

The Briar Wire

THE SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE ALUMNAE NEWSLETTER VOLUME 7, ISSUE 9 | DECEMBER 2021

My fellow alumnae and friends,

In this season of giving, I am particularly grateful to all of our Sweet Briar family as we traverse the holiday season. As I write to you, Sweet Briar is resplendent with crimson and orange maples. Our campus is bustling with students and faculty navigating the end of the 12-week session. Planning for Sweet Briar Days for local alumnae clubs is well underway, with invitations for events in December and January going out soon.

This past Thursday I had the pleasure of hosting Sweet Briar's student chapter of the Audubon Student Conservation Club at my house for dinner and conversation by the fireplace. The group of 15 were all engaged with each other and Weatherly Ryder, president of the club, talked about the excitement of the fall migration and what the club could do to begin to think about mobilizing students for an upcoming bird count in the spring. Weatherly also expressed the students' gratitude for the newly-erected Martha "Ookie" Hays Cooper '76 bird observation deck that was generously donated in her memory by the Class of '76. To hear and feel the excitement in the room as the students described their experience with having recently held a meeting at the deck and planning additional outings...Sheer joy is all I can say!

This story is one of so many that reflect upon the full circle of generosity to the College and its impact upon the next generation of our students each and every year.

Your gifts to Sweet Briar matter, as does your devotion to our College, which perpetuates a spirit of giving that changes lives. May you and yours have a memorable season of joy.

With gratitude,

Mary Pope M. Hutson '83
Senior Vice President for Alumnae Relations,
Development, and Communications



Photo by LuAnn Hunt '90.

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PLANNED GIVING



IRA Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) Reinstated for Calendar Year 2021

You may be looking for a way to make a big difference to help further the mission of Sweet Briar College — perhaps you're an alumna and it's an anniversary Reunion year for you (classes ending in 2 or 7). If you are 70½ or older*, an IRA charitable rollover is a way you can help make a tax-free gift that benefits you and Sweet Briar. The IRA Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) has been reinstated for calendar year 2021. Consider making your RMD gift before June 30, 2021 to help Sweet Briar in this fiscal year (note: an IRA transfer can take up to 2 weeks for your IRA guardian to process).

The benefits of an IRA charitable rollover include:

- Avoiding taxes on transfers of up to \$100,000 from your IRA to Sweet Briar College
- Making a gift that is not subject to the deduction limits on charitable gifts
- Helping further the work and mission of Sweet Briar College

How an IRA charitable rollover gift works:

- Contact your IRA plan

administrator to make a gift from your IRA to the College.

- Your IRA funds will be directly transferred to Sweet Briar College to help continue its important work.
- Please note that IRA charitable rollover gifts do not qualify for a charitable deduction.

Please contact Margaret McClellan Driscoll '92, Director of Planned Giving, at mdriscoll@sbcb.edu, 434-381-6131 with any questions or for additional information visit our website at sbcblegacy.org.

* Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) age: For individuals who turned 70½ after Dec. 31, 2019, the RMD age of 70½ is increased to age 72, but loyal donors can still make a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) before turning 72.

This information is provided for educational purposes. It is not intended as legal advice. Please consult your own advisors who alone are aware of your individual situation and thus in the best position to provide an individual analysis and help you accomplish the best result. ■

ADMISSIONS UPDATE

SWEET
BRIAR
COLLEGE

Let us bring your prospective student to Sweet Briar!



Our students and alumnae know that there is no substitute for a visit to Sweet Briar's campus. In fact, we are so convinced that a young woman you know will love Sweet Briar as much as you do that we are issuing a special invitation for her to be our guest on campus. Be sure to share the postcard you received like the image above with a young woman you know who would like to visit Sweet Briar. **Whether she flies, rides the train, or drives, we will cover the cost of her first visit along with one family member.** We will coordinate an experience specially tailored to her interests and we will also host the family on campus at the Elston Inn.

If you would like a link to send directly to a prospective student and her family to encourage them to make a visit, please go to sbc.edu/visit. Please also use that link if you'd like to post on social media and be sure to use the hashtag **#VisitSweetBriar!**

Of course, not everyone knows a young woman who is in high school. **If you're interested in helping to recruit the next generation of Sweet Briar women, become an Admissions Ambassador!** These alumnae volunteers help reach out to prospective students in our Admissions pipeline to answer their questions, offer relevant information from their Sweet Briar experiences, and encourage students to visit Sweet Briar. They write notes, text, and make phone calls to the students assigned to them by Heather Colson Ewing '90, Admissions Ambassador Manager. Admissions Ambassadors also represent Sweet Briar College at college fairs in their local areas.

If you are interested in becoming an Admissions Ambassador, please email Heather at hewing@sbcedu. ■

FINANCIAL NEWS

S&P Global increases Sweet Briar's bond rating



The improved financial health of Sweet Briar College has been recognized by S&P Global, which has raised the school's long-term rating to BB from BB-. S&P noted that Sweet Briar's outlook is stable.

One important factor in the rating is Sweet Briar's enrollment, which has been steadily increasing over the last three years and has resulted in positive net tuition for the College. "The strong financial profile reflects adequate financial performance for the rating category, healthy available resources, modest debt with rapid amortization and no additional debt needs," S&P said in its release. It noted Sweet Briar's operating surpluses in 2019 and 2020, with the expectation of further improvement in 2021 and 2022, and also recognized the College's healthy endowment and recent capital improvements.

Another factor in the rating is an anticipated clean bill of health from the College's accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. The final report from SACSCOC is expected in December.

"Our financial health is at the heart of our ability to serve our students," said President Meredith Woo. "Our success in recruiting students has been a critical component of that, as has our sound financial management. Our hard work is paying off, and I'm glad to see that it's being acknowledged by S&P Global."

In addition, the S&P release commented on Sweet Briar's successful navigation of the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular noting that the College re-configured classrooms and learning areas to enable social-distancing, required vaccination and testing of symptomatic students, and strongly suggested mask wearing indoors and in other confined spaces.

The high level of commitment to health, safety, academic excellence and financial responsibility demonstrated by the entire Sweet Briar community has been the cornerstone of the College's upward trajectory. The Sweet Briar community is grateful to S&P for the validation of the College's progress and prospect. ■

LODGING AND SHOPPING

ELSTON INN & CONFERENCE CENTER AT SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE

*Hold your next meeting at Sweet Briar,
located just 20 minutes from Lynchburg,
where our 2,840 acres of stunning natural beauty
will inspire your next great idea and motivate your team.*

Our conference center can host meetings of just about any size and our professional staff is standing by to help you plan it. Plus, with our on-campus greenhouse providing fresh produce, the food will be outstanding.



We can't wait to host you.

elstoninn.com/meetings
434-381-6448



ELSTON INN
& Conference Center

Shop in the store or from the comfort of your own home.

Great holiday
gifts for the
VIXEN
in your life!



No matter where you are, The Book Shop is your source for all kinds of Sweet Briar swag, including sweatshirts, T-shirts, caps, mugs, decals and more.

Show your pink and green pride!

> shopsweet.sbc.edu

ATHLETICS AND ALUMNAE

Elizabeth Parr '18 Returns to Sweet Briar as Head Lacrosse Coach

Sweet Briar College is excited to announce that former Vixen Elizabeth Parr '18 will be returning to campus as the new head lacrosse coach. Along with being a member of the class of 2018, Parr has also worked as an Admissions Ambassador and was the assistant lacrosse coach from 2018 until 2020.

During her tenure as the assistant lacrosse coach, Parr was in charge of designing the team lifts, executing goalie training, administering baseline testing and individualizing one-on-one lessons with the student-athletes.

Additionally, Parr had extensive recruiting duties which included planning clinics for recruits to attend and being the first-line of communication with those interested in attending Sweet Briar.

"We are so excited to welcome Elizabeth back to Sweet Briar, to the athletic department, and to the helm of the lacrosse program," said Jodi Canfield, Sweet Briar College athletics director. "Her familiarity with Sweet Briar, the recruiting process and the current players is a tremendous asset. She has hit the ground running and we look forward to watching the team compete this spring."



Parr had a decorated athletics career at Sweet Briar, also competing for the soccer program. Throughout her four years on campus, she was named the captain of both the lacrosse and soccer teams, named an Old Dominion Athletic Conference (ODAC) All-American, named Athlete of the Year in 2018 and was awarded the Athletic Pink and Green Award as well as Sportsmanship Award.

A 2018 graduate of Sweet Briar College with a degree in psychology, Parr obtained her Master of Science in adapted physical activity from Slippery Rock University in 2021. ■

Nominations Open for Outstanding and Distinguished Alumnae Awards

Nominations for the 2022 recipients of the Outstanding and Distinguished Alumnae Awards are now open. To submit your nomination or view past recipients of these awards, please visit sweetbriar.imodules.com/awards or call 800-381-6131. Nominations for both awards are reviewed and recipients are selected by the Alumnae Alliance Council and the President's Council of the College. Nominations are invited from any member of the Sweet Briar family: alumnae, faculty, staff, students and the Sweet Briar College Board of Directors.

Distinguished Alumna Award

The Distinguished Alumna Award was created to honor alumnae who have brought distinction to themselves and to Sweet Briar College through outstanding accomplishment in a volunteer or professional capacity.

Outstanding Alumna Award

This award may be given to graduate alumnae who have been out of college for at least 15 years in recognition of their outstanding service to Sweet Briar in a volunteer capacity. ■



Cheri Burritt Yates '84 received the Outstanding Alumna Award in 2019 for her volunteer service to Sweet Briar.

STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY

Students show up in force to Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges Women's Leadership Development Summit

At the end of October, twelve Sweet Briar students attended the Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges' 2021 Women's Leadership Development Summit in Glen Allen, Va. They were one of the largest groups of students from any one school. After all, the purpose of the summit is at the heart of what Sweet Briar College does: forge women leaders.

Hannah Epstein '22 was one of those attendees. She is the SGA president, a lead orientation leader, secretary of the Bum Chums and historian for the Earphones club. "The summit was a great opportunity to connect with different professionals and fellow undergraduate students from different institutions," said Hannah. "The advice we got will leave an everlasting impression on myself, from leading through conflict, being bold and being mindful both personally and professionally. I am grateful for the opportunity to attend the summit, and I hope to find ways to bring the lessons I learned back to our community."

May-Beth Johnson, chief operations officer at VFIC, was thrilled by the enthusiastic turn-out and offered her thoughtful comments on the event:

"Sweet Briar College has a long and successful history of not only developing the intellectual capacity of women but also cultivating their leadership potential. So it was with great enthusiasm that twelve of their students participated in the summit.

"The goal of the summit was to provide female undergraduates from VFIC colleges and universities with a forum to examine the challenges women face today as they work to achieve leadership roles in both professional and personal ventures. Those challenges are daunting. Writing in *Forbes* in 2018, KPMG CEO Lynne Doughtie reported that 'women today account for only 5.2 percent of the CEOs of S&P 500 companies and slightly more than 21 percent of their board seats.' Today, that figure is 6 percent."

Johnson continued with, "More than sixty women from other VFIC schools joined Sweet Briar students to participate in a variety of forums, discussions and workshops led by trailblazing women of all ages and professions on topics such as the art of leading, career empowerment, leading through conflict and mindfulness.

"Wherever their journeys take them, Sweet Briar students will remember the skills they learned during the VFIC's leadership summit, and one day they will have the opportunity to serve on a panel of trailblazing women, sharing their experiences and offering encouragement to a new generation." ■



Back row, from left: Reesa Artz '22, Angela Cazares '22, Annika Kuleba '22, Hannah Epstein '22, Alexia Alfaro '22, Kate Kotany '23; front row, from left: Kaytee Reynolds '23, Lauren Jones '22, Peyton Murphy '23, Tatum Wallis '22; not pictured: Siena Annable '22.



**Make your gift to the Sweet
Briar Fund today at
sbc.edu/give!**

'Tis the Season to Make a Gift to Sweet Briar!

With the end of 2021 fast approaching, time is running out to make a tax-deductible gift to Sweet Briar. Even if you're not interested in tax deductions, the end of the calendar year is a wonderful time to support our college. Here are some tips to make your gift even easier to give!

If you have questions about how to make any type of gift, please feel free to call our office at 434-381-6131 or send us an email at alumnae@sbc.edu.

Remember...every gift makes a difference!

Make a gift online at sbc.edu/give. It takes less than five minutes and a receipt will be emailed to you. If you prefer to make credit card gifts over the phone, call our office at the number below.

For gifts by wire transfer, please call the AR&D office (see below) to obtain the instructions for the transfer.

Send a check to the Office of Alumnae Relations and Development at PO Box 1057 Sweet Briar, VA 24595.

If you plan to make a gift of stock to Sweet Briar, please contact the AR&D office (see below) for stock transfer instructions for your broker. We will need to know the name of the stock and the estimated value.

For IRA Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) or Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) gifts, please see page 2 for more details.

Alumnae Relations and Development Office
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