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**Phi Beta Kappa**

## Phi Beta Kappa taps inaugural class

*Engaged citizenship gains deeper meaning on campus* BY MICHELLE HITE ('88)

The term “honor society” does not adequately summarize the essential nature and purpose of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, according to Charles H. Blake, Phi Beta Kappan and president of the newly installed Xi of Virginia chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa Society.

“Phi Beta Kappa exists to inspire people to pursue the goal of living in a reflective and considerate manner. To prepare citizens to achieve this goal, the society recommends a dedication to lifelong learning in the traditional arts and sciences. Placing importance on engaged citizenship is not a new concept at JMU. It’s part of the Be the Change atmosphere on campus and part of the JMU mission statement: “We are a community committed to preparing students to be educated and enlightened citizens who lead productive and meaningful lives,” adds Blake, chair of the JMU Department of Political Science.

**‘While the chief beneficiaries are our students, having a chapter is also a wonderful validation of the quality of our faculty and academic programs.’**

— LINDA CABE HALPERN, dean of university studies and a JMU Phi Beta Kappa officer

Blake was elected president of JMU’s chapter of Phi Beta Kappa on March 17 during the chapter installation ceremony featuring John Churchill, national secretary of the Phi Beta Kappa Society.

JMU joins fewer than 300 Phi Beta Kappa chapters nationwide. The oldest, and widely held

as the most prestigious, academic honor society in the United States, Phi Beta Kappa has invited fewer than 10 percent of American institutions into the society. JMU Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Douglas Brown, also a Phi Beta Kappan, says, “If you look at landmark events in the university’s history, this is one of them.”

Dean of JMU University Studies and Phi Beta Kappa officer Linda Cabe Halpern agrees. “While the chief beneficiaries are our students, having a chapter is also a wonderful validation of the quality of our faculty and academic programs.”

The first class of members inducted into JMU’s chapter include 136 students, who join 74 charter faculty members.

\* See video highlights of the Phi Beta Kappa installation ceremony at [www.jmu.edu/bethechange/stories/PBKprofessors.shtml](http://www.jmu.edu/bethechange/stories/PBKprofessors.shtml).

JMU Phi Beta Kappa Chapter President Charles Blake (below, right) welcomes student inductees. “While your undergraduate careers may be drawing to a close, I hope and trust that we have convinced you that the Phi Beta Kappa Society thrives when all of us apply its principles of friendship, morality and lifelong learning in our everyday lives. Please know that you are always welcome in our chapter and at JMU.”



**JMU Provost and Phi Beta Kappan Douglas Brown, (center with JMU President Linwood H. Rose) watches what might be his most prestigious achievement, the installation the Xi of Virginia Chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa Society.**