

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
ELECTRONIC COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT
VIA CISCO WEBEX
1:00 P.M., THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2021
(No Public Comment Period Scheduled)**

**DRAFT AGENDA
(AS OF 1.28.21)**

- CALL TO ORDER Ms. Shavonne Gordon, Vice Chair
- ROLL CALL
- INVOCATION
- APPROVAL OF AGENDA
- APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES (if any)
- PRESIDENT’S REMARKS Dr. Makola M. Abdullah
- REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
 - Sponsored ProgramsDr. M. Omar Faison, Associate VP,
Research, Economic Dev. & Graduate Studies
 - Government Relations UpdateMr. Eldon Burton, Director
 - Communications Update Dr. Gwendolyn Dandridge, Director
 - Institutional Advancement Update Ms. Tonya S. Hall, Vice President
External Relations
- OTHER BUSINESS
- ADJOURNMENT

***All start times for committees are approximate. Meetings may begin either before or after the posted approximate start time as committee members are ready to proceed. Meetings may also end either before or after the posted time. The Board reserves the right to change its schedule as needed.*

1.28.21

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
ELECTRONIC INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT (IA) COMMITTEE
DRAFT MINUTES**

Thursday, February 4, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Shavonne Gordon, Vice Chair, called the Institutional Advancement Committee meeting to order at approximately 1:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

A quorum was present.

Committee Members Present:

Mr. Xavier Richardson (*absent*)
Dr. Valerie Brown
Ms. Thursa Crittenden
Ms. Pamela Currey
Dr. Christine Darden
Ms. Shavonne Gordon
Mr. Glenn Sessoms
Mr. Huron Winstead, Rector (*ex-officio*)
Ms. Brenda Stith-Finch, Chair, VSU Foundation

Administration Present:

Makola M. Abdullah, Ph.D., President
Dr. Donald Palm, Senior Vice President/Provost
Kevin Davenport, Vice President, Finance/Administration/CFO
Tonya Hall, Vice President, External Relations
Dr. Omar Faison, Associate Vice President, Research & Economic Dev./Dean, Graduate Studies
Eldon Burton, Director, Government Relations
Dr. Gwendolyn Dandridge, Interim Director, Communications
Dr. Annie C. Redd, Special Asst. to President/Board Liaison

Legal Counsel Present:

Deborah Love, Senior Assistant Attorney General, Chief, Education Section

Others Present:

Pastor Jasmyn Graham, Director, Campus Ministries
Yourdonus James, Director, Conference Center
Travis Edmonds, Technology Services
Tazjia Harris-Paiva, Institutional Advancement

INVOCATION

Ms. Gordon welcomed the board members and staff to the virtual committee meeting. She invited Pastor Graham to offer the invocation.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved by roll call vote.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES (if any)

The minutes from the November 19, 2020 meeting were approved by roll call vote.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Abdullah introduced Ms. Tonya Hall, new vice president for external relations, to the Committee members. Ms. Hall came to VSU with a bachelor's from University of Delaware and a master of art from Cain University in New Jersey. She's worked in nonprofit development for many years, particularly in higher education and health care and social services, and she most recently served as the president of the National Muscular Dystrophy Society in New Jersey.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Sponsored Programs

Dr. M. Omar Faison presented information on sponsored programs relative to research proposals, awarded grants, and expenditures for quarter 2 of Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 (October – December 2020). Proposal submission in FY 2021 continues to outpace prior years, with 59 proposals submitted worth \$36.6 million. The number of grants in the portfolio (87) is stable. Grants related expenditures (\$11.06 million) continues to trail the prior two years. Dr. Faison stated that this is partly due to decrease in lab activity and expenditures related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Indirect costs recovered, totaling \$468,687, slightly trails FY 2020. Dr. Faison shared his belief that by the time we get through quarter 3, we will be on track for a greater share of vendor costs recovery to date.

Government Relations

Eldon Burton presented an update from the federal government and the Commonwealth of Virginia. On January 20th, President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris were sworn in as 46th President and 49th Vice President of the United States. Many people in HBCU community were excited to watch as Vice President Harris took the oath of office and became the first African American and Asian American Vice President as well as the first graduate of a historically black university to serve in the White House. With the Vice President's continued support for HBCU's and First Lady Jill Biden's affinity for community colleges, many are hopeful that this administration will make significant investments into higher education with a focus particularly for low-income students and students of color.

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The VSU Government Relations Department is working to enhance our president and our presence on Capitol Hill, and the president is already getting this off to a great start in this effort. Just this past week, President Abdullah along with HBCU presidents met with Congressman Cedric Richmond, senior advisor to President Biden and director of the White House Office of Public Engagement. President Abdullah was able to bring greetings in his role as chair of the Association of Public Land Grant (APLU) 1890's Council of Presidents. As we look forward to continued engagement with the White House, President Abdullah also testified before the House Agriculture Committee in December on the 1890 land grant institutions, 130 years of building equity in agriculture.

Dr. Dawit Haile, Dean of the VSU College of Engineering and Technology, participated in the American Society of Engineering Education's Conference on Capitol Hill all this week. He works collaboratively with other deans of engineering from other institutions to go and meet with the congressional delegations and we also meet with their staff.

President Biden has already announced some of his key appointments. Amongst those appointments, we were excited to learn that Dr. Jewel Hairston-Bronaugh, former Virginia State University Dean of the College of Agriculture, was nominated to serve as the new Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). President Abdullah has reached out to congratulate her and Al Stewart who has been nominated as the Acting Secretary of the Dept. of Labor and is an alumnus of VSU.

On December 27, 2020, the president signed into law the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA), which allocates more than \$21 billion to institutions of higher education. Building on the same structure of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) has designated these additional higher education support funds under the CRRSAA as "HEERF II." VSU was allocated \$10.7 million under HEERF II, with the requirement that we expend the same dollar amount (not percentage) on emergency student aid as we were required to award to students under the original CARES Act HEERF. However, HEERF II permits broader uses of those funds for both students and the institution. It is also important to note that this allocation is a separate pot of funds from the \$1.7 billion pot allocated for HBCUs (individual allocations for each institution are still forthcoming).

The 2021 regular session of the General Assembly kicked off on January 13th. The primary focus remains to be health related services and how to support Virginia's economy during the pandemic. Leading into session, Governor Northam proposed his budget amendments for FY 2022 which for VSU restored \$6.2 million for multiple programs that were previously restored only in FY 2021 during the 2020 Special Session I. These programs include the Virginia College Affordability Network, expansion of an intrusive advising early warning system, supplemental instruction,

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a summer bridge program, and the UTeach teacher preparation program for science, technology, engineering, and math majors. It also included the restoration of funding for the VSU Cooperative Extension's state match in the amount of \$1.5 million. 14 projects across the Commonwealth were included in Governor Northam's budget for systems upgrades, facility repairs, and life/safety projects, the largest of which is \$34 million for VSU to improve HVAC campus-wide for infectious and aerosol control.

The House and Senate will present their budgets this Sunday in usually what's known as budget Sunday, and President Abdullah has continued to meet with legislators in both the House and the Senate to advocate for the priorities even though they are already proposed in the governor's budget. Also in their roles as chair and vice chair of the Virginia Council of Presidents, President Abdullah and VCU President Michael Rao presented a unified budget amendment to the General Assembly on behalf of all 4 and 2 year public institutions and Virginia to provide additional funds that may be used for operational support to enhance financial aid and to address the impacts of the causes 19 pandemic.

Mr. Burton shared that Senator Mark Warren made a cameo appearance and the Chesterfield County Administrator Joseph Casey served as a panelist for the January 18, 2021 panel discussion honoring Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. The panel discussion was co-sponsored by VSU and Chesterfield County and held on campus in the Multi-purpose Center.

Mr. Burton also shared information about the Virginia College Affordability Network (VCAN) Project which allows approximately 300 eligible students from high schools within a 25 mile radius and who meet the admissions requirements for Virginia State University to attend without having to pay for tuition. This project is a great example of how our state lobbying efforts have been used to improve the local and regional needs in the area.

Office of Communications

Dr. Gwendolyn Dandridge, Director of Communications, presented a Communications update. She shared strategies used with pushing out recent headlines to ensure positive local media and community interactions and which gained regional, state, and national coverage through the Associated Press. These efforts remain consistent with telling our story through local, regional and national news headlines. Local and national headline topics included: MacKenzie Scott \$30 million investment in VSU, VSU Invest in Health and Safety (Covid-19) Updates, Former VSU Dean named to Biden Cabinet, Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration and the VCAN Project offering free tuition to 300 qualified high school students.

VSU continues to grow its presence on social media such as Face Book, Twitter, and Instagram, which allows the University to control what news and information is posted or pushed out. All of the recent headlines were posted within minutes of release them to news and television media. The staff also posts campus news and information from the Admissions Office and other

departments to interact with prospective students, current students, and alumni. Dr. Dandridge shared data showing the growth in the percentages of social engagements. In addition, VSU will begin an awareness project involving the university website as a tool to help tell the VSU story.

In response to an earlier question, Dr. Dandridge shared that VSU subscribes to a media monitoring company named Meltwater. Using an app, the company sends notifications several times throughout the day, anytime Virginia State University is mentioned in the news, or even on social media. Dr. Dandridge stated that this also helps us to protect our brand by keeping on top of any mention of VSU in the news or social media.

Institutional Advancement Update

Ms. Hall shared the IA dashboard as of January 18, 2021 stating that despite a report put out by the Association of Fundraising Professionals a few months ago, which showed that there was a 6% decline in giving to nonprofit during the pandemic, we have not seen those results at VSU. While fundraising across non-profits has experienced a decline due to COVID-19 support for VSU increased as evidenced by the FY21 dashboard report. Giving to VSU totals \$2,218,429 from 1,953 donors as of January 18, 2021. Compared to fiscal year 2020 year-to-date of \$1,600,126 from 1,728 donors. These numbers include a very successful Giving Tuesday from alums and friends of VSU in 2020 increased by 52% compared to giving in 2019.

Ms. Hall shared information about the \$30 million gift from Ms. MacKenzie Scott. The vetting process used by Ms. Scott's foundation looked at VSU's stability, its financial stability in particular, and the strong giving power of our alumni. As a result, VSU has been elevated to a level to be approached by and to seek other organizations, individuals and corporations of this size and this magnitude with its fundraising efforts.

The Advancement team has developed a pipeline of potential donors, both corporate and foundations which meet the 3As (affinity, ability, access). They have affinity, which means we have a connection to them, they have the ability which means they have the financial means, and we have access to them. This effort has led to a prospective Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Smithfield that promises to provide scholarships, internships and post-graduate employment to VSU students. Ms. Hall shared information about the others on the current list: Bank of America, Car Max, Bloomberg Philanthropies, and Markel. Board members and alumni are the best partners in making sure that VSU positions itself and build relationships with organizations. She encouraged committee members to inform the IA Team of corporations they should contact.

Institutional Advancement will also be launching a product of Anthology© called I Modules, which is a donor-friendly giving platform which allows IA to **Increase Engagement** to foster lifelong relationships with alumni and supporters through online engagement, and measure and

track campaign success. *Elevate Fundraising* via safe and secure, I Modules makes it easy for the organization to increase donations while decreasing costs, paperwork, and processing time. *Gain Efficiency* with Encompass, cross-campus departments are unified so we can collaborate strategically and centralize data for operational efficiency. *Build Your Legacy* when we maintain our institution's reputation, trust is gained, affinity is increased, and constituents are more likely to be engaged.

The Advancement Office will execute the presented strategies to seek and secure philanthropic support from all constituents for major and annual fund dollars by submitting proposals to corporate and foundation funders, mailed annual fund appeals, electronic appeals, and the annual class reunion giving program.

ACTION ITEM

President Abdullah and Ms. Hall presented a resolution to remove the names of individuals from several campus buildings--Byrd Hall, Eggleston Hall, Trinkle Hall, and Vawter Hall. The individuals' names no longer reflect the spirit of the faculty, student, and staff who live and work at VSU. These are names that have been removed by other universities and so VSU is doing what is being consistently done in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This will be done in a two-step process wherein the University would de-commemorate the buildings now and provide some generic names going forward while we work on a process to adequately name the buildings in the way that the Board sees fit and proper.

Ms. Hall stated that the de-commemoration of the buildings also presents opportunities for fundraising for individuals who may want their names on buildings. Committee members stated that this effort will present opportunities to raise funding through naming for internal spaces within the buildings and to recognize people who have been loyal to the University. The committee agreed by roll call vote to recommend approval of the resolution to the full Board at the February 5th meeting. President Abdullah request a point of privilege to express appreciation to Committee Chair Richardson (in his absence) in spearheading this effort.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Ms. Gordon, Vice Chair, adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:00 p.m.

Approved:

Xavier Richardson, Chair

Date