



Virginia's 6th HBCU: Saint Paul's College

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The Commonwealth of Virginia is home to five amazing Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs): Hampton University, Norfolk State University, Virginia State University, Virginia Union University, and Virginia University of Lynchburg.

Until June 30, 2013, there was a sixth: Saint Paul's College in Lawrenceville, Virginia.

Origin of Saint Paul's College:

Saint Paul's College was founded on September 24, 1888, by James Solomon Russell of the Protestant Episcopal Church. As with many HBCUs, it was referred to as a Normal and Industrial School, until it was authorized to provide four-year programs. Saint Paul's was designed to prepare Black students to work in Education, Agriculture, and Industrial fields. At the time of its founding, the school was supported by the church and donations from friends and supporters of the college.

Approaching a Decade:

This year marks 10 years since the closing of Saint Paul's College; however, traces of its beauty still remain on the facade of historic structures on the campus that were constructed by its former students. There's something to be described when touring the college campus, and it speaks to the heart beat, the energy, and vibrancy that was once there. It's palpable on its neglected grounds.



While standing at the Student Center, it's easy to get lost in memories of this once thriving campus and its festive energy, the excitement of students that once enjoyed the space when taking a break from class. My mind immediately went to vivid images of the Divine Nine and the block shows I had the pleasure of attending during the late 1990's.

Programming for Single Parents:

When we lost Saint Paul's, we didn't just lose an HBCU (which is daunting within itself), but we also lost one of five universities nationwide, that made it possible for parents of young children to achieve higher learning (during that time). Saint Paul's Single Parent Support System Program provided a quality education, housing, and wrap-around supports for parents with children under the age of eight through federal grant funding.

Other colleges currently providing similar programs are: Baldwin Wallace University - "Single Parents Reaching Out for Unassisted Tomorrow's," Berea College - [The Ecovillage Program](#), College of Saint Mary - "[Mothers Living and Learning Program](#)," and Endicott College Boston's "[Keys to Degrees](#)," to list a few.

Community Impact:

Like most places of higher learning, the college became the heartbeat of the community! In addition to providing degree programs, it also provided continuing education opportunities and careers for members of the surrounding community. When Saint Paul's College ultimately closed its doors, all who benefitted from its existence were deeply impacted. The impact on the community is still visible to this day.

There is always hope:

There's a dedicated group of [Saint Paul's College alumni](#) working to revitalize the college. SPC4LIFE was not available for comment when VBLM reached out to their leadership. We encourage the village to visit their hyperlinked website and support their efforts.

Please see our video of what remains of the campus below:

[@vablacklifemag](#) The Virginia Black Lifestyle Magazine was on location in Lawrenceville, Virginia to visit the the campus of Saint Paul's college; presently, a closed HBCU. [#HBCU](#) [#hbcupride](#) [#saintpaulscollege](#) [#lawrencevilleva](#) [#brunswickcountyva](#) [#JamesSolomonRussell](#) [#tigermascot](#) [#hbcugrad](#) [#SingleParentProgram](#) [#stpaulscollege](#) [#virginiauniversities](#) [#SingleParentSupportSystem](#) [#virginiahbcus](#) [#supporthbcus](#) [#blackfuture](#) [#blackhistory](#) [#africanamericanhistory](#) [#vblm](#) [#thevablacklifestylemagazine](#) 🎵 [Lofi Hip Hop Lofi\(858787\) - Enokido](#)