

# Richard Bland College Gains Its Independence

*Richard Bland College is no longer tied to William & Mary and now operates as an independent institution.*

SOUTH PRINCE GEORGE, VA, UNITED STATES, April 4, 2025

/EINPresswire.com/ -- [UPDATE]

Late Wednesday, the Virginia General Assembly accepted Governor Glenn Youngkin's amendment to have the nine-member Richard Bland College (RBC) board of visitors assume its governance role on July 1, 2025.

"After years of planning and preparation, we stand ready to welcome this board with open arms," RBC President Debbie Sydow said.

"William & Mary (W&M) board leadership has been supportive every step of the way, and I expect a smooth governance transition.

"Understanding the importance of RBC as an industry partner and economic engine in the Petersburg and Virginia Gateway region, bill patrons Senator Mamie Locke (D-District 23) and Delegate Betsy Carr (D-District 78) were fierce champions for independent governance, and RBC is deeply grateful for their leadership."

A similar bill that would have granted Richard Bland College its own, dedicated governing board never made it to the Governor's desk in 2023. Now, two years later, the General Assembly has ensured the Commonwealth's only junior college will go the way of Christopher Newport, Old Dominion and other former "branch" campuses of W&M that are now led by independent boards.

"The William & Mary Board of Visitors has governed Richard Bland College since its founding," William & Mary Rector Charles Poston said. "This has been a privilege and together with former presidents of RBC and President Sydow, positive and transformational change has taken place. "This has especially been the case at RBC over the last decade under the leadership of President Sydow. We look forward to working with RBC during the transition to a new board and we are highly confident that this progress will continue."

Over the next 90 days, Governor Youngkin will appoint RBC's nine-member board and the



RBC President Debbie Sydow giving remarks at a DroneUp press conference in 2022, as Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin and DroneUp founder/CEO Tom Walker look on.

college's accreditor, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, will review and take action on this governance change. Much work remains, but Dr. Sydow says now the fun part begins. "I can't wait to welcome new board members and work alongside them to set a bold course for RBC's future."

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