

327<sup>th</sup> Student Assembly,  
Senate Bill 327-029

A Bill

To change the name of the Ewell Award to reflect William & Mary's values.

**The Cypher Award Act**

An Act of the 327<sup>th</sup> Student Assembly of William & Mary

Sponsored by Chair of the Senate Anthony Joseph ('21)

Cosponsored by Sen. Abby Varricchio ('23), Sen. Madison Hubbard ('23), Sen. Maheen Saeed ('23),  
Sen. Eugene Lee ('23), and Class President Conor Sokolowsky ('23)

Supported by Secretary of Diversity Initiatives Celeste Chalkley ('21)

WHEREAS, William & Mary is enduring a period of transition where it is analyzing the community it has created for students, its values, and ways to incorporate inclusivity into all facets of student life;

WHEREAS, the Student Assembly last year passed the Higher Standard Resolution, SB 326-036, which called on the Student Assembly and the administration to renew discussions about creating inclusive environments for students of color, healing, and education;

WHEREAS, William & Mary recently announced the first official Statement of Values, which speaks to values essential to the university community and culture;

WHEREAS, the Ewell Award, named after President Ewell, is one of the most prestigious awards given to graduating students at William & Mary and is named after him to commemorate his tenure at William & Mary;

WHEREAS, the Student Assembly recognizes and affirms the over 1300 previous recipients of the Ewell Award who were recognized with this distinction for their contributions to the university community;

WHEREAS, President Ewell's support for the Confederacy could be seen as contrary to the value of "Belonging", which is integral to the William & Mary community;

WHEREAS, it is time for the Student Assembly and the administration to take proactive steps to ensure that the best of William & Mary is reflected in all facets of student life, and to pay attention to naming opportunities that may not resonate or promote the core value of "Belonging" for all members of the community;

WHEREAS, The Ewell Award is an effective first step to demonstrate our commitment to being an inclusive community;

WHEREAS, the Student Assembly recognizes a unique opportunity to update the award name and selection criteria in order to align it with William & Mary's first official Statement of Values, drafted and approved by both the Board of Visitors and the State Council of Higher Education in Fall 2019;

WHEREAS, the Student Assembly has agency over the Ewell Award, as the creators of the award in 1987.

Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Student Assembly of William & Mary:

1. Charges the Student Assembly of William & Mary, in conjunction with Student Leadership Development, to change the name of the Ewell Award to the Cypher Award;
  - a. The parameters of this award, as explained in the adjoining supplementary documents, will be adjusted to reflect William & Mary's Statement of Values.
2. Charges the Director of Student Leadership Development to convene and manage a selection process that involves student representatives;
  - a. The selection process shall allow applicants to showcase where their leadership has contributed to positive change and where they have exemplified a William & Mary value.
3. Recommends that the Director of Student Leadership Development, Anne Arseneau, (whose office is charged with facilitating the selection process on behalf of the Student Assembly) inquire about a possible partnership with the Cypher Society;
  - a. The Cypher Society is a William & Mary Board of Visitors alumni organization that celebrates various alumni and their philanthropic efforts for William & Mary, and those actions align with our Statement of Values;
  - b. The partnership would aim to design medallions or other regalia for recipients of the Cypher Award, which will be approved for purchasing in subsequent legislation.

Executive Action Sheet for Senate Bill 327-029

I, Kelsey Vita, President of the Student Assembly of the College of William and Mary in Virginia, do hereby approve the Student Assembly Senate's Bill 327-029, entitled "Cypher Award Act,"

by affixing my signature hereto.

<u>Kelsey Vita</u>	<u>3-5-20</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>3-5-20</u>
Kelsey Vita	Date	Witness	Date
President of the Student Assembly			

The 327<sup>th</sup> Student Assembly of the College of William and Mary in Virginia

Note: vetoes of bills must go through the procedure outlined in the SA Constitution & RB 314-001