

# POLICE REFORM

CHANGE COMES FROM THE STREETS,  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY, VCU CAMPUS

Photo by Andrew Ringle  
Photo illustration by Andy Caress

*State legislators to address community demands as civil unrest continues*

**ANDREW RINGLE**  
Executive Editor

**M**ORE THAN 100 PROTESTERS MARCHED DOWN the hot asphalt of Broad Street on Tuesday, blocking two lanes of traffic and facing off with officers from VCU and Virginia State Police. “Whose streets? Our streets,” they chanted as some in the crowd wove flags and handmade signs bearing the name of Marcus-David Peters.

The demonstration, the latest in a summer of protests in Richmond, unfolded just steps away from a Virginia General Assembly special session expected to address the very issues surrounding police violence that brought together the crowd on Broad Street.

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# CT *The* Commonwealth Times

VOL. 62, NO. 8  
OCTOBER 7, 2020

## Plans canceled

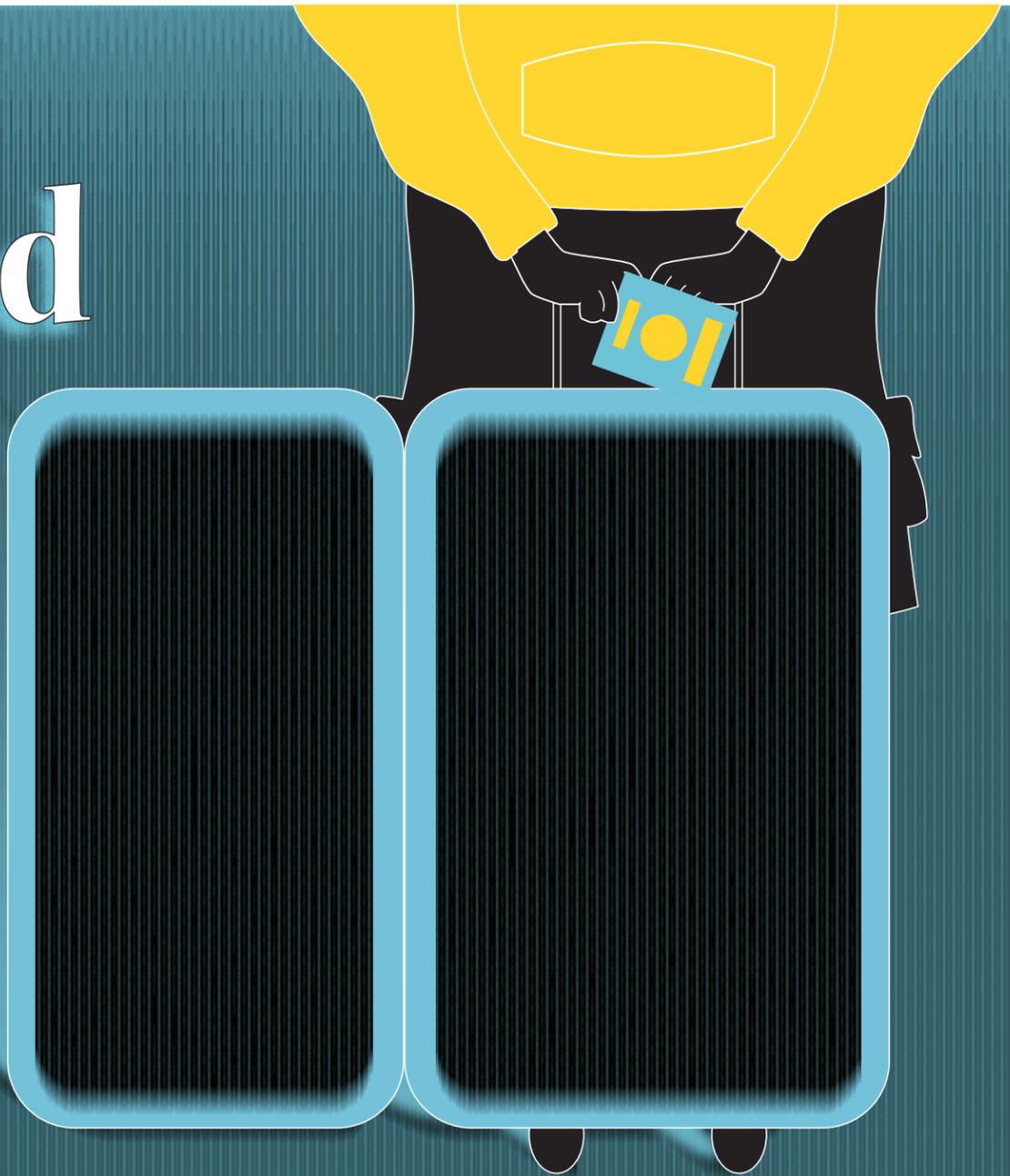


Illustration by Andy Caress

## VCU offers virtual opportunities amid canceled study abroad trips

**KATHARINE DEROSA**  
Staff Writer

Senior Mika Hayashi has been planning her study abroad trip since her freshman year, getting all of her required coursework out of the way so she could spend her senior year in Japan.

Now, following VCU's cancellation of spring study abroad programs, Hayashi said she is disappointed.

"I understand there's nothing really I can do," the biology major said.

The Global Education Office announced on Sept. 23 that VCU plans to cancel study abroad trips through May 2021. The cancellation includes spring semester and spring break trips. At the time of the cancellation, the office said 10 students had concrete study abroad plans.

Kansai Gaidai University, the school in Japan that Hayashi was planning on attending in person, is offering her two virtual classes at no charge based on speaking and writing. The courses will apply as transfer credits.

Hayashi said her speech class has only three students. Both classmates are from American universities, while Hayashi's other class has students from around the world.

"It's as good as it can get, but obviously I'm disappointed," Hayashi said.

VCU's cancellation of study abroad programs stems from the Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention's updated guidelines for higher learning institutions that encourage colleges and universities to consider postponing or canceling upcoming trips due to COVID-19.

In March, the university suspended travel to countries with advisories from the U.S. Department of State related to COVID-19. The measure forced some students to find a way home or remain abroad. VCU suspended winter break 2021 study abroad programs in July due to travel advisories and CDC guidelines.

“

I want VCU students to have these opportunities, and I look forward to the day we resume study abroad.”

**Stephanie Tignor, director of education abroad**

Virtual international opportunities are available for students in the meantime, including remote internships and classes. Director of Education Abroad Stephanie Tignor said students may connect virtually with international students through online programming.

VCU reimbursed study abroad students who returned early during the spring semester. Tignor said the university would work with students who had made financial commitments to travel. Students are encouraged to continue planning study abroad trips, Tignor said, despite uncertainty surrounding the program's future. However, Tignor said students should not make financial commitments to travel plans at the moment.

Graduating seniors may consider opportunities beyond undergraduate travel, Tignor said, such as joining the Peace Corps, participating in a graduate study abroad program or going to graduate school abroad.

"I really feel for those students, since that is a really tough situation to be in," Tignor said.

Tignor said students may contact the National Scholarship Office for study abroad resources. She said students are encouraged to apply for the nationally competitive Fulbright Scholarship, which funds international study.

Though the decision to cancel study abroad trips is disappointing to many students and advisors, Tignor said she understands the decision is based on the safety and wellbeing of students at VCU and abroad.

"I am the last person who doesn't want to see VCU students going abroad," Tignor said. "I want VCU students to have these opportunities, and I look forward to the day we resume study abroad."

# CT *The* Commonwealth Times

VOL. 62, NO. 12  
NOVEMBER 11, 2020

## ‘A CLEAR VICTORY’

Photo courtesy of Gage Skidmore  
Illustration by Andy Caress

### Students react to Biden’s win with hope for future

*‘I pledge to be a president who seeks not to divide but unify.’*  
— President-elect Joe Biden

**KATHARINE DEROSA**  
Staff Writer

**F**RESHMAN POLITICAL science major Nya Musa voted for Sen. Bernie Sanders in the Virginia primary but shifted her support to former Vice President Joe Biden in the presidential election. Although Biden declared victory Saturday, Musa said there’s “a little bit of hesitance to celebrate.”

Biden passed the benchmark of 270 electoral votes needed to secure the presidency after winning Pennsylvania on Saturday morning. President Donald Trump’s campaign hasn’t conceded the election and pursued legal challenges in states such as Pennsylvania and Georgia.

Musa said she’s happy about the outcome of the election but doesn’t want to get complacent without seeing systemic change. In Biden’s victory speech Saturday night, he preached a message of unity and reconciliation for America.

“I’m humbled by the trust and confidence you’ve placed in me,” Biden said. “I pledge to be a president who seeks not to divide but unify.”

Biden said he wants to win the confidence of all people, regardless of partisanship. “The people of this nation have spoken,” Biden said during his speech. “They have delivered us

a clear victory.”

Freshman art foundation student Savannah Brown said she voted for Biden and

believes Trump supporters could stand in the way of unity through prejudices against the LGBTQ community, the Black community and women.

“I don’t even know if we can ever be truly united,” Brown said.

Biden, the nation’s second Catholic president, referenced the Bible during his speech and called the upcoming months America’s “time to heal.”

“I feel like we can’t really heal unless we have progressive policies,” Brown said.

Many Republicans, including Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, have failed to acknowledge Biden’s win. Trump falsely declared victory the morning after the Nov. 3

election, when approximately 25 million votes had not been counted, according to NBC News.

Trump said he would order election officials to stop counting ballots, but his campaign ran into several obstacles finding legal ground for that order. Some litigation is ongoing, including one lawsuit that is attempting to dispute if ballots received by the state of Pennsylvania after 8 p.m. on Election Day should count. Experts are unsure if the Supreme Court will take the case and do not expect it to change the election’s outcome, Time Magazine reported.



**Nya Musa.**  
Photo by Katharine DeRosa



**Savannah Brown.**  
Photo by Katharine DeRosa

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