

NEWSROOM

[Home](#) / [News](#) / [2023](#) / [October](#) / New Space for Diversity to Thrive

NEW SPACE FOR DIVERSITY TO THRIVE

CLASS GIFT CREATES ROOM FOR INCLUSIVITY AND RESPECT.

by [Kelley McGee](#) | October 26, 2023*Read time: about 1 min*

The Class of 2023 has left a meaningful legacy with the creation of a new space that celebrates and embraces the myriad of cultures that enrich Christopher Newport.

A new multicultural center is now welcoming the CNU community in the David Student Union, thanks to a generous gift from the Class of '23. The Center is an inviting, comfortable space where Captains can come together to learn from one another, hang out and foster lasting friendships.

The official dedication of the room was a celebration of inclusivity. The Center was packed with students, staff, and alumni, as President William G. Kelly, joined by Kayla Caine '23 and Louise Byrne '23, unveiled the Center's plaque. The plaque reads "I will serve my community, seek equality and embrace all people." These words were added to the Alumni Oath after the George Floyd racial awakening.

"Our Alumni and our community have brought those words to life. This space will ensure our students of all backgrounds and beliefs can gather in a safe, inclusive, and respectful space," said President Kelly.

"I ask that we all challenge ourselves, especially the students, staff and faculty here today, to ensure this space is one where free speech is prized and diversity is celebrated. And please ensure that this door stays open so that all folks will come in and engage, because that's the only way we're going to grow together."

Kayla Caine, '23 Senior Class Gift Campaign Co-Chair said the class wanted to provide an impactful gift that would benefit students. "We believe part of living a life of significance is through philanthropy. My Co-Chair, Andrew Pomoranz and I knew this was something we wanted to do. At a time like this, when different cultures at war dominates the news , we need more respectful dialogue and the purposeful exchanging of ideas between different people."

The center features comfortable couches, tables and plenty of room to gather.

Anne Manspile and Jessica Cruz, both juniors, are looking forward to spending time in the room with others.

"It's really nice to be able to have a space like this to come to, to feel safe and have others like you, around you," said Cruz, '25, [Psychology](#) and [Studio Art](#), Student Diversity and Equity member.

"I'm looking forward to meeting new people," said Manspile, '25 [Communications](#). "It will be a great place to talk, to study, really anything."

Making those connections with others and enhancing understanding is exactly what the Class of '23 designed the Center to achieve.

This space is meant to foster community and inclusion for every single captain," said Louise Byrne, '23 Student Diversity and Equality Council "It is able to be reserved by multicultural-based organizations and we hope that they are able to find a place here where they can be authentic and cared for. This is a space where students can find refuge and community."
