



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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William & Mary's Business School and the Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce announce a partnership supporting women in business

WILLIAMSBURG – The Raymond A. Mason School of Business at William & Mary and the Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce are pleased to announce a new partnership supporting women in business across the Hampton Roads community. William & Mary's focus on inclusivity, community immersion and higher education connect perfectly with the mission of the Chamber, "To connect business with opportunity." The partnership includes sponsorship of three signature Chamber events over the coming year; Lead Peninsula, the Pink Bag Lunch series and the Woman's Leadership Forum.

- **Lead Peninsula** offers members of the Chamber an opportunity to participate in a civic immersion course spanning 11 Thursdays from September 2019 to June 2020. The goal of the course is to offer members a behind-the-scenes look at how the many industries within the Peninsula operate on a daily basis, including but not limited to, Transportation, Education, Healthcare, and Environmental organizations.
- **Pink Bag Lunches** allow members of the Chamber the opportunity to attend a speaker series of focused on female empowerment and women in business. The Lunches will feature speakers offering credible first-hand accounts of and memoirs about their paths to success within the business world. Each lunch will be held on the second Thursday of every month spanning from September 2019 to June 2020, excluding January and April.
- **The Woman's Leadership Forum** further emphasizes female empowerment and the accomplishments of women in business. William & Mary's business school will sponsor the monthly series and host two of these events on their Newport News campus, providing speakers and panelists who will collectively share their experiences and pathways to professional success. The Women's Leadership Forum will take place January 9, 2020 and April 9, 2020 in lieu of the regularly scheduled Pink Bag Lunches.

"My number one goal has been to build relationships with key organizations across Hampton Roads," stated Robert McKenna, President and CEO of the Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce. "It is the important relationships that will make the Chamber the single leading business voice within the Peninsula and some of the most important relationships to establish are with the area's academic institutions such as William & Mary's. That's what we want to get out of it; our members and our annual partners are our life-blood."

"William & Mary is an important player in workforce development across the Peninsula," explained Jeffrey Rich, Chief Marketing Officer at William & Mary's Business School. "Building partnerships with organizations such as the Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce allows us to stay better connected to the business community, and to have greater visibility into industry trends and the needs of area businesses."

About the Raymond A. Mason School of Business: William & Mary's business school is rebuilding the global economy by training the next generation of revolutionary business leaders. It offers undergraduate and graduate instruction, including full- time, part-time evening, executive and online MBA degree programs, one-year masters programs in accounting and business analytics, as well as corporate education. The school develops successful business leaders by providing world-class instruction and unparalleled opportunities for mentorship and experiential learning.

About the Virginia Peninsula Chamber: The Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce is home to 1400+ members, the Chamber serves a population base of 530,000 covering Cities of Newport News, Hampton, and Poquoson, along with James City and York Counties. With over 13,000 business entities, 4 major military installations, a NASA research facility, a Department of Energy laboratory, various National Park Service sites, and more, the Chamber operates with the primary mission to drive business performance and economic growth within the Peninsula.

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