

RESOLUTION ON NAMING THE SOLITUDE OUTBUILDING FOR THE FRACTION FAMILIES

WHEREAS, the Solitude site near the Duck Pond on the campus of Virginia Tech has been referred to commonly as the “Homeplace” of the university, and includes the main Solitude building and a smaller cabin adjacent to the main building; and

WHEREAS, the adjacent cabin was built approximately 175 years ago by Robert Taylor Preston, son of former governor James Patton Preston, and is commonly referred to as the Solitude Outbuilding; and

WHEREAS, historical records indicate that the Solitude properties were built from a partial inheritance and relocation of a portion of the Smithfield properties, and that the outbuilding provided housing for the enslaved and is the only surviving African-American home originally located on the Smithfield estate; and

WHEREAS, based on available census data and historical records, the families living and working at the Solitude estate were members of the McNorton, Saunders, and Fraction families, with the Fractions, whose ethnic origin was Yoruba in Nigeria, being the most numerous and; and

WHEREAS, the Solitude Advisory Board wishes to advance the mission of Solitude to study, interpret, display and recognize the importance of the “Homeplace” of Virginia Tech, acknowledge the contributions of enslaved people to their histories, promote continued maintenance of the cabin, and place appropriate signage on the building for identification and ease of locating this historical site; and

WHEREAS, the McNorton, Saunders, and Fraction families are forever interconnected by virtue of their histories and experiences living and working together to build the foundation upon which the university was established, and the descendants thereof desire to honor the legacy of the collective “Fraction Family” either for their kinship or metaphorical extension due to their extraordinary efforts, survival, and shared legacy of bondage and emancipation on this site;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that in acknowledgement of the contributions of the Fraction Family in the creation and emergence of Virginia Tech as a major land-grant university, and in accordance with the university’s efforts to transform an historic location into a site for the interpretation of the African-American experience on campus and the region, the log outbuilding at Solitude shall be known henceforth as the Fraction Family House.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the above resolution naming the Fraction Family House be approved.

April 1, 2019

**RESOLUTION ON NAMING
THE FIRST FLOOR COMMON SPACE IN O'SHAUGHNESSY HALL
FOR DIANA ROBERTS OLMSTEAD '86**

WHEREAS, Diana Roberts Olmstead graduated from Virginia Tech in 1986 with a Bachelor of Arts degree from the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, specifically a degree in English; and

WHEREAS, Diana Roberts Olmstead had a successful and respected career dedicating 27 years to the education of students inside and outside the classroom, where she served as a change agent and left an indelible impression on thousands of students; and

WHEREAS, Diana Roberts Olmstead has, along with her husband, Mark F. Olmstead, supported Virginia Tech through her philanthropy to the university to include support for Athletics, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the College of Architecture and Urban Studies, and general unrestricted support; and

WHEREAS, the family and friends of Diana Roberts Olmstead also have made generous contributions to O'Shaughnessy Hall Leadership and Social Change Residential College; and

WHEREAS, the family and friends of Diana Roberts Olmstead wish to honor her memory; and

WHEREAS, Diana Roberts Olmstead has been, and continues to be in spirit, a valued member of the university community;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that in acknowledgement of the service and generosity of Diana Roberts Olmstead and her family and friends and in recognition of past and future benefits to the university, the first floor common space of the O'Shaughnessy Hall will be known as the Diana Roberts Olmstead Commons.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the above resolution naming the Diana Roberts Olmstead Commons be approved.

April 1, 2019