



Richard Bland College
of WILLIAM & MARY

STATESMAN SAFE & SECURE EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Whereas, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, on March 12, 2020 the Governor of Virginia issued Executive Order Fifty-One declaring a state of emergency in the Commonwealth, and on March 30 he issued a stay at home order to residents of the Commonwealth (Executive Order Fifty-Five). Executive Order Fifty-Five required that institutions of higher education “cease all in-person classes and instruction, and cancel all gatherings of more than ten individuals,” resulting in the immediate transition to remote teaching and learning, and teleworking for all non-essential employees; and

Whereas, since March 12 Richard Bland College academic and administrative managers have functioned as an Emergency Management team, meeting frequently to deliberate COVID-related matters and to make informed decisions—big and small—through consensus while remaining focused on the dual goal of fulfilling Richard Bland College’s educational mission while, at the same time, safeguarding the health of our campus community. A subcommittee of the COVID-19 Crisis Management Response Team—the Statesman Safe and Secure Task Force—was established to develop and implement a plan for safely reopening the College on August 3; and

Whereas, in June, the Emergency Management team collectively agreed that the racial justice and equity crisis that emerged in the midst of the pandemic also demanded immediate attention and action. With considerable input from academic leaders, a Racial Justice & Equity Task Force was launched, and work is now vigorously underway to identify, confront and alleviate racism and discrimination on campus; and

Whereas, since the transition to remote instruction on March 30 and up to the present day, faculty have been remarkably conscientious and creative in their work to design and deliver effective online instruction that balances the distinctive academic needs of RBC’s students with the protection of everyone’s health and safety. Following a successful completion to the spring 2020 semester, faculty leaders maintained close and constant contact with faculty across disciplines to plan for a safe fall 2020 semester, and together they developed an array of classroom options to rotate students in-seat or online in response to health considerations. Importantly, faculty gave students the flexibility to complete coursework in ways that were most comfortable and appropriate for them and their needs; and

Whereas, throughout the entirety of the COVID-19 crisis, Richard Bland College staff have consistently demonstrated the College’s core community values and conscientiously adhered to COVID-related policies and guidelines, from the custodial staff who have worked diligently to

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disinfect and clean campus facilities, to student success staff who have found new and creative ways to engage students and guide their academic progress, to administrative staff who have been remarkably resourceful in delivering high quality processes and services both in-person and online.

Whereas, since the outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis in the Commonwealth, the RBC faculty and staff have brought honor and distinction to the College through their selfless and conscientious work; and

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Board of Visitors of the College of William and Mary that the Board expresses its heartfelt appreciation and admiration of the employees across the RBC campus; and,

Be it further resolved that the Board hereby supports the decision by President Debbie Sydow to make November 30, 2020, “Statesman Safe & Secure Employee Recognition Day” that includes a paid day off.