



REPORT OF THE W&M STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE SEPTEMBER 2024

Terra M. Sloane

BOARD OF VISITORS, STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Isabella Esposito, Diana Kim, Courtney Maynard, Momen Zahid

BOARD OF VISITORS, COMMITTEE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

September at William & Mary is marked by new beginnings, reunion with old friends, and a reignited hunger for academic exploration. The start of the academic year brings much excitement and opportunity for students all across campus, and the Student Assembly is no exception. We are starting our year off strong, already immersed in programming and advocacy. Our administration's goals are as follows: We hope to make student governance relevant to the student body as a whole, and we want students to be able to recognize student leaders in their community, in and outside of Student Assembly. In addition, we would like to make student leadership and Student Assembly as accessible to our student populations as possible, with serious revisions toward our Outreach effort. We want to move our student representatives toward decision making that lasts well beyond our one-year term, and we hope to be supported by the Board in that endeavor. You will find that your Committee Student Representatives are student leaders recognized outside of the Student Assembly. We hope that this experience adds to their contribution and we welcome them to their roles.

Continuing Celebration through the Year of the Arts

As we continue our celebration of the Arts, I am happy to report that our student population is still deeply entranced by the new Arts Quarter, and these spaces have been home to many Student showcases, productions, and installations. In collaboration with the City of Williamsburg and the President's Office, the perennial Virginia Symphony Concert was a resounding success, for both students and community members alike.

We patiently await the reopening of the Muscarelle Museum of Art, scheduled to open sometime in late Fall. The Museum will be equipped with more gallery spaces, learning spaces, and community gathering areas. The Student Assembly is currently amidst planning a large Student Arts celebration to welcome this amazing Museum back to campus, bringing in the Williamsburg Community to celebrate with us.

Community Engagement in Williamsburg

W&M prides itself on educating active citizens of the world, and we believe that civil leadership should begin right here, in our own backyard. As November elections approach, we are encouraging students to register to vote and make a difference in the Williamsburg community and beyond. Our Department of Public Affairs is already busy as they help students register to vote and encourage them to make informed decisions at the ballot box.

We may see enhanced engagement this November, as one of our own students—and a member of the Student Assembly—Ayanna Williams is running for a position on the Williamsburg City Council. Due to this increased attention, our Department of Public Affairs is planning a Candidate Meet & Greet to encourage students and community members to get more involved in their community's decision-making process.

When it comes to Community Engagement, we are committed to bringing the Williamsburg community to campus whenever possible. We hosted one of the City of Williamsburg Future Festivals in our very own Crim Dell Meadow, a successful entry way to bring community members into our own neighborhood.

Encouraging Students Towards Better Arguments

Over the last few years, the President's Office and the division of Student Affairs have been working on bringing the Better Arguments program to William & Mary's campus. Better Arguments is a national civic initiative aimed toward creating productive and meaningful conversations in face of disagreement. Over the summer, Faculty & Staff were invited to attend training sessions, and similar trainings were given to Orientation Aides, Resident Assistants, and the Class of 2028 during New Student Orientation. Our administration is working closely with the President's Office to plan and implement more training for Upperclassmen students and those studying within our Graduate Schools.

In addition, many initiatives have been proposed in the Student Assembly Senate that would create discussion-based events for students to gather and discuss topics in a productive way. We look forward to developing these projects and helping students towards better academic conversations.

Promoting Healthy & Sustainable Habits

One of our core values within the Student Assembly is Sustainability. Efforts have not decreased when it comes to encouraging our campus community to be conscious of their environmental impact. Our Department of Sustainability has continued emphasizing Healthy Habits through partnered initiatives with the Williamsburg Community, our Dining Sustainability Program within W&M dining, and our on-campus Environmental Organizations. We are excited to see what exciting projects are soon to come with the unveiling of new campus green spaces and the newly announced Batten School for Coastal and Marine Science.