

April 17, 2009

My fellow alumnae,

As a health services major, I spent my senior year at Vanderbilt University. This meant that I did not experience the arrival of men at our beloved *alma mater* in the fall of 2007. I was, however, actively involved in the protests of 2006-2007, and continue to mourn the fall of an amazing institution for women. We fought for a year to prevent what was inevitable, afraid that what made R-MWC amazing would be lost forever. We were mistaken.

At the beginning of my life outside the Red Brick Wall I thought my college had abandoned us. I was angry and thought I could never return to her hallowed halls. Since leaving R-MWC, and returning on many occasions, I have come to realize that *my* R-MWC no longer exists. Not because of the men on campus, or the renovations, or even because of the name change. My R-MWC no longer exists because I am no longer there to make it mine. My R-MWC no longer exists – and neither does yours.

As an alumna I have come to realize that it is my job to spread the word about what made my school so great. I have to tell others about my R-MWC and hope that they can find a way to make Randolph College their own. We all arrived in Lynchburg for different reasons, but why we stayed was the same: we loved our Macon. The students today love their Randolph. They are in pursuit of the same abundant life that we now lead. What kind of example are we setting for them? Instead of uniting and electing Alumnae Board officials to make decisions that ensure our survival, ensure the endurance of Randolph-Macon Woman's College, we continually undermine the important work to move us forward. We are preventing change.

Much like state and local governments, our Board members are chosen to represent the voice of the people. They may not speak your individual voice, but they represent the voice of the collective majority for as long as their term allows. If you, as an individual, have a concern that needs to be addressed, let them know – by email, by phone, in person. If you disagree with their being elected or the decisions that have been made, nominate someone else for the *official ballot* and vote the next time around. This is democracy. Insisting on multiple ballots and crystal transparency for every decision, at every step, hinders progress and prevents the vital work from being done. Resources are wasted and healing wounds are violently reopened. The Board is elected to discuss what changes need to be made, consider our opinions, and make a decision that ensures the longevity of our Association and our continued relationship with our College. These decisions may not always be liked or understood by us as individuals, but we have to trust the process.

Without a College there can be no Association. The purpose of our Alumnae Association is to unite graduates of R-MWC and Randolph College. It keeps us connected to the school we adore and supports the College in its efforts to help a new generation of students live a life more abundant. The time has come for division and petty arguing to end. Without a united Association that supports the College, and a College that supports her alumnae/i, there will be no growth, no future, no art, no R-MWC, and no abundant life for those students who follow us. Our fight to preserve what we knew will have been for naught.

If you no longer believe in the mission of the Alumnae Association or in our *alma mater* then walk away. Cherish the memories that you had. Celebrate the friends that you made. Enjoy the life that remains. I will continue to support and promote the College and the Association that has made my life more abundant. My voice will be heard.

The Official Ballot for this year's Alumnae Board of Directors election – included in your Bulletin – must be postmarked by April 22. Support the Association in its efforts to move us forward. Send in your ballots.

*Vita Abundantior,*

Katie Stewart Page '08