

## PVCC Students Lobby for G3 at Virginia General Assembly

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Ginger Hood, staff writer

How many PVCC students know what the General Assembly is? At least ten do – that is how many PVCC students attended the General Assembly with four faculty members on Jan. 29. The General Assembly is the Virginia state legislature, where bills get proposed, discussed, and voted on. So why exactly were PVCC students there?

The students attended the General Assembly to lobby for the “get skilled, get a job, give back” initiative, or G3.

G3 is a bill proposed by Governor Ralph Northam that would make community college tuition free for low and middle-income students going into high-demand fields or trades. This lobbying was not as straightforward as it may sound. According to Cody Clark, a PVCC student

who attended the event, there was a lot to be done.

“We were in the Pocahontas building for about two hours,” Clark said. “It was a mix of moving and standing. We had to go up and down floors several times and navigate across the building to get to people’s offices. Once we were there, it was a waiting game; the delegates and senators we went to meet had several other people and groups to meet with.”

Clark and his group of fellow students met with four different people: Delegate John McGuire’s aide, Senator Emmett Hanger’s aide, Senator Mark Peake, and Delegate John Avoli. As for the meetings themselves, Clark had good things to say.

“[It] wasn’t what I expected, it felt very casual. It reminded me that they are normal

*See General Assembly on page 2*



PVCC students at General Assembly. Photo by Connie Jorgensen

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## DATES TO REMEMBER

— Election Day —  
March 3

— Spring Break —  
March 9-13

— Richmond Ballet ^ —  
March 11, 7:30 p.m., Dickinson Main Stage

— In Form: Shapes of Contemporary  
Improvisation \* —  
March 13, 6-8 p.m., Dickinson Maxwell Theatre

— Clothing Shop \* —  
March 16-25, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., M103

— Workshop: Help! I'm Trying and Still Failing \*—  
March 17, 12:30-1:30 p.m., Main Building M627

— Voices of Adult Learners \* —  
March 19, 6 p.m., Dickinson Building

— Free Movie Friday: *Jojo Rabbit* \* —  
March 20, 7:30 p.m., Dickinson Main Stage

— Music Club Fundraiser Concert —  
March 21, 7:30 p.m., Dickinson Main Stage

— Graphic Novels for All Ages \* —  
March 21, 6 p.m., Dickinson Building

— Workshop: Rocking Around the Clock \* —  
March 23, noon to 1 p.m., Main Building M627

— Job Fair \* —  
March 25, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Main Building

— PTK Induction Ceremony \* —  
March 26, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

— PVCC Presents *Ives Plus* —  
March 26-28, April 2-4, 7:30 p.m.  
And March 29 and April 5, 2:30 p.m.  
Dickinson Maxwell Theatre

\*Free Event    ^Student Vouchers Available

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people like everyone else I've ever met . . . I felt each person my group spoke with was legitimately interested to hear our stories and listen to what we had to say," said Clark.

These meetings are not only beneficial for students, but they are important for the politicians too.

According to Connie Jorgensen, assistant professor of political science and one of the faculty members who accompanied the students, meeting with the senators and delegates can change the fate of bills like G3.

"It's one thing to read about community college – but to talk to someone who's had that experience is different," Jorgensen said.

Jorgensen also has concerns about student's awareness of the General Assembly.

"Far too many students don't know what it is . . . These things affect you every day – who do you think is deciding on tuition? It's not the feds," she said.

PVCC is already among the best rated Virginia community colleges for voter turnout.

The General Assembly is practically just as important as voting in terms of student's livelihoods, and even more open to hearing what students have to say. The general assembly has a website at [virginiageneralassembly.gov](http://virginiageneralassembly.gov), where lists of senators and delegates and their contact information are available.

Overall, for those interested in learning more about Virginia state politics, Jorgensen gave a lighthearted statement, "You should take my political science class."