

## Vicki B. Stocking

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**From:** Vicki B. Stocking  
**Sent:** Monday, October 3, 2022 10:14 PM  
**To:** Vicki B. Stocking  
**Subject:** Invitation: Exploration, Launch, Transition Summer 2023  
**Attachments:** List of Alumni for Summer conversations.pdf; List of Alumni for Summer Coaches.pdf

Dear Scholars,

Oh my goodness, this email has taken me a long time! I didn't mean to be emailing you so late on a Monday evening!

Below, we invite you to participate in a Robertson Exploration, Launch, or Transition Summer. **Respond to this invitation with a "yes" or "no" by October 17 [here](#).**

Vicki

### Summer 2023: Exploration, Launch, Transition

According to the calendar, it appears that Robertson Summers take place between April and September. However, we know from years of working on this that while the "summer" might take a few months, when we consider the soul-searching and planning before the summer and the months (and years!) of reflecting after, Summers actually cover years, not months. Once a Scholar has experienced a summer, we talk about it forever. . . ask any Alum about her/his Summers and get ready for a good listen. After spending time with several Alumni during our recent trip to NY for Julian Robertson's memorial service, this message is clearer to me than ever.

Alumni trace many of their fondest memories—and deepest lessons—to Robertson Summers. Robertson Summers involve:

- Deepening connections with others.
- Exploring new places, ideas, and activities, including those that are creative, deeply personal, and/or outside the apparent bounds of academic and professional aspirations.
- Practicing powerful leadership skills involving integrity, voice, and power.
- Evolving from conditioned reactions to chosen responses.
- Taking on personal responsibility and making decisions.
- Curiosity and commitment.
- Grappling with strengths, weaknesses, purpose, and motivations.
- Learning when and how to ask for help.

Robertson Summers provide powerful opportunities for Scholars who are willing to open their hearts and minds to the work of transformation. Scholars who truly and personally engage in a Robertson Summer—from the earliest questions through ongoing reflection—allow themselves to be changed by the experience. Scholars describe incredible experiences of insight, clarity, and growth as a result.

For 2023, we have revised our process to be more streamlined, Scholar-driven, and grounded in integrity. ***This is your invitation to participate in a Robertson Summer 2023.***

**What is a Robertson Exploration, Launch, or Transition Summer?**

This is an opportunity to create an experience that connects to your own leadership journey. These Summers are not about *what you will do* but are about *how you want to grow*. No Robertson Summer is exactly like another—there is no “typical” or “ideal” Summer. Summers can take place domestically and/or abroad, and with others or alone. With the support of a Summer Coach, you will begin by reflecting and asking questions and will design opportunities in light of those questions. You may pursue research, travel, service, entrepreneurship—whichever activities are most relevant to your curiosity and commitments as you grow toward your leadership goals. The lists of projects posted on the [resource page](#) reflect the diversity of approaches and experiences Scholars have taken on.

You have two limits to keep in mind: funding and safety.

- Scholars creating Exploration and Launch Summers will have up to \$6300 available. Transition Summer Scholars will have available the amount they deferred from 2021. Staff will share that information with those Scholars.
- All Scholars proposing international travel will follow Duke’s [policies](#). Some UNC Scholars may also need to follow UNC’s [policies](#). UNC is restricting international travel and requires a petition.

**We ask you to say “yes” or “no” [here](#) by October 17.**

- **If you say “yes”:** You are taking responsibility for your Robertson Summer. We will support you through the process as you request, and we will share many resources. As we do with other Robertson experiences, we are depending on you to communicate. You are agreeing to these three steps:
  - You will identify a [Summer Coach](#) by **October 28** and will work with that person throughout the process. A list of Alumni specifically interested in being a coach is attached, although you are not required to work with an Alum coach. Name the coach [here](#).
  - You will submit a complete proposal and budget by **March 1, 2023** to ensure timely funding.
  - You will complete the relevant reflection processes **September 2023**.
- **If you say “no”:** That’s fine! We trust your judgment that embarking on a Robertson Summer will not meet your needs at this point. All other elements of Robertson programming are still available to you (e.g., LEAD grants, NOLS). Saying “no” now does not prevent you from participating in a Summer later.
- **If you do not say “yes” by October 17,** you are actually saying “no.”

**Do you need help deciding?**

- Come to an info session!

October 4, 10-11:00 AM, <a href="#">Zoom</a>	October 11, 10-11:00 AM, Duke office
October 5, 9-10:00 AM, <a href="#">Zoom</a>	October 12, 3:30-4:30, Duke office
October 6, 10-11:00 AM, UNC office	October 13, 2-3:00 PM, UNC office
- Read examples of “Recent Scholar Projects” on the [resource page](#) for inspiration.
- Review your Summer 2021 and/or 2022 reflection and staff feedback for a reminder of what you learned and how you still want to grow. Staff are working on feedback now.
- Talk to one of our Robertson Alumni! \_A list of Alumni specifically available to talk to you about their experiences is attached. Don’t agonize—just have an honest conversation.
- Do some soul-searching and include people who know you. What’s missing for you? Do you feel that Summer 2023 is a good time to open your heart and mind to new places, activities, and experiences?

**What happens between your “yes” and March 1, 2023?**

- You’ll work closely with your Coach and will include staff when you have a question or concern.
- We’ll (soon) share resources for proposal and budget development so you know what we’ll be looking for in March. We’ll show you how to start with questions, and you’ll do the rest with the help of your Coach. We also have materials to help you generate ideas if you feel “stuck.”
- We’ll have events with Alumni to support your Robertson Summer planning, and you’ll have access to any Alum, especially the ones who signed up for conversations.

- We'll update the [resource page](#) with potential opportunities as they come to us.
- You'll be invited to participate in a work session during the Summer Celebration on November 6.
- You'll be able to sign up for individual work sessions with staff in January.

### **A few more thoughts**

- You can say “yes” now and can drop out of the process later. However, if you say “no” now and then change your mind, you will have missed the window to “enroll.”
- Despite all these words, this new model isn't actually very different.
  - If you've already done an Exploration and/or Launch Summer, we'll still ask you to invite a Summer Coach; we'll encourage you to talk with Alumni for inspiration and support; and you'll develop a proposal and budget.
  - For the class of 2025, designing an Exploration Summer continues the work of Community Summer and taps into your Sophomore experience.
- Summers are a key aspect of the Robertson [experience](#) and can be important for transformation.
- If you're interested in why we wanted to revise the “old” process, read Vicki's comments [here](#).

**Respond to this invitation with a “yes” or “no” by October 17 [here](#).**

### **Vicki Stocking**

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Pronouns: she/her/hers

### **Connect with us:**

