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Themes and Sub-themes for Project Gabriel Memorialization

Theme	Sub-Themes	Representative Comments
1. Construct a Physical Structure, Exhibit, or Place	Memorial garden Mural/Wall Exhibit Historical markers	“Memorial garden to reflect on slaves” “Invest in existing building and create a museum to be interactive” “Historical markers for specific activities that might have taken place “..history of enslavement experiences” “Possibly fountain or sculpture with significant thought”
2. Education and Awareness	“Tell their Story” Include history of enslavement in curriculums Educate students at VCU and locally Compile Documents and Archives Make part of VCU student orientation	“See them humanized; tell their stories” “Start with all new student orientation.” “Every VCU Health System should be educated on the history” “Create an archive of known information/research”
3. Host Events and Activities to Bring Awareness	Tours Annual celebrations Documentary	“Juneteenth – call to ancestors” “Recurring memorials- science fair, history fairs, art fairs..”
4. Be Attentive to how to memorialize (note this theme crosses the other themes)	Memorial should use art Involve VCU School of the Arts Memorial should be interactive and reflective Memorial should be digital and virtual Community should be involved Memorial should have relevance to youth	“Engage the community... lot of talk and money but no movement” “Something permanent” “Commission art to be performed/exhibited” “Use QR Code instead of plaques” “Memorialization can take form in many ways, film festival, curriculum development”
5. Name Something in Honor of Enslaved Persons	Building Programs & Departments Lectures	“Naming classrooms” “Naming programs, departments, connect to future”
6. VCU Acknowledgement and Responsibility	VCU should admit culpability Well Project Improve health care and reduce inequalities	“We are tired of talking and VCU needs to say what they are willing to do...” “The cover-up and the number of years was never done...”

Recommendations

We recommend renovating the First African Church to serve as a site to memorialize and honor enslaved Black Americans. We recommend this structure and space for several reasons.

The First African Church (FAC)) has much historical symbolism and represents the greatness of black Life in Richmond. It was the anchor of Black life in Richmond, where African people regulated their morals and values and was a symbol of Black enterprise and self-determination. For example, it grew out of a White Baptist Church, but Blacks had to raise the money to buy it from the White Church. The FAC also contributed to other philanthropic causes in the City and beyond (e.g., raised money for the Irish Famine).

The physical location of the AFC is of historical and practical significance as it is located in close proximity to the Egyptian Building and the Kontos Building (with possibilities of connecting pathways). The building is also proximal to the proposed Shockoe Bottom memorial to enslaved people.

Project Gabriel would collaborate with the Family Representative Council of the East Marshall Street Well Project and would build on and honor some of the work this group has done. (One member of this sub-committee [Rhonda Key-Pleasants] and other interested persons [e.g., Dr. Carmen Foster] are available to provide leadership and bridges for these two initiatives.

Another aspect of symbolism is that it will honor people who have been oppressed and victimized by VCU. People will see this building, and in fact, the enslaved individuals we don't have names for may have used this building. As an example, people who escaped enslavement wrote back to other enslaved persons in the care of FAC.

Notably, the space would be functional. This building and area provide much flexibility and, if appropriately designed, would allow us to be responsive to the themes and sub-themes generated in our community forums, showing alignment with voices from the community. Below, for example, are just a few areas in which the FAC as a memorialization aligns with community themes and sub-themes:

Theme 1: Invest in existing buildings

Theme 4. A place with reflective and interactive activities

Theme 2: The memorial should "Tell their story"

Theme 3: Host celebrations and events

Theme 2: Incorporate learning centers, lecture rooms, etc.

Theme 6: VCU should admit culpability

Theme 4: Use art, engage the community, and engage VCU students

In summary, using the FAC would position VCU as a leader in a meaningful and strategic memorialization with historical and symbolic significance, and one that is responsive to community input.

Moving Forward:

We will need to speak to Meredith Weiss, VP for Administration. We understand there are no plans to use the building, but it would require extensive renovations. There have been some earlier discussions with Weiss about this building.

If we move forward, other stakeholders with expertise and interest would need to be involved. These include Bill Martin from the Valentine Museum, persons from the Black History Museum, the Virginia Museum of History and Culture, and the Library of Virginia. Other stakeholders could possibly include students and other representatives from VCU Arts, School of Medicine, and Engineering. Also, as noted, this would be a collaborative project with the Well Project.

Respectfully submitted:

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Scholarship Themes and Sub-themes

Theme	Sub-themes	Representative Comments
Recipients of College Scholarship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -1st Generation students -Students completing RPS or other area schools -Non-traditional students (women, homeless, -Students from single-parent/low resource households -Descendants with a historical connection to slaves -Underrepresented students (Blacks, Latinx, NA) -Students from rural areas -At-risk students 	<p>“1st generation college students”</p> <p>“Latinx or underrepresented students”</p> <p>“Programs to restart non-traditional students”</p> <p>“Communities with historical connection to slavery”</p> <p>“If you graduate from a certain HS and meet the criteria”</p>
Types of College Scholarship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Health Science, medical, pharmacy -STEM -AA studies/history/racial literacy -Study abroad -Gabriel scholars -Other (healing disciplines, policy, criminal justice, work preparation, urban development) -Full scholarship 	<p>“VCU partner with RPS to develop STEM program to expand career possibilities”</p> <p>“Medical school scholarships”</p> <p>“Physician, pharmacist, science, finding a way to support young people in the sciences”</p> <p>“There should be a special focus on health science students”</p> <p>“Gabriel scholarship – build the brand...”</p>
Pipeline Scholarships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Scholarship for programs with RPS/K-12 -Summer interns/enrichment programs - 	<p>“Pipelines” High School-guaranteed admission”</p>
Scholarships that Support Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Support and learning groups for students (mentoring, technology, pathways to success -Scholarships for retention -Scholarships that train H.S. guidance counselors -Support for advisors who deal with less successful students -Stipends -VCU can establish a stronger relationship with the counselors 	<p>“Retention scholarships; need based-emergency for students needing funding to finish programs”</p> <p>“Retain advisors so students can get support they need to make most of time at VCU”</p> <p>“Need to think about not only financial but other forms of support (e.g., mental health, academic.”</p>

	in middle and high school in RPS.	
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Notes:

1. If you see other broad themes or subthemes, please add.
2. Some comments fit into more than one category.
3. Themes and comments across different venues may be more informative.
4. I have tried to arrange themes in order of which ones are mentioned most frequently but this is only a rough estimate.

Current State:

- VCU has 14 health career pipeline programs currently.
- VCU has numerous DEI merit scholarships: one awards \$120K annually for 3 schools (dentistry, pharmacy, medicine). Funded by VCU Health System. Uses socioeconomic status, first gen, other non-race based criteria
- VCU received federal earmarked funds to launch the Richmond Talent Pathway initiative with 5 partner RPS high schools. “The RTP’s overarching goal is to launch a new talent pipeline to recruit, support, train, and retain diverse student populations in high need career fields to include science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), healthcare, education and public service in Central Virginia.”
 - Eligibility: Pell-eligible students accepted from Huguenot, TJ, Armstrong, John Marshall, George Wythe intending on majoring in science, technology, engineering, math, health care and education
 - All 5 high schools will have embedded VCU counselors.
 - Could the Gabriel Commission complement this program by providing sustainability beyond the federal investment? This would respond to the community data, esp because it starts in 9th grade and involves student support beyond tuition assistance.
- MCVF recently awarded \$4M dollars toward equity scholarships for professional degree programs on MCV Campus. Could the Gabriel Commission maximize this opportunity by requesting the university name one Gabriel Scholar per professional school or something like that? This would respond to the community data.

Question: could we limit scholarships of one per regional high school.

Question: how do we identify or set parameters of eligibility for students affected by legacy of slavery

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Student success programs should focus on STEM/H and education fields
2. DEI Scholarship Fund at the MCV Foundation: Explore ways to capitalize on the established MCVF (\$1M per year for 4 years) equity scholarships for professional and graduate cohorts at

VCU Schools of Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Nursing and Health Professions. Potential for branding as Gabriel Scholars. Ongoing campaign fundraising underway.

3. RTP Undergraduate Program/Richmond Promise Model: Explore collaboration with VCU's new federally-funded Richmond Talent Pathways program (high school based coaches and undergraduate student success/scholarships in STEM/H programs at VCU). Potential for branding as Gabriel Scholars, Advisors and/or Coaches. Ongoing campaign fundraising underway.
4. If we recommend establishing a competitive undergraduate scholarship program, limit one per high school to ensure distribution.
5. Ensure that we have a minimum of 5-8 named scholarships annually, per legislative directive.

NOTE: We need answers to make recommendations for scholarship eligibility, genealogy concerns per the legislation. Check with Matt about the minimum number of annual scholarships.



PROJECT
Gabriel

**Forum Review
Themes to Support Communities
and Individuals**

Core Principles that Guide the Development of programs for Communities and Individuals

- Enhance the way VCU communicates with communities (Ex: Develop a Community Page to share information)
- Ensure the entire community is aware of Project Gabriel and the rationale for the work that is underway
- Implement a “Land grant” model for the initiative that: provides services, assesses needs, and creates solutions
- Commit to continuously engage students and faculty in community initiatives
- Engage communities to identify needs
- Engage the faith community
- Focus student experiential learning experiences on specific community needs
- When new scholarships are established, engage scholarship recipients to participate in REAL community initiatives
- Acknowledge that many of the ideas offered at the public forums are embedded in VCU Quest 2028

Community Programs

- **Theme #1:** Create inclusive and accessible skill-building educational modules that can be supported by various units across VCU that empower the community
- **Strategies:**
 1. Establish a “micro-credentialing” strategy through the Office of Continuing and Professional Education
 2. Launch a “Summer Boot Camp” that combines several topics each year based upon ideas gathered from the community
 3. Programs should be free to the community
 4. Establish a “VCU Mobile” approach that utilizes partnerships with community organizations to address access barriers faced by community members

Proposed Topics

- Financial literacy for adults and youth
- Home Ownership Program
- Programs for adult learners
- Workforce preparedness
- Conflict resolution
- Eviction prevention
- Mental health/wellbeing programs
- How to obtain scholarships
- How to start/run a business
- Entrepreneurship
- College prep
- Trainings for School guidance counselors
- Building employment skills
- GED program
- Tips on using the computer to apply for jobs
- Introduction to health careers
- Resume writing
- Active shooter training
- Re-entry support
- Access to technology

Community Programs

Theme #2: Enhance the small minority business development community ecosystem to ensure it thrives

- Strategies:
 1. Examine the VCU procurement policies to assist vendors in successful navigating the process
 2. Engage with community partners that are focused on this issue (ie, JXN project, Capital One, etc.)
 3. Identify opportunities throughout VCU to support small businesses
 - Provide seed grant programs for small SWAM vendors
 - Establish a community trust fund
 - Highlight/enhance activities of School of Business and DaVinci Center currently serve as “incubators” for businesses

Community Programs

- **Theme #3**: Build a VCU “connector” model that enhances partnerships with community organizations and community colleges to support workforce development and capacity needs of community residents and businesses
- Strategies:
 1. Build and/or expand partnerships with community colleges, trade schools, and organizations that focus on credentials and certifications
 2. Support initiatives that focus on workforce development for individuals who have encountered barriers (such as incarceration – REAL Life, recovery from addiction - CARITAS, etc.)
 3. Establish programs that focus on capacity building for small businesses

Community Programs

- **Theme #4**: Work with community partners to establish “hub” models that address community identified needs
- Strategies:
 1. Health and wellness hubs
 2. Research hubs to engage community residents in research programs
 3. Hub that focuses on healthy foods and nutrition (gardens, nutrition, cooking, healthy eating, etc.)

Community Programs

- **Theme #5**: Utilize VCU's youth and family-related resources to mobilize efforts with community partners to create strong youth development and family support opportunities.
- **Strategies:**
 1. Enhance partnerships with community organizations/programs to build additional capacity that supports youth and adults
 - Arts (SPARC), Education (Partnership for the Future, Circles RVA), Youth Development (Girls for a Change, Boys and Girls Club) History (Valentine Museum, Black History Museum and Cultural Center), Science (Science Museum), and Environmental Justice (Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens)
 2. Establish/revive intentional partnerships with specific communities
 - Enhance the partnership with Carver Elementary School
 - Explore collaborations with the JXN Project
 3. Create early childhood intervention/mentorship models
 - Improve access to early childhood education
 - Explore role the School of Education can play in developing in a City pre-K program

Community Programs

- **Theme #6**: Address community grand challenges through vertically integrated projects and team-based approaches that prioritize community input and measure outcomes
- Strategies:
 1. Decrease crime/gun violence
 2. Decrease number of food deserts
 3. Decrease alcohol sales
 4. Address digital divide
 5. Develop a robust SWAM program in collaboration with Richmond City vendors
 6. Tell the history of the organization through an initiative in collaboration with community partners (ex: Black History Museum and Cultural Center, etc.)

Programs for Individuals

- **Theme #1**: Provide opportunities for youth focused on college and career readiness
- **Strategies:**
 1. Summer internships for students at VCU
 2. Summer enrichment programs for K-12 youth
 3. Upward Bound/College Prep programs
 4. Introduce career opportunities and increase awareness of scholarships
 5. Plant seeds of what is possible through a “continuum of support” from elementary to high school
 6. Identify focused opportunities for employment at VCU and VCU Health
 7. Establish apprenticeship programs at VCU and VCU Health
 8. Expose students to entrepreneurship
 9. Address support services that create barriers to employment such as childcare, transportation, etc.
 10. Implement STEM summer research programs
 11. Provide education and pathways focused on STEM
 12. Build employment skills

Programs for Individuals

- **Theme #2**: Design programs that target underperforming schools in the Greater Richmond area to increase the number of students who enroll at VCU
- Strategies:
 1. Tutoring, after school programs, mentoring, reading support, etc.
 2. Conduct loan eligibility seminars
 3. Provide technology resource support

Additional Items to address

- Improve access to health care
 - Suggest: Build capacity with community members/ambassadors to help individuals gain access to health care
 - Can VCU study/be an advocate for enhancing policies to support CHWs/ambassadors?
- Provide office spaces for community businesses in vacant VCU spaces and/or buildings
- Need to explore how committed is VCU to achieving outcomes and the methods that will be used to evaluate impact
- Crosswalk themes and strategies to VCU Quest 2028 goals/strategies

Summary of Themes

Community Programs

1. Create inclusive and accessible skill-building educational modules that can be supported by various units across VCU that empower the community
2. Enhance the small minority business development community ecosystem to ensure it thrives
3. Build a VCU “connector” model that enhances partnerships with community organizations and community colleges to support workforce development and capacity needs of community residents and businesses
4. Work with community partners to establish “hub” models that address community identified needs
5. Utilize VCU’s youth and family-related resources to mobilize efforts with community partners to create strong youth development and family support opportunities
6. Address community grand challenges through vertically integrated projects and team-based approaches that prioritize community input and measure outcomes

Summary of Themes

Programs for Individuals

1. Provide opportunities for youth focused on college and career readiness
2. Design programs that target underperforming schools in the Greater Richmond area to increase the number of students who enroll at VCU