

## Executive Summary – Minority Affairs Com. Report

Executive Meeting Summary – Jan 30, 2021 - *Charlene Crawley*

**Minority Affairs Mission Statement:** The mission of the Minority Affairs Committee of the ACS-VA section is to serve, increase the representation of, communicate interests of, and establish programming for persons under-represented in the chemical and engineering sciences. This mission is advanced through sponsoring of the following initiatives:

1. Attract minority students (K-12 and College) to the chemistry related professions.
2. Create programs that provide mentoring to minority students via liaisons with VA universities and industries.
3. Compile best practices for recruitment, retention, career development, resumes writing, and evaluate programs for the advancement of minority programs.
4. Establish links with other STEM minority serving groups, such as the National Organization for the Professional advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers (NOBCChe)
5. Identify minority friendly educational institutions and business.
6. Create programming and initiatives to increase the participation and membership of minority STEM students and professionals within the ACS VA Section.

### 2020 - ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE:

**1. Activities tabled/suspended due to pandemic** - a) 2<sup>nd</sup> Student Summit b) STEM/SOL support in high needs area schools.

**2. Development of ACS-VA Section Social Justice/Diversity Statement for website posting:**

Combined Statements Submitted by Michael Hunnicutt & Charlene Crawley, July 11, 2020

**Subject:** Racial Justice and Equality, and the ACS's Core Values of Diversity, Respect, and Inclusion

Dear Fellow Virginia ACS Section members:

In light of the dual US health and social justice pandemics and the spotlight on systemic racism heightened by the prominent killings of African Americans, the VA ACS Executive Committee affirms to renew our commitment to increase the participation and representation of racial, ethnic and gender minorities within our community. As expressed by [ACS President Luis Echegoven](#), "*diverse chemistry learners and professionals continue to experience rejection, isolation, aggression, and harassment by their peers leaving them disillusioned and their work undervalued.*" The ACS-VA section is nationally recognized and awarded for efforts from initiatives such as Project SEED, Women Chemists, Younger Chemists and Minority Affairs Committees, among others, that provide targeted support, development, and outreach to our underrepresented Virginia STEM students and professionals. However, we recognize that programming efforts alone are not enough.

Indigenous Native Americans and African Americans of the diaspora (i.e. enslaved) populations of the US have been strategically isolated and stripped of their cultural historic origins and community, stigmatized, and denied educational and professional opportunities for hundreds of years. We must continue to be strategic in our understanding of ways to bridge the gap caused by this isolation and seek new ways to, welcome and unite these and all other ethnic minorities within the majority STEM community. Therefore, we need your individual voices, ideas, and participation to re-evaluate our policies and practices to actively remove systemic barriers to participation by all in the ACS community. The first step is to understand the ramifications of [systemic racism](#), brave conversations that seek to [get to the root of racial injustice](#), and help [White Americans to relate](#) to the perceptions and perspectives of people of color. Each of us is faced with the question, "What can I do?" We encourage all ACS members to demonstrate excellence in our professions; greatness brings authority to speak and effect change. We should use our successes to advance racial justice and equity. Together, we have an opportunity to build a stronger and more inclusive ACS.

We invite you to share your [thoughts and ideas](#).

### 3. Awarding of 2019 Chemluminary Award - Best Overall Local Section Minority Affairs Committee (Second award over past 3 years). This award was based upon the following activities:

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH: RICHMOND ST. FRANCIS MIDDLE SCHOOL

The J.L. Francis Middle School contains a high population of minority and economically disadvantaged students in the City of Richmond. As none of the students had ever attended the SCIENCE museum and there was no funding in the school budget for the students to have a yearly field trip, the ACS Minority Affairs Committee planned and secured funds, in conjunction with a grant from the Science Museum, to send over 80 5<sup>th</sup> grade students along with parent and teacher chaperones to tour the VA SCIENCE MUSEUM on March 27, 2019. We also provided them a fun restaurant style lunch.

A second event on the next day involved a SCIENCE symposium that was given onsite at St. Francis school by VCU'S Chemistry professor, **Dr. Mychal Smith**, **Monica Miles**, the president of VCU'S National Organization of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers (NOBCChe) student section and other NOBCChe and ACS student members.

A third event on April 17<sup>th</sup> involved a tour of the VCU Chemistry Dept and Siegel Center along with a science demonstrated held by the VCU Chemistry Dept CHEM 351 – Community Engagement class.


**3/27 St. Francis Elementary School - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Museum Field Trip Itinerary**  
43 Students & Parent Teacher Chaperones

9:00 - 9:30 am: Students have breakfast at the school  
9:30 am: Depart Francis  
10:00 am: Arrive to Science Museum and explore for one hour  
11:00 - 11:45 am: Show Film  
11:45 - 12:00 pm: Restroom Break  
12:00 - 12:30 pm: Lunch at Science Museum (provided by our sponsors)  
12:30 - 12:45 pm: Restroom Break  
12:45: Depart Museum  
1:30: Arrive back at Francis

**3/28 St. Francis Elementary School - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade School Career Day Assembly**  
400-500 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students & VCU Students

**4/17 St. Francis Elementary School - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade VCU Field Trip**  
200-300 St. Francis elementary students & 15-20 VCU Students

9:00 - 9:30 am: Students have breakfast at the school  
9:30 am: Depart Francis  
10:00 am: Arrive to VCU  
10:00 - 11:00: Tour Siegel Center and meet with VCU students  
11:00 - 12:00 am: Science Activity with Dr. Smith's class  
12:00 - 12:45 pm: Lunch in Dr. Smith's class (provided by school)  
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## JL FRANCIS SCHOOL- SPRING 2019 – SCHOOL CAREER DAY

The VCU National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemist and Chemical Engineers (NOBCChe) along with members of the VCU VA-ACS student affiliate chapter sponsored a field trip for the JL Francis Middle School 5<sup>th</sup> grade to visit the Science Museum on **Mar 27 2019** in addition to a second event where VCU chemistry students and faculty served as guest speakers to kick off the St. Francis Career Day event on the following day.

Peer to peer relations are the single most powerful source of influence for the academic and personal development of marginalized economically challenged and underrepresented students of color.

Both events mixer provided opportunities for **150 - 200** VCU and elementary student attendees and parents to learn about science, connect, build bonds and create friendships. The conversations were authentic and filled with energy and laughter.


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## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

*Many thanks to Hyacinth Yarabe for his long-term dedication and many years of effort as the Minority Affairs Committee Chair and co-Chair and well wishes in his journey towards new horizons!*

## 2021 Initiatives: (Budget Request- \$1000)

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1. **Increase outreach, awareness, and involvement of Minority membership** in VA section and surrounding sections with a '*share your story*' feature in future bulletins with 'interview-type' responses to questions like: (1) *Why did you choose chemistry/engineering/STEM as a career*, (2) *Discussion of 'defining' moments in career/discipline selection, such as early heroes/mentors*, (3) *steps and struggles overcome in attaining degree/position*, (4) *what excites you about discipline area*, (5) *describe everyday experiences/research on job*, (6) *what would you do/change to increase pipeline or make ACS or work environment more attractive/conducive to under-represented populations?* (7) *How have you navigated the COVID-19 and social justice pandemics and what advice can you offer to others.*

**Request \$500** to pay a VCU journalism/other student to interview and prepare write-up feature articles for up to 10 members to be featured in the bulletin and as a feature on our website.

**Measure of success** – increase in membership, participation, or attendance at VA section meetings.

2. **Supporting SOL Performance and awareness of STEM careers in Community Schools**– Collaboration between VCU, VUU, VSU faculty and alumni, ACS members and students, NOBCChE members and in collaboration with Dr. Mychal Smith (VCU Chemistry) to provide assistance to students with their SOLs using interest and performance enhancing experiments, using Zoom to have live scientists, including the minority scientists featured in Item (1) above to visit K-12 classrooms to discuss scientific methods and careers before student body.

Plan to adopt a new Richmond city middle-school (Boushall Middle School) with a high minority population. Have made a connection with a Boushall faculty member (Mr. Renee Pierce and Principal). Idea is to work with middle-school faculty to select 2-3-scientists discuss careers that relate to teaching key SOL topics per semester.

Require students to select one of speakers and write a report on the scientist, the science, and develop or contribute to quiz questions that would appear on a test (related to SOL content). Turn this into a competition, where students present a 10-15 minute presentation and teach the class on the featured content. Top eight students will win a certificate + \$50 cash award.

**Request \$500** to fund the student cash awards (\$400) + residuals.

**Measure of success** – Increase student class participation in STEM class and/or class averages on class SOL scores. Could also arrange for a section meeting where best 1-2 presentations are presented by student at an ACS meeting.