



# Reimagining Richmond: Diversity at the University of Richmond

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This is our dining hall, where we offer students a wide variety of authentic cuisines

In this way, students from diverse backgrounds may find a meal which is familiar and comforting, or students may even learn something from an cuisine which is different than what they are accustomed to!

We observe religious holidays closely, and ensure that during these times of special diet restrictions, students of all religions and beliefs may find high-quality food which is in line with their observance of the holiday.

Historically, our dining hall has not always been a place of inclusion and celebration for all. Long ago, our dining hall focused heavily on Western Christian holidays, always providing a spectacular display for holidays such as Easter and Christmas. While we do welcome Christian students and wish to help them celebrate, this lack of attention to other holidays unfortunately contributed to the white, Christian-centric environment. Now, with an equal amount of attention paid to Christian holidays and those such as Hanukkah, Passover, the season of Ramadan, and Eid, we hope to foster an environment inclusive of all University of Richmond students.



Here we have the Gottwald Center for the Sciences! Our renowned programs and equipment truly allow science students to feel prepared to enter into the professional world. Many students wish to follow a pre-med track, but we highly encourage taking a variety of courses before deciding upon a plan for after graduation, in order for the student to fully develop a well-rounded base of knowledge and find their passions organically. In this way, we aim to foster a school which is attractive to students who wish to pursue a diverse variety of careers. Perhaps our most accomplished, and famous, alum is Leland Melvin, who majored in chemistry and played on the football team here at UR! Leland went on to receive a Master of Science degree in Materials Science Engineering from the University of Virginia, then to NASA where he worked as a mission specialist on board the Space Shuttle Atlantis. Our forum is named the Leland Melvin forum in his honor, and was named so in 2019, marking the first permanent commemoration of an alum of color on campus. Before the Leland Melvin forum, the glorification of solely white alumni contributed to a white racial frame on campus, as whiteness was prevalent in all spaces through the use of art and the names of buildings other physical space. We hope that his inspirational presence on campus will encourage students to *shoot for the moon* on a daily basis. It is here that we frequently hold important social and cultural events, such as Take Back the Night and the Clothesline Project, pictured here, as well as other similar projects throughout the course of the year. The central placement on campus allows for an atmosphere of inclusion during these events, as all who pass by are encouraged to take part in activities. Additionally, the space in front of Gottwald, which is known as The Forum, is a popular place for political protests and student demonstrations.



Welcome to the Jepson Quad! The Jepson Quad used to be a fairly quiet place on campus, and students did not spend much time in the area aside from walking through it to get to class. However, advocates for social change at the university have worked towards redesigning the Jepson Quad so that it can be used to its full potential. As a result of their efforts, the Jepson Quad has immensely changed over the past twenty years, and has become a center for student and cultural life on campus.

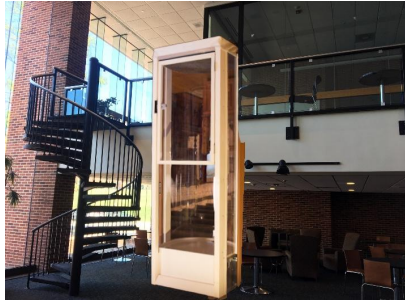
Now, students love spending time in the quad viewing the work of local artists, listening to a wide variety of musical performers, and devouring the delicious food and snacks provided by food trucks from the downtown area.

The art showcased in the Jepson Quad focuses on issues of oppression, discrimination, and the inequalities that exist within society. In this way, the art encourages students to acknowledge their privilege and emphasizes the importance of students using their privilege to take an active role in society and to catalyze positive change within their communities. One of the most recent galleries presented in the Jepson Quad emphasized the educational inequalities that exist within the United States.

The musical performances, which range from Kathak (Cá-thack), a classical Indian dance style, to salsa dancers, similarly break the “Richmond bubble” by exposing students to different cultures in a fun and lively manner.

The food trucks that frequent the Jepson Quad further enhance students cultural understanding. The food trucks range from Boka Tako Truck to Curry in a Hurry, and are a huge hit among students.

On your right is a statue of Mr. E. Claiborne Robins. While we condemn the business practices of Mr. Robins, we recognize that his donations have allowed for the university to progress, and thus, pay tribute to him for his financial contributions via this statue.



We are now entering the Tyler Haynes Commons, where students frequently gather and spend time together. We have multiple televisions in the Current, which are equipped with not only English-speaking channels, but also international channels, offering programming in 15 different languages. This way, everyone can feel welcome to catch their favorite show in a comfortable environment.

We highly encourage the promotion of cultural events on our display board! As you can see, students may promote events to promote interest in a large variety of happenings on and around campus, such as international film festivals, dance shows, and theater performances.

Over here, on the other side of the commons, we like to show off our Think Tank- a room specifically designated for groups to gather, hold meetings, and bounce ideas off of one another in a creative and innovative fashion. Since accessibility is a priority here at the university, we ensured that this room would be handicap accessible in installing this free-standing elevator you see leading up to this level. Our goal is to discourage able-bodied privilege in all spaces on our campus by making all spaces handicapped accessible. By ensuring that this is a space which is not exclusionary to any group, we are able to foster meaningful discourse which includes viewpoints of all identities.



And, over here, we have one of our many meeting spaces available in the Commons. We make sure as many student groups as possible get priority over meeting spaces, so in the Commons you will find not only the Common Ground offices and LGBTQ+ lounge, but a BSA Lounge, MSSN Lounge, and MSA Lounge. In the past, the delegation of space on campus led to an unspoken hierarchy of student groups which prioritized certain groups as more important than others. We ensure that this is no longer the case by giving all significant campus organizations a designated meeting space to further their presence on campus. The addition of these physical spaces encourages more interaction between marginalized students, helping to foster a more inclusive community.



Welcome to the Robins School of Business. The Robins School used to intimidate many ethnically and racially diverse students and non-business majors, as the majority of students who spent time in the school were white business majors. However, with the extension of "URISE"- "a pre-first-year program which aims to increase the number of students from groups traditionally unrepresented in the math and science disciplines"- into the business school, and the creation of a new Japanese restaurant named Nakamura, the Robins School of Business has become one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse locations on campus. As a result of its transformation, students from various majors say they feel comfortable inhabiting the school.

To your right, we have Nakamura, an on-campus restaurant which serves several types of ramen, Japanese appetizers, and other noodle soups. On Wednesdays, Nakamura hosts a happy hour, and on Thursday nights, Nakamura brings in Japanese musicians. Nakamura is a huge hit with the student body, as students are drawn to the lively atmosphere, delicious food, and ability to use their dining dollars.

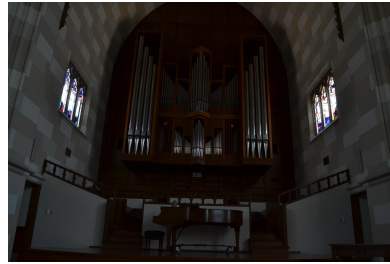
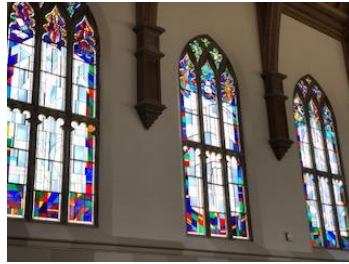
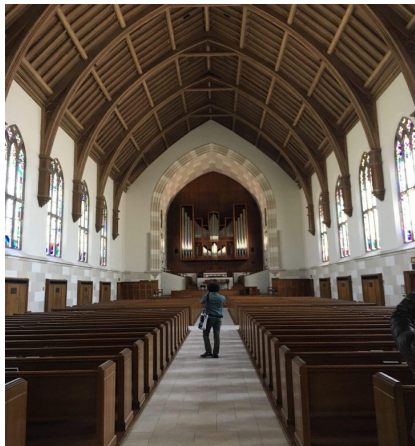
To your left, we have a painting of Mr. E. Claiborne Robins. Above his painting, we have paintings of an ethnically and racially diverse group of graduates from the Robins School of Business. Once marginalized, these students have gone on to have great success in their careers and have given back to the school.

In the past few years, The University of Richmond has taken steps towards increasing the cultural and racial sensitivity of professors. As a result, faculty and administrative training on diversity and inclusivity in the classroom is now required for all professors at the university, and takes place at the Robins School of Business.



This is our gazebo which is a nice little spot on the westhampton lake with a great sense of tradition. The traditions capture the diversity of our students and provide a sense of belonging and unity. It's a magical place where our students come by to just relax, take a breath and appreciate that they get to call this campus their own. A local legend taps back into the school's history with ziontown, a freed slave community that predates the university of Richmond. It goes that if you spot a great blue heron at midnight, the spirits of the freed slaves(Henry Pyror) shall bless you with liberty from all that oppresses you. We also have the timeless legend that kissing your beloved here will certainly lead to marriage!





Here we have our non-denominational Christian chapel on campus. University of Richmond was founded as a Baptist seminary in 1830, and did not separate from the baptist church until 1999. But even after the separation, the Christian chapel was the only place of worship (denoted to a single religion) on campus. It remained this way for much of the school's existence. The University of Richmond branded itself as a white, Baptist, local, private university during the mid to late 19th century. As a result, the university had trouble recruiting black students and struggled to make all students feel valued and represented on campus.

Thankfully, now students of many religious backgrounds feel included on our campus. We have a Buddhist temple, a Hindu temple and a Muslim mosque, all of which we will visit next on our tour. If your sacred practice is not directly represented on campus, we also have a nondenominational sacred meeting space. This space does not have architectural designs, furnishings, or symbols that denote any specific religious or spiritual practices.

Additionally, if you would like to attend services or ceremonies off campus for your sacred practices, the University guarantees one of two transportation opportunities: You can either be shuttled to the destination or subsidized/reimbursed for travel expenses.

On your right, you will see a statue commemorating Barry Green- the first African American residential student at The University of Richmond.