

RBC Students Selected for Prestigious Emerging Leaders Program

SOUTH PRINCE GEORGE, VA, UNITED STATES, October 3, 2025

/EINPresswire.com/ -- Richard Bland College is proud to announce that three of its student leaders—Kaya Pope, Victoria Wigfall and Jada Ramirez—have been selected to participate in the prestigious Emerging Leaders Program at the Gloucester Institute in Gloucester, Virginia.

Founded by former Virginia Secretary of the Commonwealth Kay Cole James, the Emerging Leaders Program stands as one of the Commonwealth's premier leadership development initiatives. The program is spearheaded by Robert James, Executive Director of the Gloucester Institute, and Christine Carmichael, Director of Programs, who together bring visionary leadership and strategic direction to its mission.



(L-R) Jada Ramirez, Victoria Wigfall and Kaya Pope were among the esteemed group of students accepted into the prestigious Emerging Leaders Program at the Gloucester Institute.

The semester-long experience brings together a select group of African American undergraduate students from across Virginia who demonstrate exceptional leadership potential, academic achievement and commitment to service. Out of 139 applicants this year, only 30 students were accepted—including the three distinguished RBC students. Participants meet one weekend each month at the historic Holly Knoll estate—birthplace of the United Negro College Fund and a landmark of the Civil Rights Movement. The program combines mentorship, advanced leadership training and hands-on workshops in personal branding, persuasive communication and professional writing. Students also gain access to a powerful network of leaders across industries, building skills that will help them thrive in today's complex professional landscape.

"Effective leadership skills are learned over time and by example, so we are grateful to Kay Cole James for her lifelong commitment to modeling and promoting leadership among emerging adults," said Dr. Debbie L. Sydow, President of Richard Bland College. "Kaya, Victoria and Jada are exceptional Richard Bland College students and they will be strong contributors to the Emerging

Leaders Program.”

Meet the Emerging Leaders (L-R):

Jada Ramirez is a psychology major and student leader serving as Secretary of the Student Government Assembly and a member of the Statesmen Starlettes cheering club. A Dean’s List student and Orientation Leader, Jada aspires to become a pediatric behavioral therapist and eventually open her own practice.

Victoria Wigfall, a sophomore and two-time Dean’s List honoree, serves as President of the Rotaract Club and Vice President of the Student Government Assembly. With more than 100 hours of community service, leadership roles on campus, and an internship with Delegate Rodney Willett, she brings a wealth of experience in civic engagement and public service.

Kaya Pope, a rising sophomore majoring in business administration, is a Promise Scholar and recipient of the Academic Excellence in Business and Economics Award. She is active in the RBC Rotaract Club and plans to transfer to William & Mary to pursue marketing and organizational leadership. Kaya aims to launch her own marketing or advertising firm in the future.

These emerging leaders attended the program’s opening weekend from September 19-21, which included a keynote conversation on media leadership led by Armstrong Williams, founder and CEO of Howard Stirk Holdings. RBC leadership, including Dr. Tiffany Birdsong, Chief of Staff to the President, and Terelle Robinson, Associate Director of Government Relations, joined to support the students at the kickoff event.

Their selection underscores Richard Bland College’s commitment to fostering socially responsible, forward-thinking leaders prepared to make meaningful contributions to their communities.

Jesse Vaughan
Richard Bland College
+1 8048626214
jvaughan@rbc.edu
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