Black College Institute
PRE-COLLEGE ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS
June 23, 2018 - June 28, 2018
BLACK COLLEGE INSTITUTE

schedule

SATURDAY — JUNE 23
9 AM - 11 AM — Move-In & Tours
11 AM - 1 PM — Lunch
1 PM - 3 PM — Welcome Program
3 PM - 5 PM — Moss Arts Center
5 PM - 7 PM — Dinner
7 PM - 9 PM — Emcee Session
9 PM - 10 PM — Reflection Activity

SUNDAY — JUNE 24
7 AM - 8 AM — Breakfast
8 AM - 10 AM — Workshop
10 AM - 12 PM — Strengths Quest
12 PM - 2 PM — Lunch & Reflection
2 PM - 4 PM — Career Development Workshop
4 PM - 7 PM — Workshop/Dinner
7 PM - 8 PM — West AJ Time
8 PM - 10 PM — Rec Center Exploration
10 PM - 6 AM — Lights Out

MONDAY — JUNE 25
7 AM - 8 AM — Breakfast
8 AM - 10 AM — Vet-Med
10 AM - 12 PM — Architecture & Urban Studies
12 PM - 2 PM — Lunch & Reflection
2 PM - 4 PM — Pamplin College of Business
4 PM - 6 PM — Group Projects/Dinner
6 PM - 9 PM — Etiquette Dinner, Professional Development, Networking
9 PM - 10 PM — Reflection
10 PM - 6 AM — Lights Out
TUESDAY — JUNE 26

7 AM - 8 AM — Breakfast
8 AM - 10 AM — Natural Resources & Environment
10 AM - 12 PM — Liberal Arts & Human Sciences
12 PM - 2 PM — Lunch & Reflection
2 PM - 4 PM — Agriculture & Life Sciences
4 PM - 7 PM — Group Project/Dinner
7 PM - 10 PM — Cultural Centers Tours & Breakzone
10 PM - 6 AM — Lights Out

WEDNESDAY — JUNE 27

7 AM - 8 AM — Breakfast
8 AM - 12 PM — College of Science
12 PM - 2 PM — Lunch with Dean Julia Ross
2 PM - 4 PM — Biomedical Engineering & Mechanics
4 PM - 5 PM — Preliminary Presentations
5 PM - 7 PM — Dinner
7 PM - 10 PM — On Site Admissions
10 PM - 6 AM — Lights Out

THURSDAY — JUNE 28

7 AM - 9 AM — Breakfast/Check Out
9 AM - 11 AM — Assessment/Group Projects
11 AM - 12 PM — Presentations
12 PM - 3 PM — Closing Remarks/Lunch & Departure
Dannette Gomez Beane, Ph.D.

I grew up in South Texas and went to an AAAAA (5A) public school. I left Texas to attend Hollins University - a small, women's, liberal arts school in Virginia. It was there that I learned I wanted a career in higher education. After graduation I joined AmeriCorps in an assignment with College Summit where I helped low-income, inner-city youth apply for college. This work led me to pursue a Masters in Counselor Education and secure a job in college admissions. After completing my Masters degree, I became an academic advisor at Virginia Tech's College of Architecture and Urban Studies. The academic work led me to pursue a doctorate and to work with graduate students. I served as the Director of Graduate Recruitment and Diversity Initiatives for seven years and completed the Ph.D. part time. Today, I serve as the Director of Recruitment and Operations for the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at Virginia Tech.

Hometown: San Antonio, TX | Department: Office of Undergraduate Admissions | Position: Director of Recruitment and Operations

Luisa Burgos

Luisa earned her Bachelors degree from James Madison University and her Masters degree from Virginia Tech. She has served in several roles at Virginia Tech including working for the Student Success Center, Cultural and Community Centers, The Graduate School Office of Recruitment, Diversity, and Inclusion; and The Provost Office of Inclusion and Diversity. Luisa is very excited to bring her experiences to help underserved and marginalized populations thrive at Virginia Tech!

Hometown: Bolivia & Alexandria, VA | Department: Office of Undergraduate Admissions | Position: Assistant Director
**Alphonso Garrett**

I grew up spending time between the Hampton Roads area and the Northern Neck of Virginia. After a great experience as a student tour guide at Old Dominion University I set in motion my career in college admissions and recruitment. While deployed in the Army National Guard, I began taking graduate courses and working toward a Master of Science in Education degree, and 12 years later after positions at ECPI University, Virginia Wesleyan University, and Virginia Commonwealth University, I found my way to Virginia Tech. My work has allowed me to travel the country speaking to prospective students, families, and educators about the college search and admissions process, planning and coordinating recruitment programs, and advising the Director of Undergraduate Admissions on matters related to diversity and access. Virginia Tech provides a wealth of opportunity and proven outcomes to our students — and faculty and staff. Outside of my direct responsibilities I am actively involved in several professional organizations including my recent post of President-Elect with the Virginia Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. Outside of work I am active in the community having coached youth basketball and soccer, volunteering with my church, and picking up random hobbies such as balloon twisting.

**Chris Kwaramba**

Chris Kwaramba is one of our program coordinators. He is a fourth year Ph.D. student in the Department of Business Information Technology in Virginia Tech's Pamplin School of Business. He will be defending his dissertation this summer. Chris has a vested interest in increasing the ranks of underrepresented minorities in higher education and has been active in organizations such as the Ph.D. Project to further his cause.

**Linwood Moore**

I am originally from Portsmouth, VA where I graduated from I.C. Norcom High School. In addition to working for Virginia Tech, I also graduated from the university in May of 2017 with my Bachelor of Science in Statistics. My work in the Office for Inclusion and Diversity includes developing databases and managing data reports. I play basketball, listen to music, and work on my coding skills in my free time.
Menah Pratt-Clarke, Ph.D.

Menah Pratt-Clarke is the Vice President for Strategic Affairs and Vice Provost for Inclusion and Diversity. She is also a Professor of Education within the School of Education in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences. She has over twenty years of administrative, academic, and legal experience including designing, leading, executing and coordinating large-scale strategic initiatives in higher education. Dr. Pratt-Clarke received a B.A. and M.A. in Literary Studies from the University of Iowa. Additionally, she received a J.D., as well as a M.A. and Ph.D. in Sociology from Vanderbilt University.

Hometown: Born in Pittsburgh, PA, raised in Bloomington-Normal, Illinois | Department: Office of Inclusion and Diversity | Position: Vice President for Strategic Affairs & Vice Provost for Inclusion and Diversity

Mercedes Ramírez-Fernández, Ph.D.

Mercedes Ramírez-Fernández serves as Associate Vice Provost for Strategic Affairs and Diversity. In her capacity she develops and supports innovative programs and policies relevant to diversity and inclusion across campus. She has an undergraduate degree in Psychology with Spanish Literature concentration from the University of Puerto Rico; a masters degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of Iowa, and a doctorate in Higher Education Management from the University of Pennsylvania.

Hometown: Mayagüez, Puerto Rico | Department: Office of Inclusion and Diversity | Position: Associate Vice Provost for Strategic Affairs and Diversity

Natasha Saunders

I currently serve as the Director of SOAR (Student Opportunity and Adacemic Resources). My passion is assisting individuals with identifying their strengths and talents. Some of my interests and hobbies include singing karaoke, international travel and spending time with family and friends.

Hometown: Roanoke, VA | Department: Office of Inclusion and Diversity | Educational Background: Undergraduate Degree acquired from NCA&T, Master's Degree acquired from University of Kentucky

Jamelle Simmons

I am currently a Ph.D. candidate in Biomedical Engineering focusing on evaluating and modeling therapeutic approaches in autism spectrum disorders. In addition to research I am involved in mentoring undergraduate research students and working with middle school students in rural communities to help increase their interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. Some of my hobbies and interests include teaching myself coding languages, music, going to the gym, hiking, and watching plenty of YouTube and Netflix.

Hometown: Jacksonville, NC | Department: Biomedical Engineering and Mechanics | Major: Biomedical Engineering | Student Involvement: Biomedical Engineering Society, VT-PEERS, Black History Timeline
Chantel Simpson

I am a Ph.D. candidate with research focusing on problem-solving and the retention of minorities in STEM. Prior to beginning my graduate program at Virginia Tech, I worked as a high school science teacher where I reaffirmed my commitment to ensuring student success in the sciences. In my spare time I enjoy cooking, hiking and painting.

Hometown: Reidsville, NC | Department: Agriculture, Leadership & Community Education (ALCE); College of Agriculture & Life Sciences | Major: Agriculture, Leadership, & Community Education (ALCE) | Student Involvement: Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources & Related Sciences (MANRRS)

Leemar Thorpe

A graduate of North Carolina Central University with a Bachelor of Arts in Visual Communications and Radford University with a Masters of Fine Arts in Graphic Design, I’ve worked at Virginia Tech, promoting and advancing diversity, for the past 8 years. Prior to my position with the Office for Inclusion and Diversity, I was a program manager for two Virginia Tech - NIH funded programs that focused on underrepresented students in the biomedical and behavioral sciences.

Hometown: Newport News, VA | Department: Office for Inclusion and Diversity | Position: Associate Director of Programs

Stacey Wilkerson

I am a third year Ph.D. student in the Higher Education program at Virginia Tech. I have worked in the field of student affairs for nearly 17 years in the fields of first year experience, Title IX, retention, student success, service-learning, crisis management, family programs, and large-scale programming. My research interests include college access for historically underrepresented populations, pre-college programs, and first-generation students and families. When not in school, I enjoy spending time outside, playing ball with my dog, and watching movies.

Hometown: Victoria, VA | Department: Inclusion and Diversity | Position: Senior Project Manager
STUDENT STAFF LEADERSHIP

Yeabsera Bogale
I am currently a rising senior with a passion for law, poetry, traveling, Netflix binges, and snacking at 1 AM. At Virginia Tech, I will attend law school, pursue a career as a criminal defense attorney, and later start my own non-profit practice in marriage and family law. My research interests include constitutional law and racial ethics. I am an advocate and a fighter. I absolutely love serving my community and helping others reach heights they never saw possible. I’m also in love with music and horror films. Here’s to a dope week filled with growth, empowerment, and academic enrichment! Go Hokies!

Hometown: Woodbridge, VA | Department: Department of Political Science, Department of Philosophy, Department of Economics | Major: Political Science: Legal Studies | Minor: PPE — Philosophy, Politics, and Economics | Student Involvement: Black Organizations Council, Mu Alpha Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Expressions, Deans Office

Elysia Budu
I am currently a rising junior studying History, particularly with a focus in World War II and European History. After I graduate in 2020, I want to get a duel masters in Education and History and teach in a High School. Two of my favorite research projects I’ve participated on are research on Virginia Tech World War I veterans and a project for US State Department’s Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement. In my free time I enjoy coloring, practicing clarinet, calling my mom and siblings and watching Netflix.

Hometown: Richmond, VA | Department: College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences | Major: History | Minor: War and Society, concentration in Research and Thesis | Student Involvement: Marching Virginians, Ambassador for CLAHS, Tau Beta Sigma Sorority, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.

Nyheim Foster
I am currently a junior double majoring in Political Science (legal studies option) and Criminology. My long term goal is to become a Criminal Defense Attorney. Between now and then, I plan to attend law school at either Georgetown University or University of Richmond and gain more knowledge and experience by acquiring an internship at a small firm to learn the basics. During breaks, I go back to local schools and communities in my hometown and tell them why I chose Virginia Tech and give them insight about the university, encouraging them to apply. During my minimal free time (when I’m not at work or in class), I like to go on various adventures, hiking, watching Netflix and hanging out with friends.

Hometown: Norfolk, VA | Major: Political Science and Criminology | Minor: Residential Property Management | Student Involvement: Yates Project, VT Housing and Residential Life
Mia Freeman

I'm a rising junior. In my free time I like to watch hair tutorials on YouTube, listen to music, and hang out with my friends. Some fun facts: I've traveled out of the country twice, my celebrity crush is Quincy Brown, and my favorite food is homemade tacos.


Ashleigh Griffin

I am a current senior studying food science and technology with a concentration in science. I am a weekly writer for Her Campus VT and I am one of the social media directors for the group as well. I am involved with the Southwest VA LGBTQ+ History Project, and I recently completed an internship with the project this past spring where I was trained and certified to conduct oral history interviews. Within the development of the internship, we created a new community group, The QTPOC Project, and I am a co-director and social media director of this project (feel free to check out our Facebook page). Some of my hobbies and interests include reading, keeping up with political debates, music, watching true crime documentaries, drawing, getting tattoos/piercings, and yoga.

Pronoun: She, her, they, them | Hometown: Richmond, VA (Glen Allen) | Department: College of Agriculture and Life Sciences | Major: Food Science and Technology (Science option) | Student Involvement: Her Campus VT

Sarina Harper

I am an upcoming senior majoring in Animal and Poultry Science with a concentration in companion animal science. My post-graduate plans include gaining more hands on experience as a vet tech, and later attending vet school and becoming a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. In my free time, I enjoy movies, video games, and taking an excessive amount of naps.

Hometown: Chesterfield, VA | Department: College of Agriculture and Life Sciences | Major: Animal and Poultry Science, Pre-Vet | Student Involvement: Pre-Vet Club, Swine Center Assistant
Felicia Haynes

I recently graduated and am currently in the process of putting in job applications that apply to my degree and go back to school to receive my Masters. One of the best opportunities I had in college was studying abroad. I did a 10-day service learning trip to Puerto Plata and the Dominican Republic. That was my first time out of the country and I plan to travel as much as I can in my future. I enjoy jigsaw puzzles, reading, photography, watching movies and the best TV shows, and sleeping in.

Hometown: Portsmouth, VA | Department: Pamplin College of Business | Major: Accounting and Information Systems: Information System Audit | Student Involvement: American Red Cross Club, National Association of Black Accountants (NABA), Student African American Sisterhood (SAAS), and Upsilon Lambda Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Incorporated

Camrin Jefferson

I am currently a junior here at Virginia Tech majoring in Business Information Technology on the Decision Support Systems track. After graduation, my plan is to become a software developer for a major company. I am also the president of the Student African American Brotherhood, an organization which serves to enrich the black male community on campus and as a whole. My hobbies include: playing Fortnite and 2K and volunteering in the community.

Hometown: Lynchburg, VA | Department: Pamplin College of Business | Major: Business Information Technology - DSS | Student Involvement: SAAB

Jordan Lozama

I am currently an undergraduate student studying public relations and consumer studies. I’m a rising senior graduating this upcoming year. After graduation, I plan to go to graduate school. This will be my second year as a student staff leader for the Black College Institute Program and I’m very excited to meet the new students. I enjoy getting to know new people and sharing past experiences. A few fun facts about myself are: in my free time I like to write and watch Netflix and Hulu. If I could go anywhere in the world at this point in my life, it would be Santorini, Greece or the Dominican Republic. My two favorite sports are football and track and field. I’m anxiously awaiting for the 2020 Summer Olympics and football season to begin.

Hometown: Reston, VA | Department: College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences | Major: Public Relations | Minor: Consumer Studies | Student Involvement: Virginia Tech Athletic Marketing Department, Event Intern, Presidential Scholars Program, Member of Black Organization Council, Event Chair, Caribbean Student Organization, Marketing Chair, College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Ambassador
Taylor Mallory

I am currently a senior majoring in Political Science with interests in diversity and inclusion, public policy, criminal justice and law. My time here at Virginia Tech has been centered around advancing their diversity initiatives and advocating for fellow underrepresented students. Some of my hobbies and interests include music, Netflix, and playing sports.

Hometown: Stafford, VA | Department: College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences | Major: Political Science | Minor: Sociology and Communications
Student Involvement: Student Government Association, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Black Student Alliance

Travis McDonald

I am a recent graduate with a MFA in Creative Writing. In addition to teaching Academic and Creative Writing at Virginia Tech, I have published work in various literary publications and I currently work as a freelance writer for a number of companies and individuals. Some of my hobbies and interests include reading, riding my bike, and listening to podcasts.

Hometown: Boston, MA | Department: English - Creative Writing Program | Major: Creative Writing

Steven Mendoza

I am a fifth year student double majoring in electrical and computer engineering. I spend a lot of my time with the Latinx community here trying to build it up. Other than that, I work for Blacksburg Transit, I watch way too many tv shows, I love learning about new things and goofing off whenever possible.


Krishna Mittal

I am currently a senior pursuing Industrial and Systems Engineering. I want to work in Supply Chain/Logistics and dream of owning a company of my own soon. Some of my hobbies include sports and Netflix.

Hometown: Ahmedabad, India | Major: Industrial Systems Engineering
Oluwatosisn Ogunmayowa

I am a Ph.D. student in Environmental Science focusing on nutrient enrichment in streams. Also, I co-lead a group of graduate students with diverse backgrounds to explore how Christian faith informs our academic and professional work, and journey through graduate school and provide support and encouragement needed to thrive in graduate school. I love traveling and playing soccer.

Hometown: Benin City, Nigeria | Department: Crop and Soil Environment Sciences | Major: Environmental Science | Student Involvement: Minority in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS), Intervarsity Graduate Christian Fellowship

Courtney Ortiz

I am a psychology major that is hopefully on my way to law school next year. I currently spend most of my time with friends and with my black lab, Baine. She's a 1 year old service dog, training to go to her forever home. I spend my time playing in makeup, playing the Sims, online shopping, watching Netflix and playing video games. I also love spending time with my friends and family.

Hometown: Richmond, VA | Department: College of Science | Major: Psychology, Criminology, Sociology | Minor: Africana Studies | Student Involvement: Minority in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS), Intervarsity Graduate Christian Fellowship

Alejandro Pezo

I am currently attending George Mason University for a Master’s program in Counseling & Development, with a concentration in Community Agency Counseling. I graduated from Virginia Tech in Spring of 2017. I also founded the Provisional Chapter of La Unidad Latina, Lambda Upsilon Lambda Fraternity, Inc. at Virginia Tech, and hope to help its future growth. Hobbies include basketball, soccer, football, and of course Netflix/Hulu.


Juan de la Rosa

I am a 2017 graduate of Virginia Tech. While at Virginia Tech, I started an organization called Tech DREAMers to advocate for undocumented like myself. Outside of the classroom, I was heavily involved through Tech DREAMers and discovered a passion for helping minority students thrive at places like Virginia Tech. Most recently, I worked as an Admissions Advisor at the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at Virginia Tech. I hope to continue in higher education and eventually be the director of an undocumented student resource center.

Hometown: Chesterfield, VA | Department: College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences | Major: Political Science and Spanish | Student Involvement: Tech DREAMers, El Centro, LASO
Ginai Seabron

I am a spring 2018 graduate and the First African American Woman Nanoscientist from Virginia Tech. During my time as an undergraduate student I served as president of the Black Organizations Council and the Enlightened Gospel Choir. I had the opportunity to conduct research with the chemistry and physics department, be a Teacher's Assistant for a first year experience course, and work as a Residential Advisor for 4 buildings. When I’m free, I enjoy spending time with children from the Blacksburg community, whether it was through the College Mentors for Kids Program or simply babysitting for faculty and staff. My hobbies include swimming, listening to music, playing card games, watching Netflix, and spending time with family and friends.

Hometown: Richmond, VA | Department: Nanoscience, College of Science | Major: Nanoscience | Student Involvement: Black Organizations Council, University Council, Enlightened Gospel Choir, Order of the gavel, College Mentors for Kids and Residential Advisor

Zoe Snead

Hi! My name is Zoe and I am currently a rising senior at Virginia Tech! After undergrad, I aspire to attend either Howard University or Virginia Commonwealth University for medical school to further my education and become my dream occupation of an OBGYN specializing in fertility. Fun facts about me: my love language is cooking, I’m a Gemini, my favorite artists are The Weeknd and Future, and I love to knit.

Hometown: Richmond, VA | Department: Biological Sciences, College of Science | Major: Microbiology | Student Involvement: Social Programming Director of Black Student Alliance, Service Trip Leader of Campus Kitchen at Virginia Tech

Lydia Tewolde

I recently graduated from Virginia Tech this spring in Human Nutrition Foods and Exercise with a concentration in the Science of Food, Nutrition, and Exercise. I was involved in many student organizations and also tutored local elementary school students in math and reading. During my free time, I enjoy going to the gym, meeting up with friends, and binge watching Netflix.

Maggie Turbyfill

I am currently a Senior in Finance. This past year, I helped in founding a club for first-generation college students. We are currently working to grow the program in terms of new students, a meeting space, mentorships, etc. This club allows me to help students who come from similar backgrounds as mine. I have four older brothers and I am the first in my family to go to college. I love singing, hiking, photography, calligraphy, and watching movies/tv shows.

Hometown: Galax, VA | Major: Finance (Corporate Financial Management & Banking and Financial Institutions) | Student Involvement: First Generation at Virginia Tech (1G@VT)

Monica

Monica (she/her) is a recent graduate of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. After switching majors twice, she spent her time studying the intersections of agriculture, Black leadership, food justice, and participatory education. She’s served as President of Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS) chapter, and as a Student Leader for VT Engage (a service-learning entity). In her free time she enjoys reading the works of Nnedi Okorafor, gardening, and curating her instagram feed.
