

3rd Annual Black Town Hall Hosted by the Black Student Alliance Addresses Campus Concerns

By: BRANDON WHITAKER
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Two years ago in the Spring of 2024, leaders from Radford's Black Student Alliance created an event that would be called the Black Town Hall, spearheading a tradition of advocacy and open communication between the black student population and university administrators.

February 12th was the date of the 2026 Black Town Hall. The panel on the Bonnie auditorium stage included President Bret Danilowicz, VP of finance and administration Rob Hoover, Provost and VP of academic affairs Bethany Usher, VP of student affairs Susan Trageser, Dannette Gomez Bean who is VP for enrollment management and strategic communications as well as Penny White the VP for advancement in alumni relations.

“Many students seem to be forced off campus after their sophomore year due to the lack of space, what is the plan in the future to prevent this from happening?...”

The first question asked from the members of BSA sitting in the front row, centered on the topic of housing and how it feels as though students are being forced out of dorms and scrambling to find housing each year. Dr. Trageser shared that a few years ago when enrollment numbers were declining, Radford housing started accepting more non-obligated students,



Photos from the 2026 Black Town Hall Photo Credit: Jessica Groft

“since we’ve been able to increase retention, keeping more students here at Radford to finish their degrees and the class sizes of our new entering students have increased and stabilized at around 1400. That does put us in a little bit of a bind in terms of how many (non-obligated) students we can house.”

She shared that another factor playing a role in this issue is the residence hall renovations. She shared that currently there are no plans to purchase any additional properties to create more housing. The goal moving forward is to be as up front and open as possible about the overall housing situation and about how many non-obligated students may live in res-

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the Tartan Presents: The Club Corner

Upcoming Events:

Calm Day Feb. 18th
8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Scan the QR code for the full
schedule of events.

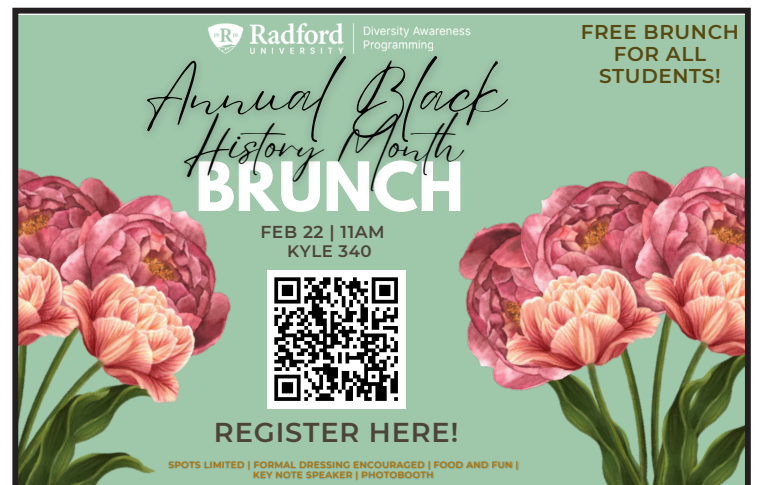


**Radford Theater Department
Presents "Gulf View Drive"**

Feb. 18th-21st at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 22nd at 2 p.m.

Read the in depth preview of this event on page
four. The performances will be held in the
black box theatre in the Artis Center.

**Diversity Awareness Programming
Annual Black History Month Brunch**



Sing the Night Away Karaoke
Hosted by R-SPaCE Feb. 19th 7:00 p.m.
Bonnie Main Stage

**"For the Culture" Black History
Month Celebration**

Hosted by Radford African Student
Association Feb. 20th Preston Hall

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inquiries

idence halls. **She told the audience that the number of openings right now is sitting at around 200.**

“...are there any plans in place to modernize or improve the transit system to address (these) concerns?”-

The next question focused on Radford transit and if there are any plans to improve the system. Dr. Hoover explained the university is working very closely with the City of Radford to identify and solve issues relating to the capacity and number of routes as well as the outdated technology and the appropriateness of the routes. He shared that soon the city is planning on conducting a study of the system and they will be encouraging students and faculty to provide input in addition to the input from the community overall. He added that the city has already conducted an internal study of their tech and determined that their technology has been out-of-date and has not been upgraded properly. The city is also re-evaluating the routes, so that students can get to where they need to be more efficiently, **“We are examining the relationship between transit and parking, knowing that some of our parking is not exactly adjacent to the buildings, that students may be needing access to...”** said Hoover.

Is there any clarification that can be provided regarding the limited funding allocated for the African-American studies department, The National Pan Hellenic Council and other diverse clubs and organizations by the university?

Next the panel answered questions regarding the funding of the NPHC as well as the African American studies department. Dr. Usher shared that the AAST program is actually one of the minor programs at Radford that receives the most funding. She also

noted that the University does value the minor program very much and they are in the process of introducing a new director for the African American Studies program. Regarding the NPHC, Dr. Trageser explained that rejoining FSL means that the funding that supports FSL can support NPHC too. She pointed to the Club Programming Committee as another route they could go to acquire funds for events or travel.

The next question was related to how the university plans to continue supporting black and minority communities in Radford and surrounding cities. Dr Usher shared that just recently the university held a workshop to help local businesses register as SWaM businesses (small, women, and minority owned). This was done because state contracts require a percentage of university contracts to use SWaM businesses. Dr. Hoover also added that the state requires a certain utilization rate for SWaM businesses and Radford is sitting at 42% which he says is higher than many other institutions across the state.

The Tartan spoke with the President of BSA **Jasmine Graham** and Vice President **Arshae Jackson** to gauge their thoughts on the night overall.

“I feel like we heard a lot of solutions happening and I didn’t hear a lot of running around our questions which was really good, as far as the turnout goes we would love to see more of the student body here, these questions are pertaining to them and their student involvement and their student life” shared Graham. Jackson added, **“We are advocating for you and this is a time where you can get in direct contact with the president and his cabinet** and if there were any questions that we missed we opened the floor up for anyone to ask questions as well.”

Department of Theatre is Transporting Audiences to the Early 50s with “Gulf View Drive”

By: ANGELINA CAPOTS
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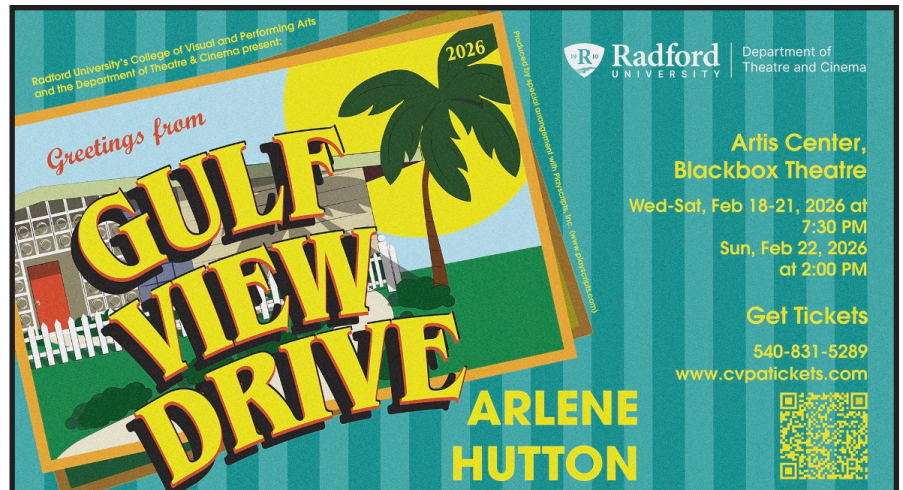
Directed by junior **Mazie Wakefield**, this Southern drama is the third installment in Hutton’s Nibroc Trilogy. The play follows May and Raleigh Brummett as they navigate post-World War II America and the complexities of marriage and family.

Set three years after Raleigh, a writer, and May, a schoolteacher, move from Kentucky to Florida, the play finds the couple living with May’s mother.

Their quiet life is disrupted when relatives arrive unexpectedly, bringing family tensions and outside pressures into their oceanside home. As the world around them changes, the characters confront their own beliefs and the influence of others on their relationships.

The production is the department’s spring studio show and features student direction and design. The cast includes **Charlotte Hall, Brandon Smith, Kathryn Pendleton, Angelina Capots and Gwendolynne Arnold**. Designers are **Ezra Arnold, Elliott Sanborn, Kennedy Goodwin and Professor Jimmy Ray Ward**. Stage Manager **Mack Fields** and Assistant Stage Manager **River Scott** lead the production team, with support from students working in the scene shop, costume shop and box office following weather-related delays earlier this year.

Director Mazie Wakefield has been heavily involved in Radford’s theatre department both on and offstage. Students who have attended productions here may have seen her last spring in the production of “The Totalitarians” by Peter Sinn Nachtrieb or last fall in “Moon Over Buffalo” by Ken Ludwig. When she’s not onstage, Mazie can be found in the costume shop, assisting the team of stitchers who build and alter costumes. Mazie made her directorial



debut last spring in the Directing II class with her production of “The Diaries of Adam and Eve” by Marc Bucci.

I had the chance to interview Mazie before the show entered its tech run. Mazie shared her process coming into this show and her navigation. When Mazie first arrived at Radford, she informed her professors of her passion for directing. Through classes and opportunities, she was able to apply last year for a directing position. **She told the faculty she would like to do a show she had “never heard of before” and was given “Gulf View Drive”.** Mazie took her time with the play and dedicated a night to each scene. She wanted to understand what each scene meant on its own. The purpose of the play and how it would be presented was imperative to Mazie. This led Mazie to her own self discoveries and new-found strengths stating- **“Whenever I believe something or in something, really stand up for that thing and hold out for that thing.”** This perfectly encapsulates the story that Mazie has presented on stage, especially within it’s characters and their struggles. My bias may be coming through here but if you have the ability to see this show I cannot urge you enough to attend.

Opinion: Black History is American History

By: MORGAN WADE
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Black History month is celebrated each year starting February 1st lasting through the whole month until March 1st, it honors and celebrates the generations of black Americans for their achievements, contributions, and history they gave to their people and country. BHM started as just a week of honoring black history in 1926 by Carter G. Woodson to ensure the inclusion of black history in education. It later expanded into a whole month by 1976. Black History month aimed to cover over 400 years of black history and heritage that had been neglected in hopes to highlight all the achievements that were never recognized and the stories that were never told.

We always look back at all the noble figures that paved the way for the new generations such as Martin Luther King Jr, Rosa Parks, Malcolm X, and all the activists, scientists, politicians, and just people who wanted change. Black history is American history and every year it seems we learn something new about black history that should have already been told and taught in schools, but not all of black history is rooted in pain. Black history has helped shape America as we know today with innovative ideas from black inventors such as Dr. Gladys West, a mathematician who helped calculate the GPS so it can be more accurate, and Garrett Morgan who invented the modern traffic and designed the three position traffic signal after witnessing a car crash.

Art has also played an integral role in black history. Rock music, Hip Hop, and House music, all trace their roots back to black creators in some way.



Black History Month Graphic Credit: @art.by_kyliee

Black history doesn't only get celebrated in February, there is also Juneteenth which represents and takes pride in black joy and not just emancipation. Black history is not just about survival and pain or even just slavery. It's about our excellence, creativity, our passion to push forward even though we always get brought down. We always stand up and fight for what is right. In the end black history is more than just a painful past. We are also a proud culture that continues to shine despite getting used everyday. Whether it be our culture getting mimicked and mocked or adopted and adapted without proper credit.

Black history may be highlighted for just a month, but it is every month and every year we celebrate black history.

The Threat on TikTok: a Timeline

By: RYLEE LYONS
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TikTok, one of the most popular apps used by people worldwide, has gone through many trials since it began in 2017. It has been a hub for creatives to post their content and potentially earn funds from the creator fund and has kickstarted the careers of many musicians, filmmakers, actors, and artists. It has provided a sense of community for many, allowing for users to post content about various issues and reach a relatable audience. The app pushes a hyper-specific algorithm that feeds each user content they are interested in. The data that TikTok collects has posed political concern from US lawmakers who continuously threaten to ban the app. The question is are Americans truly afraid of TikTok taking their data, or is this a governmental attempt to censor them? **Here's the timeline of everything TikTok has gone through since the first effort to ban it in the states.**

2019:

Speculation begins regarding China having US data via TikTok, federal workers and military personnel with government-issued cellular devices are urged to delete the app.

2020:

The Trump administration proposes a ban on TikTok for the first time and signs an executive order forcing ByteDance, TikTok's Chinese parent company, to limit or eliminate their involvement with the app. TikTok sues the Trump administration for a violation of due process regarding the executive order.

2021:

Biden reverses this executive order and promptly delays the decision on the TikTok ban.

2022:

TikTok remains safe for most of the year, yet reports still come out in relation to China's use of US

data. In the latter part of the year, the FBI raises national security concerns regarding ByteDance again.

2023:

The Biden administration reorders all federal employees to delete TikTok from their government issued devices. Singaporean TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew appears at a US congressional hearing, attempts to affirm that TikTok and ByteDance are not a threat to US security.

2024:

A bill suggesting TikTok either sell to a US company to prevent being banned in the country is proposed by congressional lawmakers despite the app's efforts to improve its protection of user data. The house and senate pass a bill to President Biden, who signs it. TikTok and ByteDance sue the US federal government once again. Donald Trump and opposition Kamala Harris both bring their 2024, presidential campaigns to TikTok despite controversy. The federal government upholds their decision to ban TikTok in the US.

2025:

On January 17th, the government announced that the ban will take place the next day. On the 18th, it did... for 12 hours. President-elect Donald Trump asked the US Supreme Court to halt the ban so he can find a solution with the company, framing himself as the app's hero by bringing it back to US screens.

2026:

After even more review, it is announced that TikTok will continue to run in the U.S. under a new board of american directors. This new joint venture between ByteDance and big-tech investors Oracle, Silver Lake, and MGX, is supposed to improve the security of US data, and will likely result in further review of content, and possible changes in the algorithm for U.S. users.

Opinion: Radford University's Parking Predicament

By: AMANDA FARLOW
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Radford University introduced the Radford Tuition Promise in October 2023. An initiative that seeks to help Virginia help cover the cost of college tuition. It worked, really. I am one of those students currently here on the Radford Tuition Promise, and I'm grateful for it. I wouldn't be able to pay for college without it. However, despite it guaranteeing my ride to college, there's one other problem I have: Radford overdid it.

Radford University overenrolled students. There are too many of us, and simply not enough space, utilities, or housing on campus for the number of students enrolled here. Students are being pushed out of their dorms, told to leave their cars back home, and limited to only one tightly packed parking lot off campus (if you've got nearly \$300 to cover the cost of the parking permit). Imagine looping the Dedmon Center parking lot for 45 minutes after you've gotten off work, to finally find one at the bottom of the hill, all to walk back up in icy conditions, with wind and snow nearly knocking you over as you trek up the hill.

If it's the weekend, you might just be lucky enough to park in front of your dorm. It's hardly a walk if you live somewhere like Muse or Washington. However, Radford University Parking Services is prone to blocking off random lots, at any given time, without letting you know. So don't invite family over for the weekend, because they'll have to park at BTs. If they aren't blocking entire lots, they also enjoy blocking off singular spaces with cones. It isn't in any order, like only handicapped or EV spaces, just sporadic and without any reason, like always.



Original photo credit: radford.edu

Without a heads up and without purpose, Radford University Parking Services will be there to cause a minor inconvenience to your day. Good luck if you get a ticket! You're no longer allowed to dispute it unless you pay first.

We encourage students with similar concerns to fill out our survey so we can identify where students are finding the most difficulty with parking and communicate these concerns to those who can help improve the situation.



Highlander Highlights: Men's Basketball Ranked Third in Big South after Senior Day Win, Baseball Starts Season with Series Win vs Iona

By: IAN GRECO and BRANDON WHITAKER

Men's Basketball

Senior Jaylon Johnson Leads Highlanders over Buccaneers in Dominant Senior Day Performance

Every school hopes to win on their "Senior Night", when nearing the end of their respective sports season, and Radford's Senior Night thankfully lived up to that expectation of success while hosting Charleston Southern this past Saturday.

After honoring this season's seniors **Jaylon Johnson, Brennan Rigsby Jr., Louie Jordan and Tyson Brown** alongside their team manager **Michael Jacome**, the Highlanders came out to a hot start with a 10-6 initial scoreline.

Although high-scoring, this game also began physical, with Radford shooting 12 free throws in the first-half. Thankfully Radford shot 10-12 from the charity stripe, making the most of the brutish opening half. After Charleston Southern caught back up with a run of their own to make the game 11-10, it would be the last time they held a lead for the rest of the matchup.

With the home crowd feeding into the infectious on-court momentum, Radford continued to dominate the game. **Jaylon Johnson** (17 points, 70% FG), **Dennis Parker Jr., Del Jones, and Mari Jordan** continued their prowess helping the Highlanders secure 26 fast break points overall. Radford went up as much as 27 points with a 81-54 scoreline with 6:42 remaining before quick points were scored in the last few minutes to soften the scoreline for Charleston Southern. The game ended 90-80, with the dominant Highlander performance increasing their record to 14-13 overall.



Radford Seniors Brennan Rigsby Jr., Jaylon Johnson, Louie Jordan and Tyson Brown vs Charleston Southern Photo Credit: Hailey Hutchison

Baseball

Junior Outfielder Devin Parks Dominates Iona in Season Opening Series

Last week the Highlanders hosted their opening day series against Iona College, winning the series 2-1. The first game occurred on Friday with Radford winning 2-0 behind clutch plays from **Mason Self** and **Hunter Keen**. The first game of Saturday's double header was a back and forth affair. **Devin Parks** had four hits in his five at bats, scoring two runs and bringing home four more. Iona was able to recover and score two runs in the 9th for a 9-8 win. In the second game Radford won 6-3 to secure the series win behind two hits and two RBIs and some relief pitching down the stretch from **Breckin Nace**.