



BOYS STATE TODAY

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How Virginian Officials Are Providing Us With Job Opportunities For The Future

Alex Szymczak

The present state of the nation's economy is a topic of discussion that all members of society, both young and old, concern about. Despite its occurrence in 2009, the Great Recession is still showing its effects, with tax revenue collected by the Virginia State government in 2016 still underneath the 2009 levels. On the floor of the Virginia Senate and House of Delegates, elected lawmakers passionately propose new policies for economic developments across the state. As rising seniors, we as students will soon be subject to these new policies, in which either their success or failure is vital to our ability to find long-term employment.

Conversations with Virginian delegates, representatives, and even governors provide an interesting outlook into how our state legislators are providing an environment in which we, as soon-to-be workers, will be able to secure a job within the chaos of commerce. Lieutenant Governor Northam, in a side interview with a reporter from Boys State Today, emphasized the need for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) related fields, as the digital age changes the expectations for job applicants. Additionally, Lieutenant Governor Northam cited the success of governmental policies that have allowed "Virginia's economy to do very good, [with] unemployment rates being lowered from 5.4 percent to 3.5 percent, the second lowest in the country."

In the House of Delegates, representatives such as Colonel Richard Anderson propose different legislation, such as the lowering of income tax rates and the promotion of aircraft maintenance, which could engineer around "one billion dollars of economic activity" throughout the Commonwealth. However, Anderson, a Republican delegate in the House, disagreed with Lt. Governor Northam's statement about the unemployment rates, criticizing these statistics as "misleading" because they "do not account for people who say 'I've been searching for a year, I give up!'" However, Anderson, like Northam, agree for the necessity of STEM field employment, citing it as the future of economic progress in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

In the end, both representatives voiced similar opinions when concerned with the high tuition rates at colleges across the state. Lt. Governor Northam advocates for increased opportunities for vocational training, career, and technical education, and both candidates also vocalize for an increased number of workers in "new collar jobs", a commercial advent in the twenty-first century.

As elected officials, both the Lieutenant Governor Northam and Delegate Anderson have clear interests in the future generations of our state. Most of us are within a year of becoming legal adults, means that we will be ever so close to entering the bustling environment of business and commerce. As Virginians, it's reassuring to know that on both sides of the aisle, there are citizens fighting for the betterment of their constituents.

Monday's Service

Jordan Houston

City Chaplains delivered a sermon to start off the morning that built upon the previous day's theme of service and focused on the virtue of charity and moral integrity. Based on the parable of The Good Samaritan, as well as a passage from the Quran encouraging generosity and kindness to all people, the sermon was focused on assisting others both materially and spiritually, regardless of popular opinion, ethnicity, or your personal beliefs.

Jackson City Chaplain Nathan Dowdy gave an impassioned speech in which he stressed the importance of doing the right thing, regardless of how others would react.

"What's right is right," he told the congregation.

As he emphasized doing the right thing regardless of consequences, Dowdy also empathized with the citizens, "I know how hard it is, because I've been in that situation many times," he said.

Dowdy also expressed his gratitude and respect for soldiers and others who follow their leader's orders despite their objections, noting the strong character and conviction that the action requires. The choir graced the congregation with their performance of the song *What Does the Lord Require of You*.

The Boy's State Experience: Day 2

Owen Ferguson

Monday began with a rough, early start, many of us running on four to six hours of sleep. We were instructed to make our beds and place any other objects out of sight, as room inspections are routine every morning. Finally, after about a half an hour of failed inspections, we finally headed out to breakfast. After Breakfast, we went to the flag raising. This is one of my favorite times of the day, merely for the chants. Every city's chant during role call is a representation of their city and their creativity. Some are serious, some are humorous, but all are unique in one way or another.

Next up was the religious service and then began the lectures from the Virginia's General Assembly. Although these lectures were very educational as well as interesting, a few citizens caught themselves dozing off. With a nudge from the person beside them, they corrected themselves and were back to paying attention. After this, all that stood between us and lunch were city pictures. After ordering ourselves from tallest to shortest, we were on our way.

After conversing with our fellow citizens, we headed back to Preston Bondurant for the next activity. The first thing we did was swear in our city's sheriffs. All cities showed great pride in their sheriff. Next was our second to the last speaker for the day. The lecture was from Hon. Ralph Northam, Lt Governor of Virginia, and this was very inspiring speech, and we all thank him for taking the time to speak to us.

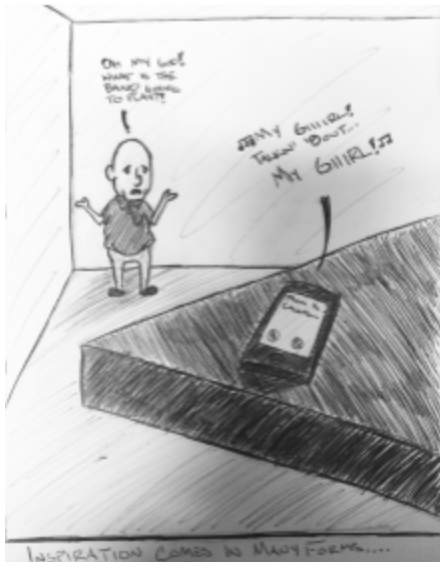
Next was the time most of us have been looking forward to since after breakfast, the afternoon activities. Unfortunately, all outdoors activities were canceled due to the weather, so most of the more popular sports were put on hold for the next day. The sports that were active included bowling, billiards, and volleyball. After this time, we went back to the dorms to dress in uniform and headed to dinner.

The following event was the flag lowering ceremony. Most city chants were entertaining, but some were weak as well. For the next instructional session, the cities were split and went to different buildings. My city, Burke City, was in Preston Bondurant. Our speaker was Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney. Mayor Stoney gave an excellent speech which included his upbringing, education and his participation in Boy's State.

The next task upon us was electing our parties candidates. I won't go into great detail because as we all know, this was a long and very serious process. After our city party elections had been completed, citizens headed back to their dorms to get ready for lights out. Today has been a very productive day, and I assume all of our days will be this way.

The 75 Art Club

Donovan Reynolds



Interviews around the campus

Walter Spurlock

It is only the second day at Boys State, and things are getting a bit heated. Some citizens are making their name know in their city from different types of chants and march songs. But what thought are on these citizens minds. We asked MacArthur "What are your thoughts and expectation for your city during your stay at Radford?". Their response was "We want to get as many as possible for a state as a city plan. We want to support or city and policy first before we support the party." Cities are already thinking they will top each in various competitions.

So many people have already started leaving impressions to other people to vote for them for the top positions in Boys State like Governor, Lt. Governor, Attorney, etc. For example, Brian Briggs from the city of Puller stated: " Elect me, and the opportunities are endless." There are plenty of people like Brian that are just trying to get ahead of the competition. People are networking from the jump, making alliances with other cities, and asking our guest speakers advice; however, it is only the second day of the Virginia Boys State.

Featured Interview

Brian Hemphill, President of Radford University

Interview and Report By Chris Oglesby

Q: “Hello sir, my name is Chris Oglesby, and I was born in Houston Texas. However, I am fortunate enough to live in the great Commonwealth of Virginia now. I was hoping that you could introduce yourself and tell us about what you do to serve the Commonwealth of Virginia.”

A: “Yeah, I’m Brian Hemphill, and I’m the president of Radford University, and I’m truly honored to have the opportunity to focus on producing the citizenry that we need to serve the Commonwealth and be able to lead for the future.”

Q: “Yes sir, in your opinion as for the president, what is an essential component of education at the collegiate level in preparing students for the workforce and for the life that’s ahead of them?”

A: “Yeah the most important thing is having students come to the university, be focused and serious about what they want to pursue and then find their passion. Once they find their passion, it does not work. Whether their passion is in the sciences, health, mathematics, or business. But find that passion and pursue that and then all of a sudden it becomes something that they get excited about every day when they walk into a classroom and prepare for the world that they’re going to work, lead, and serve in.”

Q: “Yes sir, what is like for you to have the honor and the responsibility of satisfying the passion of those students who want to learn? What is it like to be in the position that you’re in?”

A: “It’s a great feeling because I understand what the end gain will be for many of our young men and young women. And it’s truly an honor to be able to prepare them, knowing the leadership that we need. I mean we just heard from Delegate Anderson about the importance of giving back and serving the community, and these are young men and young women that will do that with great pride for many years. So it’s an honor to be able to provide that guidance and that leadership for them.”

Q: “Awesome. Thank you so much, President, - one more question. What was the key to your success? Kind of your journey in life that brought you to your position of authority that you’re in now... What would you attribute your success to?”

A: “I would say a lot of prayer of my parents for one. But another was real - every opportunity that was given to me - I worked hard. I spent a lot of time, a lot of energy working with the common belief that there will always be someone more talented in a given area. But I didn’t believe that anyone could outwork me. I didn’t believe anyone would be willing to put in the time, the hours, and focus. So that has been something that has been very beneficial for me from a professional standpoint.”

Q: “Yes sir that’s very inspirational. There’s a verse that talks about that it says, ‘Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart as working for the Lord, not for men,’ and I feel like you embody that so it’s humbling and inspirational. Thank you.”

A: “Thank you.”

Q: “Thank you for your time.”

A: “Yes sir, thank you. I appreciate you.”

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Today's Trivia 75 : Who donated the Citizenship Trophy and was the founder of Virginia Boys' State?

Send your response via email to boysstatetoday@gmail.com, along with your name and city name.
First response will be highlighted in the next publication of Boys State Today.

Congratulations to **Jackson Lockhart of Maury City** for answering Monday's question correctly.

Thank You For Supporting Boys State Today!