

April 17, 2017

## Why Engagement – Communicating with Students April 17, 2017



*The following represents the Engagement Advisory Group's work on developing a "Why Engagement" narrative to use when communicating with students about the benefits and rationales behind the university's vision: To be the national model for the engaged university; engaged with ideas and with the world. The narratives have been developed through an iterative process involving various groups, including the EAG, since the Fall of 2016. They were approved by President Alger and the Senior Leadership Team on April 17, 2017. It is recommended that these become a key part of communicating with students about the value of Engagement-related activities.*

### **Full**

When you walk across the stage at JMU's graduation having been a part of an engaged university community, you haven't just been educated, you've been transformed. The focus on engagement means you develop inwardly and apply learning outwardly. You are determined to live a life of meaning and pursue a career of purpose as you move forward. Something happens when you participate in engaged learning, community engagement and/or civic engagement. You feel differently about yourself and your place in the world. You see yourself as part of a larger community and world in which our lives are interconnected across all kinds of boundaries.

Graduates of JMU see innovation as essential and knowledge creation as a means, not an end. You initiate, taking an active role in the learning process. As a result, you contribute to solving society's problems and use your knowledge as a tool for building a more perfect union. What does engagement look like? Things like community service, travel, civic or political involvement, experimentation, work, campus involvement, creativity and teamwork are part of it. The Engagement opportunities you choose will lead to a greater self-understanding and, therefore, a more meaningful connection with others. You will be creative, collaborative, resilient, and ethical. You will become a citizen in the best sense of that word. Now, making a difference is a way of life for you.

### **Brief**

When you walk across the stage at JMU's graduation having been a part of an engaged university community, you haven't just been educated, you've been transformed. What does engagement look like? Things like community service, travel, civic or political involvement, experimentation, work, campus involvement, creativity and teamwork are part of it. The Engagement opportunities you choose will lead to a greater self-understanding and, therefore, a more meaningful connection with others. You will be creative, collaborative, resilient, and ethical. You will become a citizen in the best sense of that word.