

February 2019

Dear Families of Graduates,

The Class of 2019 has embarked on its final semester. We, like you, look forward to this last fulfilling chapter in your student's college experience. Please review the enclosed Commencement information that may be helpful in planning travel, lodging, and other logistics related to the weekend. Included in the mailing, you will find a Commencement weekend schedule of events and information for ordering graduation announcements (including a sample announcement). We also strongly encourage you to explore our Commencement website, where you will find helpful links and frequently asked questions related to this exciting event:  
<http://www.randolphcollege.edu/commencement/>.

For information on local hotels or lodging, please go to [www.discoverlynchburg.org](http://www.discoverlynchburg.org). Please note that other local institutions also have their Commencement activities the same weekend as ours. ***We recommend you obtain hotel accommodations immediately, if you have not already done so.***

#### **Final Friday - Mandatory for Undergraduates**

Seniors are *required* to attend Final Friday in Hampson Commons on Friday, May 10 from 1:30-2:30 P.M. to complete last-minute Commencement preparations. This event is for *students only*, and staff will be in attendance to administer a questionnaire about future plans and to hand out caps, hoods, tassels, and Commencement rain tickets. Keep this mandatory event in mind when discussing plans with your student.

#### **Baccalaureate Service**

All graduates and their guests are invited to the Baccalaureate Service, which is planned by fellow students. Graduates will process in their robes. This event is open to all graduating seniors and M.A.T. candidates who wish to attend.

#### **Commencement Rehearsal**

All graduates and their squires are *required* to attend Commencement rehearsal at 8:00 A.M. on Sunday, May 12. Meet at Michels Plaza (if raining meet in Smith Banquet Hall located in Smith Memorial Building). Graduates should arrive dressed and ready for Commencement; caps, gowns, hoods, and tassels should be readily available.

*It is tradition, though not required, for each senior to select one squire who will march with the senior and sit directly behind the graduate during Commencement. At the designated moment during the Commencement ceremony, the squire will ceremoniously place the Randolph College baccalaureate hood around the senior's collar. Originally, the squires were sophomores; but once sophomores were no longer required to stay for Commencement, seniors began to choose family members as their squires. Although most seniors choose fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, grandparents, alumnae relatives, or siblings to act as their squire, some seniors choose a person who is not a relative but someone with whom the senior wants to share this very special occasion.*

#### **Commencement Ceremony**

Commencement will begin at 10:00 A.M. on Sunday, May 12 in The Dell (if rain, Smith Memorial Building, Smith Hall Theatre). If the ceremony is outdoors there is nearly limitless seating, but if forced indoors by rain, each graduate will be allotted 3 guest rain tickets for seating in Smith Hall Theatre. *Graduates and their squires*

*do not need tickets.* Guests without tickets may view the ceremony in the Student Center. ***A system to reserve allotted rain tickets and request additional tickets will be emailed to graduates in February.*** The ceremony typically lasts approximately 1½ hours. A graduation luncheon is available for purchase in Cheatham Dining Hall following the ceremony. The College will provide lunch free of charge for all graduates.

**Assistance for Guests with Special Needs**

If your party will include someone who has special needs, please contact Jill Mazzone in the Office of the Dean of Students. Requests for a sign language interpreter and/or handicap-accessible seating and shuttle ride into and out of The Dell must be made in advance by emailing [deanofstudents@randolphcollege.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@randolphcollege.edu) or calling (434) 947-8895. One companion may accompany the guest in the handicap-accessible seating area in The Dell. Handicap-accessible seating in The Dell is limited. When this seating area fills, overflow seating will be available in the air-conditioned Hampson Commons where the ceremony will be simulcast.

**Residence Halls Close Sunday, May 12 at 6:00 p.m.**

Seniors who leave campus following exams should plan to return on Friday in order to accomplish the bulk of their packing before Commencement events begin. We ask students to reserve Sunday afternoon for loading already packed belongings. Residence halls will close at 6 P.M. on Sunday, May 12 (no exceptions).

Please visit <http://www.randolphcollege.edu/commencement> for more information about Commencement weekend. Questions may be directed to Jill Mazzone in the Office of the Dean of Students at (434) 947-8895 or by e-mail to [deanofstudents@randolphcollege.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@randolphcollege.edu).

Sincerely,

Wesley R. Fugate, Ph.D.  
Vice President for Student Affairs  
and Dean of Students

Enclosures