

**State Council of Higher Education  
Director's report  
March 20, 2012**

***University of Virginia's College at Wise.*** Hundreds of people gathered February 6 at the college convocation center to celebrate the life of Chancellor David. J. Prior, who died February 2. "David was a scientist first, but he was a dreamer too," said Teresa A. Sullivan, President of the University of Virginia. Now is the time to "share the talents, life, and remarkable achievement of this wise, warm and wonderful dreamer," she said. President Sullivan has established a search committee, which will be led by college board chairman, Marcia Gilliam, to identify a new leader for the college.

***New president for Richard Bland College.*** The board of The College of William and Mary has named Debbie L. Sydow as the new president of Richard Bland College. She currently is president of Onondaga Community College in Syracuse, NY, and previously served as a dean and vice president at two Virginia community colleges. She holds a Ph.D. in English.

***Auditor of Public Accounts.*** The Auditor of Public Accounts recently completed an audit for the period July 1, 2008, through June 30, 2011. The audit found proper recording of all transactions; no matters involving internal control; and no instances of noncompliance with applicable laws and regulations or other matters that are to be reported. The audit also included a review of our compliance with Commonwealth Information Security Policy and Standards, which required staff to document dozens of information technology settings and protocols. I commend the entire staff – especially budget and finance director Ellie Boyd – for their excellent stewardship of public resources.

***Outstanding Faculty Awards.*** Over 100 people gathered February 16 to celebrate the 12 recipients of the 2012 outstanding faculty awards. Special thanks go to Council members Mary Haddad and Johanna Chase, who served on the selection committee; Gil Minor, who along with Ms. Haddad introduced the recipients; and Steve Haner for participating in this year's event.

***Taiwan Educational Exchange.*** We have met on three occasions with representatives from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office. They are interested in an organized effort to enroll Taiwanese students in Virginia institutions, mostly in professional programs. Dr. DeFilippo is exploring the possibility with institutional leaders.

***Marketing Virginia Partnership.*** We are working with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership on an agreement with college and university presidents. The agreement is designed to increase the number of businesses that consider Virginia for expansion and growth.

***Student Advisory Committee.*** The Council has a number of advisory committees available to provide different viewpoints on areas of interest to Council members. One such advisory group is the Student Advisory Committee. Based on requirements in the Code of Virginia, SAC must meet at least twice annually to advise the Council on issues of concern to Virginia's college students. SAC members already have met three times this year, most recently as part of a legislative visit to the General Assembly to meet with lawmakers as advocates from SCHEV for Virginia's higher education system. Alex Reber, a third-year undergraduate at the University of Virginia, is SAC's elected chairman and is here today to share his observations on this year's Legislative Day.

***Campus visits.*** I recently attended the "Campus Within Walls" commencement program at Lunenburg Correctional Center; the Apprentice School commencement program in Newport News; and the investiture ceremony for Norfolk State University's president.