

## **How the Board of Trustees Hijacked Randolph-Macon Woman's College Right Before Our Eyes**

An Open Letter to the R-MWC Community, June 30, 2007

### **The R-MWC Tragedy in a Nutshell**

On July 1, 2007, Randolph-Macon Woman's College ceases to be, replaced by the newly created Randolph College. Although it occupies the same buildings, and most of the faculty remain, make no mistake about it: Randolph College not only has a different name; it is a different institution. The women's college we all know and love is gone.

In fact, R-MWC was in financial trouble not because it was a women's college but because it was undermined by years of financial mismanagement and irresponsible leadership. Since R-MWC's single-sex status is not the problem, so coeducation is not the solution. The coeducation decision was wrong and is actually making matters worse. We hope to convince you to join us in demanding that R-MWC be restored to the preeminent position it once enjoyed among women's colleges in the south.

Our narrative opens with the administration's glowing announcement in the early summer of 2006 of the successful completion of the *Vita Abundantior* Campaign, which has left R-MWC "poised for the future." However, statistical evidence challenges the Board's assertion in the fall of 2006 that there are too few college-bound women interested in women's colleges to sustain R-MWC as a women's college. Analysis of the College's financial condition indicates that operating costs were excessively high in comparison to those of other schools because of overstaffing and the shift from successful methods to more expensive but less effective methods of recruiting new students. As a result, the *Vita Abundantior* Campaign and the endowment were raided to cover annual deficits rather than the purposes for which capital donations were given. The study by the Art and Science Group and Chris Burnley's "Financial Analysis of Strategic Options," both cited by the trustees as pivotal in the coeducation decision, are deeply flawed and lack appropriate supporting information. The administration has engaged in secrecy, deception, and intimidation during the Board's consideration and adoption of the so-called strategic plan, and has continued these practices during implementation of the decision. The Board has released not one solidly researched bit of documentation in support of its decisions, and at many stages has expressed ignorance of or indifference to the much more solid evidence available that challenges its decisions. Indeed, the December 2006 warning issued by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the statistical evidence in the May 2007 Campus Strategies report actually support our contention that financial mismanagement, including costly and ineffectual student recruitment, is at the heart of R-MWC's problems. Blaming R-MWC's troubles on its single-sex status is an egregious example of scapegoating, of blaming the institution for the sins of its trustees. The coeducation decision and the creation of Randolph College have only exacerbated the financial crisis and placed the College's invaluable art collection in jeopardy of being sold.

At the end of this document are listed the many measures that we in the R-MWC community can still take to undo the irresponsible and destructive actions of the Board of Trustees.

## **R-MWC Is “Poised for the Future.” Really?**

The Board of Trustees announced the decision to make R-MWC a coeducational institution on September 9, 2006. The R-MWC community was struck dumb by the announcement because only two or three months earlier everyone had received the glossy brochure “R-MWC on the Move: Educating Women Leaders for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” (Summer 2006), which gives no inkling whatsoever that coeducation is in the offing or that the college is in the financial doldrums. On the contrary, this women’s college is trumpeted as the wave of the future and the *Vita Abundantior* Campaign with its goal of \$100 million is declared a resounding success providing a firm foundation upon which to build. “Truly R-MWC is now poised for the future” (2). The brochure elaborates:

The campaign has created more than 120 new endowed funds for support of faculty chairs, scholarships, and academic programs. It has also allowed R-MWC to strengthen its endowment, now \$140 million, and to address critical needs such as installing state-of-the art technology in classrooms and restoring key campus facilities, including Smith Hall Theatre and the Wimberly Recital Hall (1).

Also cited is the \$500,000 raised by the alumnae “to pay back the College for the purchase and reconstruction of [Casey] house” (16), and the building of the long-awaited \$30 million sport and activity center. A list of major donors is included (4-5). There is no hint that the building is to be a men’s gym or that the money is not in hand. Nor is there any hint that “the strategic plan to ensure the College’s tradition of excellence” (2) has coeducation at its center. The entire brochure is misleading, for the trustees knew well before September of 2006 that the College was going coeducational and its financial picture was less than rosy.

## **Interest in Women’s Colleges Is Not Declining**

The Board of Trustees’ stated reason for its coeducation decision is the declining interest in women’s colleges, which has raised recruiting costs and adversely affected the College’s financial stability. They repeatedly cite only one bit of evidence for this contention: the Educational Testing Services’ assertion, based on a questionnaire administered to students taking the SAT test, that only 3 or 4 percent of all college-bound women prefer a women’s college. According to the alumnae authors of “Twenty Reasons Why You [Trustees] Should Change Your Vote” (October 14, 2006), in 2006 the figure of 4% represented 31,400 women. Now let us add to this group the 87,581 (13.5%) of female students taking the ACT test in 2006 who indicated no preference between women’s colleges and coeducational schools. In 2004, 13,131 women were granted bachelor’s degrees by women’s colleges. Even though some students take both the SAT and ACT tests, and even though more students enroll than graduate, there are more than enough female students to fill every available space at women’s colleges each year (9).

Women’s colleges have in fact been experiencing enrollment increases in recent years, although trustees at question-and-answer meetings in September 2006 admitted to no awareness of these data. Agnes Scott College has doubled enrollments since 1995. Stephens, Chatham, and Mills have recovered from low enrollments, Hollins has stable enrollments and a growing endowment, and Mount Holyoke is thriving. This fall Sweet Briar College expects approximately 206 first-year students and 15-18 transfer students. Its enrollment has increased steadily each year from a

low of 151 total new students in 2003. Its goal remains 240 new students each fall (Upcoming Sweet Briar College Newsletter). The renaissance in single-sex education at K-12 levels is likely to maintain this increasing trend at the college level.

Jolley Bruce Christman states that R-MWC's enrollment has been in decline for years ("Letter to the R-MWC community," September 1, 2006), but Table 1 in "Twenty Reasons" shows that it has actually been relatively stable since 1987 with many "ups and downs." A slight decline over the last three years (11) may well be due to poor admissions policies and strategies. R-MWC's admissions officials did not participate in meetings with their peers at other Virginia women's colleges and thus did not benefit from shared information and strategies. Instead, the increased use of professional staff and the exclusion of alumnae from the recruitment of new students stripped the admissions program of the highly personalized and effective character that served it so well in the past. Blanket recruitment also meant that previously targeted schools and areas received less attention than before. Where active and loyal alumnae enthusiastically identified college fairs, recruiting events, and high schools with promising prospects where they offered to recruit for R-MWC, the College sent no banners or flyers to use in recruiting, and soon became unable to recruit students in areas where R-MWC recruiting had traditionally been strong.

The population of female college students is rising and is projected to increase by 21 percent by 2014 ("Twenty Reasons," 9), whereas the number of college-bound men is expected to decline according to recent reports, including one aired on CBS Evening News on June 2, 2007. Long established coeducational institutions have already been forced to lower their expectations in order to attract male students, and those men now attending college are for unknown reasons less well prepared and less motivated than male students were in the past.

Either the trustees did not have this utterly crucial information or else chose to ignore it when they made the coeducation decision. We must conclude on the basis of the evidence that the single-sex status of R-MWC is not the cause of R-MWC's financial problems; therefore, coeducation is not the solution.

### **Excessive Spending, Not Single-Sex Education, Is at the Heart of R-MWC's Financial Instability**

The administration insists that the lack of interest in women's colleges is the problem. Chris Burnley, vice president for finance and administration, notes in his Financial Update appended to the President's Letter of May 2007 that "our low expenditures, high-performing endowment, successful capital campaign and generous alumnae base...have simply not been enough to overcome the reality of declining market demand" (President's Letter 2007, p. 6 ). This statement is misleading in the extreme. The market demand is there, and R-MWC expenditures have not been low – they are exceptionally high compared to other colleges of the same size, as alumnae have been telling the trustees for months. Finally, the trustees vacillate between describing the endowment as performing well and performing poorly as they find convenient, without solid comparisons to other colleges and standard performance indicators. In fact, R-MWC's problems lie in poor financial management and ineffective recruiting methods.

One major question is why the College's endowment declined between 2000 and 2006 from \$149.5 million to \$140.4 million. During the first portion of this period, Randolph-Macon's

endowment, like the stock market, plummeted sharply, down to \$106.7 million in 2003. The market eventually recovered—for example, by 2006 the Dow Jones Industrial Average had surpassed its earlier peak—but R-MWC’s endowment did not, in spite of the College’s self-proclaimed triumph of achieving endowment returns that were better-than-market as well as higher than comparable-size college endowments. “Our investment allocation and investment manager selection led to a total endowment return of 22.4%,” a period in which “the S&P 500 returned 19.4%, and the average college endowment of similar size returned 16.1%,” according to the 2004 President’s Report. However, notes to the college’s own financial statements for that same year show an endowment increase of only 15%, lower than returns for the S&P index, and 7.4% lower than the President’s claims. Recall also that the successful completion of the capital campaign meant 120 new endowed funds. Even allowing for the fact that some funds were only pledged rather than collected, the endowment should have increased substantially, not only to reflect market recovery and better-than-market returns, but also to reflect the infusion of funds from the campaign, more than enough to offset the higher-than-desired endowment draw.

Thus it would appear that much of the money from the *Vita Abundantior* Campaign, which “R-MWC on the Move” describes as the largest capital campaign in the college’s history (1), did not actually go into the endowment. The college provided no explanation of this contradiction between its allegedly successful fund-raising and its lack of new capital funds until Chris Burnley’s “Financial Update,” included in the President’s Letter of May 2007. This admits that only \$58 million of the \$100 million was actually received through June 30, 2006, the remaining \$42 million being pledges and deferred gifts. Of the \$58 million actually received, \$28 million or almost half was actually received as Annual Fund. So two distinct funds, the capital campaign fund for endowment and long-term improvements, and the Annual Fund for current operating expenses, were merged, thus muddying the waters and perhaps facilitating the use of capital campaign money to cover operating deficits between 2000 and 2006 of \$39.2 million. This is not what donors were told or what they intended.

Burnley repeats that the *Vita Abundantior* gifts “have established more than 120 new, endowed funds that will support faculty and students in perpetuity,” and according to the report \$18 million was added to the endowment. Yet there is no discussion in the minutes of the trustee/faculty meeting on February 9, 2007, concerning the financial state of the college of any implementation of new academic programs or establishment of new endowed chairs that should have been made possible through these newly endowed funds. Nor does Burnley mention in the Financial Update of May 2007 the \$500,000 that 1200 alumnae raised for the purchase and renovation of Casey House or money for the construction of the Sport and Activity Center.

The College’s endowment has failed to grow substantially mainly because its income has been diverted to cover high operating costs, including overstaffing, excessive tuition discounting, and costly admissions and development policies. One needs only to scan R-MWC catalogues to realize that there have been substantial increases in administrative and staff positions in recent years. Tuition discounting is hawked in printed and on-line materials, and stories are circulating of students receiving financial assistance who do not need it and did not apply for it. The admissions procedures were “professionalized” with mass mailings, blanket recruitment of students, and an increased staff replacing alumnae recruiters, rather than the targeted recruitment of the past. Prospective students were dined at elegant restaurants instead of in alumnae homes. All of these practices drove up recruitment costs to \$8,000 per actual matriculant, four times the

average cost for liberal arts colleges.

Much of this overspending and overstaffing occurred during the college presidency of Kathleen Gill Bowman, whom the trustees paid one of the nation's highest salaries as president (\$495,963, according to the Chronicle of Higher Education, November 18, 2005). Current interim president of the college Ginger Worden, then a trustee and a member of the presidential search committee, was responsible for interviewing Bowman, at the University of Oregon, and promoting her as a candidate for the college presidency. Early in Bowman's presidency, which began in 1994, the trustees conducted what was to be a top-to-bottom, open and honest review of her performance. During the review, a highly placed staff member, on the basis of information she was asked to collect from other staff, reported that Bowman ruled by divide and conquer, inciting conflict and damaging working relationships among various administrative offices; she had a dictatorial management style, performed badly in alumnae relations and fund-raising, did not seem committed to single-sex education, and more. After hearing this account, the trustees decided that regardless of these problems, Bowman would be renewed. The staff member was dismayed that the trustees would set the standard for presidential leadership so low, and she was so upset by their failure of oversight at this critical juncture that she recounted the incident to several people. Even though the trustees knew early on of severe problems with Bowman's presidency, she remained as president for twelve years, until 2006. The trustees, under the leadership of board presidents Sally Dean, Ginger Worden, Alice Ball, and Jolley Christman, have taken R-MWC on a spending spree for the last dozen years, and that is the major cause of the college's financial instability.

If poor leadership and misusing the college's assets were the real source of financial instability rather than being a woman's college, then coeducation is unnecessary. Indeed, due to the extremely high costs of Title IX compliance, which unfortunately emphasizes athletics over academics, coeducation is a very dangerous strategy to pursue in search of financial stability. Coeducation is actually a potentially deadly diversion of resources and attention away from the real sources of financial mismanagement at R-MWC. How did coeducation-as-cover-up get transformed into the trustees' chosen course?

### **A Marketing Firm Determines the Future of R-MWC**

The Board of Trustees engaged the Art and Science Group to show "How to Preserve and Strengthen a Small, Independent, High-Caliber, Progressive, Southern Woman's Liberal Arts College...." The Group began its work in the summer of 2004 and produced three reports that have remained secret. The trustees have never revealed these supposedly persuasive reports. Do they fear that critics will spot the methodological weaknesses in them and expose the flaws in the trustees' decisions? Are they ashamed to let the college community know that they followed the advice of outsiders in making all of these decisions in complete secrecy rather than using the far more commonsensical practices of transparency and consensus building? Fortunately, a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the November 2005 report did surface, revealing fundamental problems with the research mission, the research design, and the evaluation of evidence in these reports.

In this presentation, A & S strikes down all three of the single-sex options for R-MWC because "the market for women's colleges—particularly for one in Macon's circumstance—has shrunk to

alarmingly small size,” but it provides absolutely no supporting statistical data for this startling assertion, an unfounded one as we have already seen. A & S’s first option entails making incremental changes in the college such as adding new pre-professional majors, offering flexible evening adult and graduate courses, and creating a partnership with an urban campus. Even so, A&S asserts that the college’s spendable endowment will shrink and the deficit grow, because “the demand for women’s colleges will likely have diminished even further” (23). A&S argues in the second “scenario” based on changing the community surrounding the college that R-MWC can remain a woman’s college if and only if it raises new unrestricted endowment funds in the \$100 million-plus range within five years, which it dismissed as unlikely. Of course, just six months later the capital campaign was described as having raised \$104 million, though we now know this total involved a very slick interpretation of what was really raised and an even slicker diversion of the funds in hand. This scenario stipulated that the college would have to spend untold millions on “an independent movie theater, bars, restaurants, coffee shops, and retail stores” in order to attract students. In a “Response to the A&S Group Study,” prepared in January 2006, the alumnae authors point out that Lynchburg is a major city with a metropolitan population of over 200,000, yet safer than large urban centers, and it is already committing large sums of money to revitalization so it should appeal to students and parents (5). Thus, the second scenario – improving Lynchburg – is not actually as far-fetched as the A&S study implies. The third single-sex option, for R-MWC to merge with another college, was actually tantamount to having R-MWC disappear. The most sensible single-sex scenario – requiring the College to adopt more prudent financial and admissions policies in order to remain a women’s college – is not even broached. Thus, without any financial analysis to investigate the underlying assumption that R-MWC already used best practices in staffing, recruiting, and spending on programs, the A&S report argues for the fourth option as the only viable one – making R-MWC a coeducational institution with some sort of “distinctive appeal” such as global and/or honors college.

To search for this “distinctive appeal,” A&S asked samples of current R-MWC students, applicants, and “inquirers” their reactions to four themes: “global,” “honors,” “leadership,” and “exploration.” These four terms may have emerged out of discussion with faculty during an A&S fact-finding trip, but we do not know whether faculty who were questioned about them fully understood how these themes would be used to decide the future fate of the college curriculum. Nor do we know how the survey questions presented these themes or what respondents had in mind when reacting. But “global” and “honors” came out ahead of “leadership” and “exploration.” Yet what significance can we assign to this type of survey? Did an important international event the day before give “global” special appeal, or were students simply responding to current fads? Were some students flattered by the idea of being honors students? Most important, did the student’s perceptions of these terms match those of the consulting firm and the college administration, and is there a concrete way to translate these buzz words into real academic programs?

The results from this marketing survey’s multiple-choice questions thus became the distinctive appeal adopted for Randolph College and the basis for the trustees’ much touted strategic plan, unveiled the weekend of September 8. This strategic plan (which is neither) is a pathetic four pages long and bears no comparison to the substantial planning documents and careful open deliberations of other colleges and universities. It was not designed by the faculty but originates in the survey. This might be a good way to market toys or teen fashions, but it is not a good way

to do planning in higher education. Is it any wonder that at a meeting of the College community on the weekend of September 8 the administration was at a loss to explain what “global honors” meant, and that the faculty have never been comfortable with this theme, unaccompanied by concrete resources?

More than a century ago, Randolph-Macon Woman’s College was founded on the vision of an inspired educator. Dr. William Waugh Smith realized that young women could study science and mathematics, become learned in the Greek and Latin classics, and enjoy art and music without losing their feminine grace. In contrast, Randolph College is founded on the recommendation of a marketing firm, and its “global honors” program, which has yet to be deciphered, was shaped by the responses of students to a marketing questionnaire. If the manner of their founding has any significance, then Randolph College most certainly is **not** Randolph-Macon Woman’s College with a new name.

The Board of Trustees of R-MWC must have accepted the A & S reports without challenging these critical flaws. The summary alone reveals lethal flaws in assumptions and the design of alternatives, though a thorough evaluation is well nigh impossible because, at least in the PowerPoint summary, the consulting firm provides none of the details – survey design, sampling methods, actual questions and raw results, statistical significance and error terms – that are called for. Nor is there any discussion of the economic model on which they base their financial forecasts of the costs of these four scenarios. Nor do they proffer any evidence at all to support their claim that the demand for women’s colleges is alarmingly low and declining further. Why did they apparently see none of these glaring flaws? If they did, why did they rely on it so heavily and adopt its recommendations? Why, if this report was so persuasive to the trustees, did they not share it with the college community? Although A&S’s own study showed that 78% of alumnae would oppose coeducation – confirming the subsequent survey done by the Alumnae Association showing that 87% were opposed and that 61% would never give money to a coeducational replacement for R-MWC -- the trustees brazenly went ahead with their plan. Apparently because A&S advised “delicacy” and warned against “too frequent communication” with the alumnae, the trustees ignored commonsensical management advice about consensus-building through open deliberations, and instead kept their plans a secret until the stunning revelations of August 2006. This secretive decision raises so many questions that one has to wonder if these studies were really just designed to tell the trustees what they already wanted to hear, and not intended as any serious weighing of alternatives. At a cost of \$700,000, these studies are a very expensive indulgence for a college in financial trouble.

### **Chris Burnley’s Projections for the “Global Honors Experiential Coed College” Are Problematic and Hardly Encouraging**

Chris Burnley’s “Financial Analysis of Strategic Options,” presented to the students on September 4, 2006, compares three economic forecasts for current, single-sex with marketing effort, and coeducation options. These forecasts incorporate capital expenditures including the completion of the PER/SAC building, residence halls and facilities for student life, and library renovation. The current option is to continue as a women’s college with an enrollment of 195 first-year students each year. The other single-sex option supposes an increase of up to 236 first-years each year to 741 residential students (with additional students studying abroad) and significant expenditures for marketing and “global honors” (still undefined). This option

includes a new science wing and new student housing (for the enlarged enrollment) as additional capital improvements. Both of Burnley's single-sex projections show operating deficits growing to almost \$14 million per year by 2014-2015 and spendable endowment dropping from \$85 million to \$10 million. Finally, the "Global Honors Experiential Coed College" option requires 350 new students each year, yielding 1,100 residential students (with more students abroad). Additional capital improvements include much more student housing, new playing fields, and another academic building. The operating deficits are predicted to grow to \$12 million through 2009, then decline to \$3 million by 2014-2015; the spendable endowment drops only to \$47 million by 2014-2015 and then stabilizes. It is important to note that all three projections involve annual deficits of similar size; the coed option only does less harm to the endowment by bringing in more tuition revenue. Thus rising enrollment and reduced tuition discounting are crucial to making the coed option look good.

Conspicuous by its absence is a single-sex model unencumbered by the current crippling financial policies: overstaffing, high tuition discount rates, and costly recruitment programs. Like the A&S study, current practices are assumed to be unassailable and efficient, when in fact they are actually the source of the financial difficulty that prompts all consideration of change. Why did Burnley (and A&S) do no projection based on an attempt to remedy the overstaffing and overspending that R-MWC indulges in? Why do they never compare R-MWC's endowment to those of other institutions? It is in fact the largest endowment among the women's colleges in Virginia and should be more than sufficient for a small college. Why do they never address the fact that other women's colleges do not need to engage in the high tuition discounting and diversion of endowment income that have become habitual for R-MWC over the last decade? Why are these unsustainable practices considered givens in all of Burnley's and A&S's modeling exercises?

Burnley also supplies no information whatsoever about the econometric model used to generate these projections. They were prepared in-house, and no specialists in modeling have evaluated the data or provided explanations of how unstable the model may be as various inputs are altered. The administration has supplied neither the equations nor the data for independent analysis and evaluation by econometricians with expertise in forecasting. The trustees seem to be completely unaware of the increasing error factor inherent in such projections due to multiplying uncertainty over time, which requires the sensible analyst to discount distant predictions. Indeed, if the rosy assumptions underlying the coed financial projection turn out to be wrong, the actual prognosis for the coed option will be truly disastrous, since the high expenditures at the outset are certainties, whereas future returns are entirely hypothetical.

The trustees have not provided one single financial report other than Burnley's to support their decision.

### **The Administration Launches a Campaign of Secrecy, Deception, and Intimidation**

The coeducation decision, which should have been discussed and debated by faculty, alumnae, students, friends, and donors, rather than entrusted to a marketing firm, destroyed the college's essence and identity, sending shock waves through the R-MWC community. To make matters worse, the decision, along with the ill-conceived strategic plan, was immediately set in stone. In order to defuse any opposition or challenge to it, the administration announced over and over that



the Board would never change its mind. Apparently no amount of solid evidence, sound reasoning, or bad consequences predicted by their opponents would constitute grounds for reversal. Everyone was expected to accept the strategic plan. Retired faculty were asked to endorse it sight unseen and to promote the process that produced the plan as “thorough, thoughtful, and realistic” – when it is none of these – if their former students inquired about it.

The administration then launched a carefully orchestrated campaign that continues to this day, of secrecy, deception, and intimidation in order to prevent or at least minimize challenges to the strategic plan. The trustees declared the documents they used to defend the plan off limits, citing confidentiality required by the researchers. When an A&S Group representative appeared on campus to discuss the plan at a specially convened meeting of faculty and emeriti, questions had to be submitted in advance, and the representative left many of them unanswered, claiming confidentiality. Those who attended the session pronounced it unhelpful. Those who contact the A & S Group requesting the reports prepared by it are referred to the trustees, indicating that the decision to reveal or conceal these studies actually lies now with the trustees. The in-house studies of five women’s colleges that stayed single-sex and five that went coeducational have not been released, though the latter has also been leaked and provides much evidence about the damage done to education of women and rising campus violence when these schools go coed. So why does the Board of Trustees refuse to share with us the research on which it based its coeducation decision? Is it because the research will not stand up to critical scrutiny? Is the rest of the research as problematic as the A & S study we have seen?

In contrast to the shoddy or non-existent evidence used by the trustees, alumnae and others opposed to these decisions have provided carefully crafted documents and made them available to anyone who was interested. All of PEC’s studies and legal briefs are available on its web page ([www.preserveeducationalchoice.org](http://www.preserveeducationalchoice.org)) – PEC even posts the college’s legal briefs. PEC studies “Twenty Reasons” (already mentioned), “What Every Trustee Should Know,” and “R-MWC Blueprint for the Future” all expose the folly of the coeducation decision and the abundant research that supports the value and virtues of women’s colleges. Yet these documents were not even afforded a hearing by the Board of Trustees, and interim president Worden dismissed “Twenty Reasons” as “advocacy, not research” in John Pulley’s “Hell Hath No Fury” in the February, 2007 issue of *Currents*.

In fact, the Board of Trustees and the administration went out of their way to show the alumnae that they have no say in shaping college policy. At the September 8 meeting, the trustees said “All we want is your money,” while at an alumnae gathering last fall in Washington, D.C., a trustee stated that the College was really only interested in contributions of \$5 million or more, apparently unimpressed by the fact that the largest gift to the *Vita Abundantior* campaign was a full \$3.9 million. By belittling the alumnae’s financial support, and by declaring that the alumnae have no say in college policy, the Board attempted to justify its exclusion of the alumnae from the coeducation decision and its rejection of their carefully researched documents opposing that decision. This rebuff of the alumnae adds to the already strained relations between the administration and the alumnae who have been so neglected by the administration in the last decade that many alumnae chapters have become inactive.

The trustees were besieged by letters opposing the coed decision from all the college’s constituencies, including former trustees, former presidents, and former directors of admissions.

Interim president Worden responded to a particularly cogent letter emphasizing financial mismanagement, penned by a former president, a former trustee, and a retired faculty member, by characterizing the former president as senile. Yet in the interview with John Pulley cited above, interim president Worden declared, “Speaking for the institution, you have to make sure what you say is accurate and conveys a tone of respect.” However, her comment about the former president is neither accurate (far from it) nor respectful. The administration even pretended it did not know how to communicate and engaged the consulting firm Public Conversations Project (PCP) of Watertown, MA, to tell it how, when in fact the administration was deliberately obstructing the lines of communication between trustees and the college community. It targeted Preserve Educational Choice, Inc. as dangerous, so when two of its members arrived on campus on October 19, 2006, to describe their two studies and in turn to learn campus and town reaction to the coeducation decision, the exchange was overtly recorded which had the effect of intimidating and silencing the few faculty who had dared to show up. Ironically, in the spring of 2007 faculty members were prodded into signing a petition addressed to PEC asking it to drop the two lawsuits designed to save R-MWC. The administration provided neither the PEC studies nor the legal briefs so that faculty could judge for themselves whether the lawsuits should be dropped. In the soon-to-be Randolph College everyone must be on board; there is no room for dissent. Academic freedom has become one of the casualties of this sordid affair.

At the rally in support of R-MWC, held on December 9, 2006, on the sidewalk along Rivermont Avenue, a member of the new campus security force walked up and down, surveying the crowd. A few faculty members showed up but knew better than stand in the protest line. In fact, some of them remained on the other side of the street, observing the proceedings from afar. It became clear then why the old security personnel, many of them with twenty-five years of faithful service to the College, had been summarily fired the year before. They had bonded with faculty and students and never would have engaged in this kind of surveillance over those whom they were originally hired to protect.

### **The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Warns R-MWC to Put Its Financial House in Order**

Today, nine months after adoption of the strategic plan, the trustees continue down the disastrous coeducation path as they dig the institution deeper and deeper into a financial and academic hole. Recent documents have made it clear that R-MWC’s single-sex status is not the problem; its problem all along has been irresponsible financial management. In October, 2006, the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools visited R-MWC to assess new graduate programs and examine the school’s financial resources. Although interim president Worden has repeatedly blamed alumnae and media attention for the SACS warning, Belle Whelan and Ann Chard, president and vice-president respectively of the SACS Commission on Colleges, have clarified more than once that the SACS visit was in fact an automatic result of the trustees’ decision to launch new programs. As a result of its findings, on December 11, 2006, SACS placed R-MWC on

Warning because the Commission determined that it failed to demonstrate compliance with Core Requirement 2.11 (Resources) of the *Principles of Accreditation*—the accreditation standards of the Commission. This standard

expects an accredited institution to provide evidence that it has a sound financial base and stability to support the mission of the institution.  
<http://www.sacscoc.org/disclosure/dec2006/Randolph%20Macon%20Womans%20College.pdf>

SACS criticizes the college's endowment spending rate, operating deficit, deferred maintenance, and high tuition discount rate. Interim president Worden observes in the President's Letter of May 2007, "It is very important to note that in highlighting these concerns, SAC's findings mirrored those of the Board of Trustees," a surprising statement in view of the fact that SACS' warning, even as Ginger Worden describes it in her "President's Letter," suggests that these financial problems relate not to R-MWC's status as a women's college but to a history of poor financial planning and management. The assertion that the findings mirror those of the Board of Trustees implies that the trustees knew about them. Indeed, they have known for years that the endowment spending rate, operating deficits, and tuition discounting were undermining the College's financial base, yet they did nothing to correct these problems. At the February 9, 2007, meeting of trustees and faculty, the interim president mentioned that Dr. Ann Chard, R-MWC's liaison with SACS, had suggested that the College engage a consulting firm to help them put their financial house in order (Minutes of the meeting, 2).

### **The Campus Strategies Report Exposes the Causes of R-MWC's Financial Instability**

The trustees hired Larry Goldstein, founder of the consulting firm Campus Strategies, who confirmed what SACS had told them and what PEC had told them many months ago – namely, that the college has been living beyond its means. In his "Financial Review" of the college, Larry Goldstein observes that tuition discounting at R-MWC, which in recent years has been in the mid-60 percent range, is double the mid- to upper- 30 percent range found at other institutions (2). The tuition discount rate for international students is greater than 80 percent, yet we wish to point out that R-MWC has been intentionally accepting poor women from third-world countries as part of its international emphasis. If the tuition discounting drops, so will the emphasis on international diversity, one attribute of the college that could lend real substance to a "global" emphasis. The report also confirms the overstaffing. While R-MWC's enrollment is 8 percent smaller than that of its peers (other colleges with 700-800 students), it has 30 percent more employees than its peers. Its academic staff is 13.3% larger (94 compared to 83); executive staff 29.6% larger (35 compared to 27); other professional 35.7% larger (95 compared to 70); and nonprofessional a full 41.5% larger (116 compared to 82). In other words, R-MWC has some 78 more employees than other colleges its size (2-3).

The data Goldstein used do not distinguish between single-sex and coeducational institutions. Tuition discounting and overstaffing, neither of which relates to R-MWC's status as a women's college, help account for the fact that a staggering 40% of its operating expenses were financed from endowment spending and that spending from endowment is calculated for the present year at 12.8% and estimated for next year at 13% (2). The Goldstein report confirms what the trustees and many administrators and faculty already knew, and what PEC told the trustees many months ago – for free.

Goldstein comments further,

The College recognizes the seriousness of the [financial] situation and, even before SACS action, undertook the dramatic action of changing the mission and character of the institution... one that, if coupled with other structural financial changes, has the potential to reverse the recent financial downturns that have been experienced (1).

Later he reiterates, “The change in mission clearly is a positive step...” (3). These endorsements of the coeducation decision (and endorsements elsewhere in the report of Worden and Burnley in particular) are most peculiar, since coeducation requires an even greater outlay of expenditures and depends on rapidly expanding enrollments that have not materialized. There is no indication here that Goldstein actually analyzed the financial projections used by the trustees to justify their coed decision or studied the performance records of interim president Worden and Burnley, who contributed to the problems that Goldstein (and PEC and SACS before him) noted. There isn’t a shred of evidence in his report to support these endorsements. We cannot imagine what his source is for these statements other than the administration.

### **Randolph College Is Shaping Up to Be an Educational Boondoggle**

The administration has launched a propaganda campaign to convince the public that Randolph College is already a success story. In an editorial in the Lynchburg *News and Advance* for Thursday, May 31, 2007, Brenda Edson, a spokesperson for Randolph College, declares that the College is set to admit 172 students, 57 of whom are men. Edson indicates that the final enrollment figure is all the more remarkable because of the late start in recruiting and the lack of a name for the college. The editorial writer, impressed that the college attracted almost three times more men than college officials anticipated, goes overboard in his praise:

The successful enrollment of the first men in what was once an all-women’s school should settle down many of those who criticized the move toward coeducation. A bright coed future is better than no future at all, which is the road down which the school appeared to be heading.

A bright future? That is hardly the picture we get when we examine the statistics provided to the faculty by the College and available on the PEC web site. The disclaimer of a late start is belied by the fact that the College sent out 853,170 pieces of mail by December 15, 2006, compared to 485,931 pieces by December 15, 2005. It also used an outside vendor to send 42 different group e-mails and received 898,991 individual hits by December 15, 2006, compared to 323,728 hits in 2005. In January the College used the Fast APP program to contact tens of thousands of additional students, including approximately 30,000 male prospects. This blanket recruitment has yielded a first-year class of 172 students, including 53 men and only 119 women! Last year, with much less intense marketing, there were 179 women in the entering class. Sweet Briar College has an entering class this year of 206 women, as we noted earlier. Smith enrolled its largest entering class in history. So here is further proof that R-MWC’s problem was not the dearth of college-bound women but poor marketing strategies.

According to Chris Burnley’s financial projections, Randolph College needs 350 freshmen each

year to move toward deficit reduction. This target was scaled back to 235 for the first year, presumably to allow for failure and embarrassment. Even so, the 172 entering students are 63 fewer than the scaled-back goal. The trustees' much-touted marketing and recruiting strategies were not only very expensive but also ineffective. High-school seniors were evidently unimpressed with Randolph College's "distinctive aspect" of global honors. Our society apparently does not need another coeducational college to add to the hundreds that are struggling to survive.

It appears, too, that Randolph College has adopted an open admissions policy. In a letter to Carl and Charlotte Stern, dated March 7, 2007, the interim president indicates that applications are up, but adds, "Too soon to know if they will enroll however." The information on the entering class released by the college is confusing or even deceptive on this score. The "E-News Update Early Summer 2007" claims the College met "its key goals by maintaining its diversity and academic standards." We are told that "the middle 50 percent range for SAT scores in critical reading and math is 1030-1260 compared with 1020-1270 last year" to assure us that quality has not dropped, but we are not told whether R-MWC paid attention to the new SAT writing test, an important consideration given that R-MWC's on-line application did not require a freshly written application essay. An irate alumna reported recently that one young man with an unimpressive academic record and difficulty holding down after-school jobs, who was turned down by every college to which he applied, had planned to join the army until Randolph College came along with a scholarship offer. How many other entering students, men and women, are like him? We worry that the student body will consist of students of such diverse ability and commitment that the classroom atmosphere will be incompatible with effective learning. The patience, ingenuity, and diligence of an already demoralized and divided faculty will be severely tested. How does one teach in a global honors setting? We do not know what these students were led to expect. Will the male athletes be disappointed that the gym is not under construction? How many students were lured by the inane video on the College's web site, an attractive financial package, blueprints for an athletic facility for which there are no funds, or the global honors hype? Are these new students also to be disappointed when they arrive in September only to discover that the administration has lied to them just as it lied in promising the classes of 2008, 2009, and 2010 that they would be attending a women's college?

### **Coeducation Strips R-MWC of Its Mission**

The administration's plans hinge on Randolph College growing to 1,100 residential students (more including those studying abroad), and the trustees justify going coeducational, as long as total enrollment also grows, as being within the college's mission because they expect to educate more women per class than as a single-sex college (regrettably, their emphasis is on quantity over quality). However, incoming enrollment falls well short of their target (it is less than half of the number assumed by the Burnley forecast), and the enrollment of women is dropping precipitously. The first-year class has 119 women compared to the 179 who entered a year ago. Except for the daughters of that minority of pro-coed alumnae who believe that the same positive experiences they had at R-MWC can occur at Randolph College and who will encourage their daughters to attend, the majority of first-year women are unlikely to be the same women who would have attended the college if it were still a women's institution. Those women who want the distinctive experience of a single-sex college will look elsewhere. Randolph College has now sent the women who would have gone to R-MWC as a fine women's college to the

remaining women's colleges, so that it can now compete for male and female students with the hundreds of long-established coeducational institutions.

The administration also argues that Randolph College is neither single-sex nor merely coeducational but – in a backhanded insult to R-MWC – “*consciously coed*,” where “women and men work together productively” (President’s Letter of May 2007, 3). There will be faculty development seminars to ensure that the classrooms are “free of gender bias”(3), even though abundant research demonstrates that this has not proven possible anywhere else. The cherished traditions like the honor system will remain, according to trustees who in their own legal presentations in court insist that the honor code does not constrain them, not even trustees who are alumnae. In issuing all of this empty propaganda about what is supposed to happen at Randolph College, the trustees are diverting attention from the real issue – namely, what they have destroyed. The distinctive ethos of R-MWC, the sense of sisterhood that it nourished so well, is gone because the trustees long ago refused to confront and correct the financial and admissions policies that were undermining the institution.

### **What Is a “Global Honors Experiential Coed College” Anyway?**

In its promotional literature the College administration has gone out of its way to convince the R-MWC community and the public that Randolph College offers an exciting new educational experience as a “Global Honors” college. This concept, now written with capitals in the President’s Letter of May 2007, remains as murky as ever. Paired without a connective, “global honors” sounds like some new direction and the College some new kind of institution. Yet the explanation in the President’s Letter that “global” refers to “global engagement” and “honors” to an “honors standard of achievement” implies that they are discrete concepts (1). Global is hardly distinctive, however; everything is going global these days, even social activism – “Think globally, act locally.” “Global” evidently implies an increased international awareness in and out of class; yet the study of and proficiency in foreign languages is notably absent from the descriptions of the global emphasis. The trustees still threaten to sell the Reading program, one of the flagship features of R-MWC that could offer credibility to claims of an international (“global”) focus. Moreover, the German department has been reduced to one person, without even the foreign student assistant so important to any foreign language program. At the trustee-faculty meeting on February, 2007, faculty members warned the trustees that not filling vacant positions in Japanese and Chinese languages could be detrimental to a curriculum with a “global honors moniker” (2-3). Having failed to figure out what “global” means in concrete programmatic terms, the trustees routinely contemplate destroying programs with an international or “global” emphasis in which R-MWC has already established credibility.

The “honors” college is far trickier. In current usage, an honors college is a unit inside of a large university in imitation of a liberal arts college, as a way to draw students from liberal arts colleges to larger (especially public) universities. A real liberal arts college does not need to claim to be a liberal arts college because it already is. A real liberal arts college’s claim to be an honors college is therefore a pathetic and comical misuse of the term. Consider the following statement in the President’s Letter of May 2007:

A revised and required first-year seminar will enable every student to understand the foundational concepts and scholarly methods of the arts, humanities, and

sciences. All students will be encouraged to work at the honors level—to pursue a question of importance to them with the goal of generating new insights—and to communicate knowledge clearly and persuasively (2).

This is of course no different from the various interdisciplinary first-year courses that have long been required at R-MWC, except that now first-year students will be expected to work “at the honors level.” But how does one begin to explain, except on the most superficial level, the scholarly – i.e. research – methods of mathematics and biology, or linguistics and music theory to first-year college students who know next to nothing about these disciplines? Or is this course really the first-year unit on “How to Write a Research Paper” rephrased in inflated language? More bizarre is the implication that all students will be honors students. Heretofore only a few R-MWC seniors exhibited the mastery of their discipline, the intellectual curiosity, and the verbal fluency necessary to “read for honors.” Even though they were carefully screened, some still fell by the wayside. Do the trustees seriously expect all Randolph students to do honors-level work? Will the scholarship athletes recruited primarily for their interest in the basketball, tennis, soccer, and cross-country teams want to work at the honors level? What about the 25 percent of the students with low SAT scores? Even if we assume that everyone is potentially an honors student, how can all students work at the honors level unless the college increases the size of its faculty? Honors work is highly individualized, placing heavy demands on faculty time. One faculty member can handle only a few honors students per year, and there is already serious talk of faculty layoffs. But wait! – nowhere is “honors” defined, so “work at the honors level” can mean whatever the trustees need it to mean, unlike the R-MWC “read for honors” program, whose specific and demanding requirements are known to everyone familiar with the program.

Inevitably, the paragraph on global honors strikes us as promotional hype, with “global honors” as unfathomable as ever. Without substance it will not attract students.

### **The Trustees Are Holding the Art Collection Hostage for Ransom**

The establishment of Randolph College is already proving to be not the first step toward financial stability, as Goldstein suggests, but yet another and more outrageous example of financial irresponsibility. Instead of rectifying past profligacy, the Board of Trustees has embarked on a reckless spending program in order to finance the coeducational college. These costs will come from conversion to coeducation, an emphasis on athletics imposed by Title IX, and unfocused mass marketing that can no longer rely on alumnae help. Figures for this academic year are not yet available, but the costs for marketing alone must have been enormous. Consider too the millions needed for the renovation of the existing Physical Education and Recreation building and construction of the new Sport and Activity Center. The latter could have been postponed indefinitely had the College remained a women’s college but must be built in order for the coeducational college to be in Title IX compliance. According to Burnley’s projections, this project will create \$10 million in debt and require \$20-25 million from new fund-raising efforts. New fund-raising efforts? We thought the money was raised as part of the *Vita Abundantior* Campaign! Now add to these costs the expenditures for new athletic fields and salaries for the four men’s coaches.

Nor do we know how much the entering class is costing the College. The “E-News Update” for early summer 2007 states, “As of May 18, the average [tuition discount] rate was 55.1 percent compared with last year’s final rate of 68.5 percent.” The 55 percent figure is still much higher than the 30 percent found at comparable colleges, including other women’s colleges. Moreover, these tuition discounts at Randolph are probably unevenly distributed – if the male athletes have received full scholarships, then the female students are receiving much smaller ones. If so, then instead of educating more women, Randolph College will be educating fewer women than R-MWC did, and exploiting their presence to subsidize the education of male athletes. This is truly a travesty of R-MWC’s goal to promote women’s education, and a heinous misuse of all funds ever donated to R-MWC.

What is far more significant is the loss of funds as a result of the coeducation decision. How many unpaid pledges have been cancelled? What about the \$36 million in deferred gifts? How many of those donors have written the college out of their wills? How many disillusioned alumnae and donors have refused to give this year to the Annual Fund? We know that the trustees have given heavily to this year’s Fund in order to mask the drop in alumnae giving, but surely they cannot sustain this very long. Once again the bad news is kept from us. We gather that giving is down this year by 30-50 percent compared with the projection of a temporary drop of 20 percent, but no one knows how many large potential gifts have already been cancelled.

Finally, the trustees are now threatening to sell the college’s art collection in an attempt to cover the exorbitant costs of going coeducational, since they cannot take the money out of the endowment without raising the hackles of SACS officials in December. However, the trustees have actually been threatening to sell the art for years, and they now exploit that threat in a quasi-extortionist attempt to induce the alumnae to give when the alumnae do not want to support the trustees in their decisions. The SACS warning actually came along at just the right time as a convenient scapegoat and opportunity to use the art as hostage once again to demand more “ransom” money from supporters of R-MWC and friends of the art collection.

We were told back in September 2006 that if R-MWC remained a women’s college, it would have to sell the art collection in order to survive – the A & S Group report indicated that R-MWC would need to raise \$100 million in new funds if it remained a single-sex college – but that going coeducational could spare the art collection. Now it appears that the College must sell the collection in order to go coeducational because going coeducational – just as PEC said – is wildly expensive, and not a sensible strategy for solving financial problems at all. The sale of the College’s most valuable asset as a means of achieving financial equilibrium is hardly what SACS had in mind, and it is of course penny-wise and pound-foolish in the extreme. Moreover, such a sale is in violation of the guidelines of the Association of Art Museum Directors: “Deaccessioning and disposal from the art museum’s collection must never be for the purpose of providing financial support or benefit for other goals of the university or college or its foundation.” Fisk University has just been told by the court that it may not sell its Georgia O’Keeffe paintings to shore up its shaky financial base. The public is venting its spleen at the proposed sale of R-MWC’s collection, causing the trustees to propose, incredibly, that the R-MWC community and art lovers everywhere raise \$100 million dollars to ransom the collection and keep it at R-MWC. They are in effect holding the art collection hostage. Here the trustees are asking for that amount to pay for their coeducation boondoggle.



## **R-MWC, Like the Phoenix, Shall Rise from the Ashes**

R-MWC has been hijacked by its Board of Trustees, which in the last ten or twelve years has arrogated to itself dictatorial powers. While self-appointed, self-perpetuating boards are common in most colleges, universities, and charitable trusts, what we are seeing at R-MWC right now is an extreme example of the harm a board can do if it decides to make a radical decision, refuse to share its evidence or acknowledge any challenge to it, and then bulldoze its way through the implementation of its decision. The R-MWC trustees have abandoned their primary obligation to educate women set out in the Articles of Incorporation. They have refused to release the expensively commissioned studies on which they base their coeducation decision, have declined to engage in open, honest dialogue with the various constituencies of the College, and have alienated the very groups whose support is essential for the well-being of the institution. They have even ignored the faculty, traditional guardians of the academic integrity of the College. Instead, they have hired outside consulting firms to tell them what they want to hear. Although the trustees are legally empowered to proceed in this fashion, it is incredibly bad governance. To the extent that the trustees continue to aggravate the college's financial problems through bad governance instead of solving those problems, the trustees are actually at risk of violating their fiduciary duties in any case, which they do not have the legal right to do. It seems clear that these trustees have no devotion to the original principles of R-MWC and no concern for women's education (they should never have been made trustees), and they are quite willing to destroy the R-MWC community and ignore solid evidence, sound reasoning, and bad consequences, all to avoid admitting their mistakes and reversing their decisions. But these errors of judgment and practice also bring them very close to the boundaries of their financial responsibility.

The R-MWC Board of Trustees has been on a spending spree for years, which has led to the warning by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. It has undermined the very institution it is supposed to protect. The trustees have refused to accept responsibility for the College's annual deficit. Moreover, the trustees who are making the decisions today are either the same ones or relatives of those who made the bad decisions earlier. Consequently, they do not challenge the errors of the past; rather, they protect the past. The coeducation plan is designed to save the board from correcting their past errors. So they have shifted the blame for their reckless financial policies to the College's single-sex status and have surged ahead with the coeducation decision. Having seen their gamble go egregiously wrong, they are now trying to cope with the disastrous consequences of that act. Thus many in the Randolph-Macon Woman's College community are fighting the coeducation decision, not only because of the manner in which the Board made the decision, but also because the decision was wrong.

Ironically, this dictatorial and intransigent Board consists of individuals none of whom is the president or dean of an outstanding liberal arts college. Such a person could have acted as a restraining influence and forestalled irresponsible decisions. Nor does the interim president have the training and experience necessary to provide effective leadership. Instead of "borrowing" a president from a reputable women's college for a year to put R-MWC's financial house in order, the Board of Trustees appointed as interim president the individual who, in her earlier role as president of the Board, took no action to rid R-MWC of the policies that were undermining it, and in fact insisted on renewing the college president who was instrumental in launching overspending and causing administrative offices to clash with each other instead of cooperating.

There was no reason to suppose that as interim president in July 2006 she would reverse the practices and habits that she displayed as president of the board of trustees in 1994. Rather, she can only have been willing to come back to a grueling year at R-MWC in order to defend her own past record, to conceal the trustees' own responsibility for today's problems, and to bring everyone on board the coeducational bandwagon.

For more than a decade, the college's considerable resources were misspent on activities that did not contribute to the long-term well-being of R-MWC. Virtually all of the "changes to strengthen finances and marketing" that are now being promoted as part of the coeducational transition should have been done anyway to strengthen R-MWC as a woman's college. Changes like improving the internet facilities and the college's poor web site, accepting on-line applications, creating courses in computer science and business, and building a new student center were suggested many times. Similarly, all of the painful reductions in spending and staffing, including 30-35 positions eliminated on June 27, 2007, a pay freeze, reductions in the college's contributions to retirement plans -- being undertaken now should either have been done long ago, or, preferably, the expansion in expenditures that took the college in this spendthrift direction should have been curtailed long ago. All of this could and should have been done for R-MWC as a woman's college, and it is both tragedy and travesty to see these measures now being undertaken as desperate rescue measures for the new college that the trustees have created in place of the one they want to kill.

The administration would have us believe that R-MWC is gone and Randolph College is up and running, so it is too late to reclaim our college. We don't believe it. We consider the academic year 2007-2008 an unfortunate hiatus in the history of R-MWC. Here, in brief, are some of the ongoing efforts to reclaim R-MWC.

- Preserve Educational Choice, Inc. continues to be a watchdog, monitoring the administration's activities and public statements, challenging them every step of the way. Its web site ([www.preserveeducationalchoice.org](http://www.preserveeducationalchoice.org)) makes available legal proceedings, numerous letters, and documents related to the College. It has also engaged the law firms of Troutman Sanders and DurretteBradshaw in Richmond to seek to undo the coeducation decision through the judicial system. It has already raised \$300,000 to fund the litigation, and by June 28 had raised 90% of additional \$100,000 needed to receive a matching grant from a generous supporter.
- The two lawsuits, which were dismissed by the lower court, are now on appeal to the Virginia Supreme Court. The Court has agreed to hear the Petition of Appeal in the Student Contract Case at 10:00 A.M. on July 9, 2007. The Charitable Trust appeal was filed with the Court on Wednesday, June 13, 2007. It goes to the heart of the matter, namely, "The Board of Trustees Has Breached Its Legal Duties by Diverting the Assets of R-MWC from the Charitable Purpose Set Forth in the Governing Document of the College." We are hopeful that the Virginia Supreme Court will agree to hear this case too, scheduled in September 2007.
- The current flood of letters to the *Lynchburg News and Advance* and the *Richmond Times Dispatch* protesting the sale of the College's invaluable art collection has given new life and energy to our cause.

We need to force the trustees to vacate their posts so a new board can be constituted that is committed to restoring R-MWC. The president or dean of an outstanding women's college should be engaged for a year to wean the board from its addiction to spending and to replace the public, university-style policies inappropriate and harmful to this private women's college with traditional women's college policies that have been updated for our times. The faculty and the alumnae should once again resume their pivotal roles in the ongoing life of the College.

### **How You Can Help Reclaim Your College**

Because of the intransigence of the Board of Trustees and the damage to R-MWC's financial condition and academic reputation, it will take the combined efforts of all of us in the R-MWC community to reclaim our college. Bear in mind that R-MWC was a distinguished and honorable institution dedicated to a noble goal. It was turned into an educational travesty through no fault of its own but as the scapegoat for the Board of Trustees' irresponsible management of it. Here's what you can do to restore it.

- Learn all you can about the tragedy. The PEC web site posts regular updates. You can access the web site at [www.preserveeducationalchoice.org](http://www.preserveeducationalchoice.org).
- Send a contribution today to PEC. PEC has collected the \$100,000 needed by June 30 to receive a generous matching grant in the same amount, but more funds will be needed to continue through the appeal process. The ongoing litigation is expensive, but it remains our best hope for saving the College.
- If you gave to the capital campaign, demand a refund by contacting the interim president Ginger Worden, Treasurer Chris Burnley, or Director of Development Skip Kughn (contact details below), explaining that your gift was for R-MWC, not for Randolph College.
- If you contributed to the Annual Fund in the last eight years, you too may demand a refund. Because the capital campaign and the Annual Fund were merged in the *Vita Abundantior* Campaign, your contribution was counted as part of the capital campaign, and such money can therefore be used to refund your donation to the Annual Fund.
- Once the college has refused to refund your donation, however small, to the capital campaign or the annual fund of the last eight years, you can join class action litigation to demand that the trustees honor donor intent. Even though Virginia does not allow for class action lawsuits, they can be filed in other states and can include plaintiffs from multiple states. Contact McKean ([mamckean@duke.edu](mailto:mamckean@duke.edu)) to obtain information about joining such lawsuits.
- Alumnae who have already expressed anger at the demise of the College, can call, e-mail, or write to interim president Worden, incoming president John Klein, and the trustees (contact information attached) to say that you are still seething, you have not been lulled by the official propaganda, and you refuse to be placated until R-MWC is restored.
- Those of you who have contributed works of art or money for their purchase should warn the interim president, the incoming president, and the trustees (contact information

below) that even if no conditions were attached in writing, the art may not be sold by Randolph College to raise cash. This will also provide you with grounds for joining lawsuits to enforce donor intent, in whatever state such suits are filed.

- Contact your classmates who may have been persuaded by administrative hype or discouraged by the Board of Trustees' intransigence and tell them that Randolph College is not R-MWC, that if they want a college on Rivermont Avenue, they should join you in the good fight.
- Send letters to the *Lynchburg News and Advance*, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, and other papers that have written stories about the College and denounce the destructive actions of the trustees. Contact information attached.
- Attend the Alumnae Association's annual meeting on September 15, 2007. In September 2006, the Alumnae Association Board adopted an open meetings policy that has not been honored by the currently reconstituted board under Emily Gill Mills. However, according to AAB rules, all "alumnae" -- that is, all who hold a degree from R-MWC or who have attended the college for at least one semester -- are invited and may vote in this meeting.

Some think it is too late to undo what the trustees have done. But in fact, it takes time for legal remedies to work and for the trustees' reckless experiment to fail in public view. Although it may appear that R-MWC is now gone, there is great cause for renewed hope in the survival of a restored R-MWC. The lawsuits are proceeding, the disastrous coeducational coverup venture is experiencing precisely the difficulties that critics anticipated, and the financial mismanagement of at least a decade is increasingly visible. If the majority in the R-MWC community who remain opposed to this folly put energy into the struggle, we can still have Randolph-Macon Woman's College Forever!

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Charles A. Dana Professor of Romance Languages, R-MWC (1968-1992)

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Carl Hester, Ph.D. Columbia University '70  
The Mary Frances Williams Professor of Humanities (Religion), R-MWC (1986-2005)

Helen McGehee, R-MWC '42,  
Principal Dancer of the Martha Graham Company (1942-1971)  
Founding Faculty Member of the Dance Division of The Juilliard School (1952-1980)  
Professor of Dance and Director of the Visiting Artist Program in Dance at R-MWC, Emerita

Madeline Miller, R-MWC '66, R-MWC Trustee 1978-1992  
President of the R-MWC Board of Trustees, 1987-1992

Betty Sue Moehlenkamp, R-MWC '53, M.A. Sarah Lawrence '68,  
Chair of the Dance Department at R-MWC (1974-1979).

Muffie Moroney, R-MWC '65, University of Houston J.D. '82

Joan Hull Stumborg, R-MWC '79

Louise (Winkie) Hutchings Westling, R-MWC '64, Ph.D. University of Oregon '74  
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