracking existed. The tracking would help with determining whether specific data for students of color could be retrieved and studied.</p> <p>A measure was created to assess professors':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Definition of diversity and its value ○ Diversity of curriculum ○ Discussion and experiences of confronting and addressing forms of discrimination ○ Confrontation with racism within the academic setting. (Have student confided in the professor?) ○ Do professor account for differences in dialect based on a student's ethnic or national identity when assessing student writing? ○ Professor's view of the goal or meaning of both the phrase and the organization of Black Lives Matter? ○ How much flexibility for events in students' lives do professors build into their course policies? ○ The ethnicity of students referred to tutoring in the professor's course ○ The ethnicity of students' and in-class behavior ○ Opportunity for professors to provide additional comments relevant to how race and ethnicity may relate to student success. <p><i>Virtual Listening Sessions</i> Faculty Dr. Eric Earnhardt Summer 2020</p> <p>Productive listening sessions were hosted by Dr. Eric Earnhardt for faculty to evaluate how they provide an inclusive, anti-racist environment and to discuss how they could improve in this area.</p> <p>The goals for the listening sessions were to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how well or poorly RBC has done in being anti-racist institution • Consider the integration of a Common Read Program for freshman on the topic of racial justice and equity. • Consider elaboration on/revision of Values of "Diversity & Openness." • Share ideas for next steps and for faculty development focusing on inclusive, anti-racist pedagogy.
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	<p>Continued dialogue among faculty highlights the consideration of language in and or around the RBC Strategic Plan's "Power of Difference" platform and consideration of drafting syllabus and Faculty Handbook language addressing diversity and inclusion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Virtual Listening Session</i> – RBC Faculty and Staff of Color Dr. Evanda Watts-Martinez <p>During the months of September and October, seven small-group listening sessions were held to provide employees of color the opportunity to respond to the questions leading back to our guiding inquiries. The goal of the session was to give the participants the opportunity and space to express where and in what situations they perceive racism, discrimination, and exclusion to exist within the procedures, structures, and systems. These sessions were also opportunities to discuss whether equity is carried out in the treatment of people of color on the RBC campus.</p> <p>In addition, listening session participants engaged in dialogue on the issues surrounding the disproportionate number of Black faculty and faculty of color on a campus in which a large proportion of students are Black and of color. Suggestions for actionable steps were also shared (See the summary of results section).</p> <p>The sessions, surveys, questionnaires, and virtual sessions completed by RBC employees were some streams of data that brought forth enlightening information that will continue to set the course of the RJ&E's campus study. Additional data flowed from the resources in the Library, the digital visions of the RBC Handbooks, and other relevant sources and materials.</p>
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Section B: Meetings & Programming

Racial Justice & Equity Meetings - Invited Guests

This semester the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force invited guests to join them in the open session of its meetings.

- In early October Dr. Randall Hahn
- and Mr. Michael Shriver spoke shared the mission of LOVE 804 with members of the task force and provided details on ways they are able to meet their mission through service to students on our campus.
- Richard Bland College Student, Faith Simms
- Old Dominion University student, Tequida Simmons

During the spring semester, we extended an invitation to Dr. Fanchon Glover, the Assistant to the President for Diversity & Community Initiatives and Chief Diversity Officer at William and Mary to join us to share her experiences with the Diversity work on that campus.

RJ&E Programming

Faculty

- August 18, 2020 - Understanding Underrepresented Students@RBC

The Co-Chairs of the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force focused on faculty behaviors that contribute to disparity of underrepresented students. The conceptions explored were:

- Stereotype Threats
- Stereotype Lift
- Stereotype Boost
- Types of Bias
- Types of Microaggression
- Student Realities
- Microaffirmations
- Helping Underrepresented Students

Speaker Series

For the Fall 2020 semester, the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force's goal was to bring the issues impacting the Black community to the forefront of discussion on campus. Presentation series were held during the month of November along with an additional presentation for the GSSP students. The speaker series offered were:

- November 4, 2020 The Ways Black Lives Matter to Black People – Dr. Evanda Watts-Martinez

Program Description

The founders of the Black Lives Matter Movement remind us that Black people continue to be targets for intentional and systematic racism and demise. These realities challenge the community to focus closely on the Black Lives Matter mantra, which expresses self-love, inspires a sense of social justice, and sends an energizing message fueling the fight for its overall health, stability, and humanity. To fully understand the Black Lives mantra, it is beneficial to open up a conversation concerning the ways Black lives matter to Black people. A discussion focused on "Mattering" is important for understanding how it looks and what it means when Black people strive to embrace each other and articulate their value as people during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- November 9, 2020 Racial Bias in Action – Ms. Kyle Binaxas

Program Description

What is bias? What are the different types of biases? How is bias lived out in action? What are the effects and consequences of today's marginalized groups in our complex and uncertain society? Please join us in a discussion around these questions along with the steps we can take to address, reduce and eliminate bias.

- November 11, 2020 The Cost of Exclusion – Dr. Thomas L. Nins

Program Description

The act of exclusion relates to the denial of opportunities and resources for specific groups. Some individuals argue that exclusion brings on distress for those who are being targeted and is detrimental to those who are targeting others. The action of being exclusive has been linked to removing people who were deemed undesirable or a threat to perceived superior group. Unfortunately, exclusion continues to occur in our society to the detriment of those facing threats to their basic needs. In these instances, we ask: Is justice REALLY for all? What groups of people feel excluded in our society? Who, in particular, is left out? In what ways are people's differences being diminished? Whose input is not being considered? Is our society truly benefiting and progressing when groups of people are excluded? What is the cost exclusion?

- November 18, 2020 Black Hair Politics – Dr. Latasha Eley

Program Description

The presence and visibility of Black women's natural hair has become a topic leading to their conscious decision to vocalize the social experiences related to hair texture, styling, and the aesthetics connected with the politics of skin color. Dr. Latasha Eley, a leading expert on Black hair and hue politics, discusses the perceptions of the ways in which hair and hue politics manifest itself in our society. She will also focus on how Black hair and hue impact Black women's emotional and psychological wellbeing along with the contributing factors which place the onus Black women to educate others regarding their physical attributes and personal appearance.

- November 18, 2020 Social Justice for All – Dr. Evanda Watts-Martinez to students in the Global Student Success Program (GSSP)

Program Description

Social justice for all makes the connection between global education and human uplift and mobility. The links between worldwide learning and its role in reducing and ultimately eliminating poverty are the highlights of this discussion. Global models for education and humanitarian efforts were brought forward and applied to students' interests and refashioned to provide them with ways to understand how they could make room for and contribute to the forward movement of global society in their future professions.

During the Spring 2021 semester, Dr. Thom Addington will bring the conception of White Allyship to the Richard Bland College Campus through a series of trainings. More information will be provided by the end of January. Additional presentations and community dialogues will be held by:

- Ms. Cassandra Standberry - Black Employees Matter at RBC and similar topics for the campus community at large.

- Mr. Kevin Massengill - The Dynamics of Inclusion
- Ms. Candi Pearson – Financial planning and economic mobility seminars for students

Diversity Audit – Takeya McLaurin, Karen Belanger, and Sara Rafuse

A diversity audit was conducted by Ms. Takeya McLaurin, Ms. Karen E. Belanger, and Ms. Sara E. Rafuse of Virginia Commonwealth University. They presented their results to the President and the Task Force Co-Chairs on December 4, 2020. The purpose of the audit was to identify RBC’s most critical diversity concerns. The VCU team interviewed three RBC employees respectively representing the College’s top-level, mid-level, and staff personnel leadership. Using tenets outlined in Taylor Cox’s *Creating the Multicultural Organization*, the interviews enable the identification of the most pressing issues for growth pertaining to inequity unique to RBC. The audit has been provided to the RBC Racial & Justice Task Force as an attachment to this report. The audit made observations and determined areas of need based on data collected along five interrelated axes: Leadership, Research and Management, Education, Alignment of Management Systems, and Follow-Up.

The findings of the VCU team’s audit aligned with those detailed in the TOCAR survey results as well as in the faculty data collected from the listening session and survey. The audit’s “Most Critical Problem(s)” section indicates three areas especial to the work of the Task Force, areas affirmed by the aforementioned data sources:

- A “lack of strong leadership on the issue of diversity from the top of the College’s leadership down to middle management” (26).
- A “limited” or “narrow” understanding of what constitutes diversity (27).
- A “lack of diversity among faculty” whose composition “does not mirror [RBC’s] diverse student population” (27).

Ms. McLaurin, Ms. Belanger, and Ms. Rafuse’s (2020) audit also provided short-term, mid-term, and long-term action steps in its “Recommendations” section. These action steps – particularly the mid-term and long-term steps – echo those found in the Vision and Mission Statements of the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force as well as in its Work Plan. The majority of the short-term action steps suggested in the audit across all five axes of interest have either been completed by the Task Force in its inaugural semester or are slated for completion in Spring 2021 and forthcoming.

Section C: Conclusion

The work of the Richard Bland College Racial Justice & Equity Task Force will continue during the Spring 2021 semester. We will proceed with a focus on policies addressing any existing inequities within the systems and procedures of the College’s functional units. The operational, academic, and social structures of the campus environment will also continue to receive attention. Working with the Human Resources Director and top campus administrators will be critical as we move forward with outlining clear procedures for reporting actions of

racial, gender, ableism discrimination in specific, multiple, intersectional, and combined forms, as such actions undermine the achievement of diversity, inclusion, and equality, which are fundamental for supporting human rights on campus.

The Racial Justice & Equity Task Force will also develop a communications plan to include a digital space for public comment on its expanding webpage that will further articulate the Richard Bland College's identity as a multicultural institution committed to an anti-racist organizational development, per the recommendation of the Mc Laurin, Belanger, and Rafuse's Diversity Audit (2020). The TOCAR survey administration and Listening Sessions will continue as it is imperative to solicit the perspectives of current and former RBC students. An analysis of descriptive data will ensue.

The task force will move into its third phase, which includes program planning, implementation, and monitoring. Campus programming and training will be centered around the issue of White Allyship. Should the occasion arise, members will be available to assist college administrators when consideration is given to building naming projects. A spring Racial Justice & Equity Task Force report will be available by May 25, 2021, and the final report is scheduled to be completed next summer. The report will be submitted to the Task Force for feedback before the final submission to the President's Council.

The Racial Justice & Equity Task Force is enthusiastic about continuing its rewarding work on the campus of Richard Bland College. Questions regarding this report should be directed to the Racial Justice & Equity Task Force Co-Chairs, Evanda Watts-Martinez and Thom Addington at racialjustice@rbc.edu.

Respectfully submitted,
Evanda Watts-Martinez
Thomas Addington
Co-Chairs, Racial Justice & Equity Task Force

Reference

Mc Laurin, T., Belanger, K., Rafuse, S. (2020). *Diversity audit of Richard Bland College of William & Mary*. (Unpublished). Virginia, United States: Virginia Commonwealth University, School of Education.