

A Good Spring

Academic year 2007-08 has ended, successfully. Commencement was rousing! Chancellor Sandra Day O'Connor, speaker Mike Tomlin '95 (coach of the Pittsburgh Steelers), and Sam Sadler '64, M.Ed. '71 (retiring after 41 years at William and Mary) were all in good voice. Honorary degrees went to Tomlin and David Ellenson '69 (president of Hebrew Union College). We paid homage to Sam with news that the Board of Visitors has named the University Center the Sadler Center. And we announced the \$283,379 pledged by the Class of 2008's undergraduates, law students and business students — a new record.

Commencement was a time to remember that, while the College's coffers do not overflow, William and Mary is extraordinarily rich in things money can't buy. The College has roots running deep in American history and a storied role in creating the United States. For centuries, William and Mary people have helped push their communities, states and nation forward. Three U.S. presidents studied at the College — Jefferson, Monroe and Tyler — as did the great Chief Justice John Marshall.

William and Mary is a place of striking physical beauty, architectural and natural. And it is a place of important firsts — Phi Beta Kappa, the honor system, legal education. Then there is William and Mary's towering academic reputation — the prestige that comes from generations of transforming teaching, research and learning.

You can't buy a legacy of this sort. You have to live it.

The day before commencement, seven new second lieutenants were commissioned from our Army ROTC program. William and Mary has a long tradition of sending its people to help defend the country. Indeed, more general officers currently on active duty graduated from the College than from any other schools except West Point and the Citadel.

This summer, 40 undergraduates are

using competitive service grants to work on issues such as literacy, hunger and medical relief; many more students are participating in service activities from Virginia to Uganda. Ninety-one law students are spending their summers in public service in this country and abroad, assisting nonprofit organizations concerned with civil rights, family rights, health care and the environment.

By spring of this year, we had received record numbers of applications from prospective undergraduates and law students — 11,622 for 1,350 spots in the freshman class, and 4,582 for 200 spots in the first-year law class. Three of our undergraduates became Marshall, Truman and Gates Cambridge Scholars. Board of Visitors member Joe Plumeri '66 established the Plumeri Awards for Faculty Excellence, which will provide 20 awards of \$10,000 each to outstanding faculty members during each of the next 10 academic years. We made serious progress toward raising \$10 million for Gateway William and Mary by the end of the year. And the faculty and staff of the Mason School of Business raised over \$545,000 for their new home, Alan B. Miller Hall, which is rapidly rising on Jamestown Road.

More good news came in late April when the Virginia General Assembly provided William and Mary with \$38.1 million for the new School of Education building as well as funds to upgrade the College's heating and cooling systems, and to plan the third phase of the Integrated Science Center and the renovation of Tucker Hall.

This marvelous state support did not carry over to the College's operating budget. Last fall, the state cut \$3 million from our support, of which \$2.7 million carried forward into fiscal year 2009. In March, the General Assembly authorized a 2 percent



faculty and staff salary increase for November 2008, well below the rate of inflation.

Commonwealth support is not enough to sustain even bare-bones operation of the College. The Board of Visitors, therefore, recently voted to raise tuition and fees (including room and board) for the 2008-09 academic year by \$1,457 for in-state students and \$2,767 for out-of-state students. These new revenues will enable us to heat, cool and clean new buildings coming on line, give our faculty and staff a 3 percent (rather than 2 percent) raise, and increase need-based financial aid for in-state undergraduates. The tuition and fee increases provide no funds to grow the faculty or staff, support research, or otherwise enhance our programs.

While extraordinarily rich in things money can't buy, William and Mary still needs money to operate amid the competitive realities of American higher education. To remain academically pre-eminent, the College must soon begin to enjoy greatly heightened support from its alumni and friends. State support and tuition will never provide all the resources needed to sustain our operations. Increasingly in this century, the colleges and universities (whether public or private) that build powerful bases of private support will advance. The rest will fall behind.

I am confident we can rally the private support vital to William and Mary's success in the 21st century.

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