

# The Briar Wire

THE SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE ALUMNAE NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2018 | VOLUME 4 | ISSUE 1

## Dear fellow Alumnae and Friends of Sweet Briar,

The holidays give us an opportunity to relax and celebrate another year of a life, but we also have the time to assess the chapter we are closing and start to shape the plan for the next one. The new year offers all of us a chance to reset and start anew.

One thing that is constant as we move forward is change. Sweet Briar College is no different. To withstand the test of time, and no matter what the external or internal challenges, the College has had to navigate changing times, changing values, and changing expectations.

Change, in and of itself, is not the goal for the College. The goal is change that is intentional, innovative, and relevant, all of which will keep Sweet Briar on the path to endure in perpetuity. These intentional changes—not just to classes and majors, but making these classes and majors work together—will allow the College to reclaim its rightful place as one of the top women's liberal arts colleges in the country.

Even intentional change can be difficult to face and then muster up the resolve to put into motion. But if innovation

and relevance are to be achieved, every one of us must put in the work—together. The faculty and President Woo have given us a plan for change that is a necessary change, that brings about necessary growth. Over the next several months, we need your help in many areas. Opportunities exist to: Volunteer with the Alumnae Alliance, participate in your club or regional activities, become an Alumnae Admissions Ambassador, communicate with classmates, come to Reunion, and continue to support Sweet Briar

As members of the Sweet Briar community, we know that Sweet Briar provides a transformative educational experience. Together, we will continue that tradition for our current students and for future ones.

Onward!

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

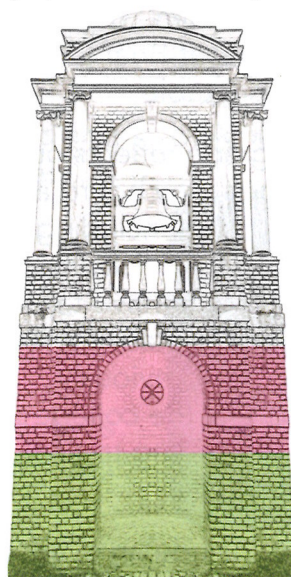
**PS: Save the Date for the ALL-class Reunion, June 1-3, 2018!**

### Fundraising Progress Fiscal Year 2017-2018

(July 1, 2017 — June 30, 2018)

**Goal:**  
**\$13 million**

before June 30, 2018



\$5.2 million received  
in gifts and pledges

40.2% of goal



## Board of Directors of Sweet Briar College

The Honorable Teresa Pike  
Tomlinson '87, Chair  
Dr. Meredith Woo  
President of the College  
Andrew C. Benjamin  
Jacquelyne "Jax" Bullett '15  
Leah Solivan Busque '01  
Alice Dixon '82  
William B. Drake, Jr.  
Marianne "Mimi" C. Fahs '71  
Kelley Manderson Fitzpatrick '85  
Carol McMurtry Fowler '57  
Liza Lee  
Charlene "Sunny" Monk  
Gillian Munson  
Bernie Niemeier, Secretary  
Frank W. Roach  
Mason Bennett Rummel '83  
Caville Stanbury-Woolery '06  
Allison "Allie" Stemmons Simon '63  
Meighan Stone  
Georgene M. Vairo '72, Vice Chair  
CeCelia E. Valentine '95  
Elinor "El" H. Warner '85  
Marshalyne Yeargin-Allsopp, MD '68

## Alumnae House Staff

Mary Pope M. Hutson '83  
Vice President for Alumnae Relations  
and Development  
Paula Eanes  
Office Manager  
Claire Dennison Griffith '80  
Senior Director of Alumnae Relations  
and Development  
Lea Harvey '90  
Director of Corporate and  
Foundation Relations  
Sarah Lewis  
Stewardship Manager  
Lisa Wray Longino '78  
Western Major Gifts Officer  
Julia Paris '99  
Director of Advancement Services  
Annette Pettyjohn  
Boxwood Circle Manager  
Rachel Pietsch  
Alumnae Relations Associate  
Bonnie L. Seitz '01  
Assistant Director of Advancement  
Services  
Clélie D. D. Steckel  
Director of the Sweet Briar Fund and  
Editor of The Briar Wire  
Katie Keogh Weidner '88  
Eastern Major Gifts Officer  
Wanda Vest  
Data Entry Manager  
(800) 381-6131  
PO Box 1057  
Sweet Briar, VA 24595

## Tax Reform Update: Key Takeaways

With the increase in standard deductions, it is estimated that fewer people will itemize in the future. The donor group most affected will be middle-income families and individuals. There is no evidence yet that the charitable giving of this group will decrease, or how much it could impact giving to education.

Higher-income donors, whose gifts are roughly 80% of all charitable dollars, will continue to itemize. It is expected there will be less impact on their giving.

A rise in the exemption for estate taxes may have an impact on higher-level donors making planned gifts. However, this can be offset by the increases in ways to give now, including the IRA rollover and the proposed change on restrictions on donor advised funds to allow DAFs to be used to satisfy pledges in some

cases. (Stay tuned for more on this topic.)

Bottom line: tax deductibility is not the top giving motivator for most donors, and this is all the more true for those who believe in the mission and know their gifts are essential to sustaining the organizations they support. So keeping our alumnae and friends in the circle about Sweet Briar's strategic direction is a high priority.

The rise in the stock market has put many investors in the position of holding highly appreciated stocks, just as upturns in the housing market have caused property values to rise, which also can lead to properties being appreciated in value. Sweet Briar welcomes the opportunity to discuss with you and your advisor the ways that you can make your gift to the College in 2018. ■

### For more information, please contact:

**Claire Dennison Griffith '80, Senior Director of Alumnae Relations and Development**  
PO Box 1057 | Sweet Briar, VA 24595  
Phone 434-381-6479 | Email: [cgriffith@sbc.edu](mailto:cgriffith@sbc.edu)

*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.*

## Sweet Briar recognized for strategic initiatives with upgraded rating from S&P Global

S&P Global Ratings announced yesterday that it has raised its long-term rating to "B+" from "B" on bonds issued for Sweet Briar College, with an outlook of "stable."

"The rating upgrade reflects our view of the college's new board and senior leadership team, including a new president who officially took office in May 2017, who have taken a number of actions to stabilize the college following the previously announced closure of the college in March 2015," according to S&P Global's report.

"These actions include an overhaul of strategic initiatives and developing

related objectives to address the college's immediate and intermediate priorities that include curriculum restructuring, reexamination of SBC's tuition policy, and implementation of multi-year planning. In addition, during fiscal 2017, the college refinanced its direct placement debt with a loan from the endowment, thereby eliminating acceleration risk, which had been a prior credit concern."

S&P further noted that Sweet Briar's "continued elevated fundraising support and astute financial management and budgeting practices support the college's attempt to



stabilize and sustain its operations.”

In September, the College announced a comprehensive vision focused on excellence, relevance and affordability, and positioned itself as a new business model for liberal arts institutions. Comprehensive tuition, fees, room and board were reduced by 32 percent to \$34,000 for the 2018-19 academic year. ■

## **Lynn Rainville named associate dean of academic affairs at Sweet Briar**

*by Janika Carey, Office of Communications*

Research professor Lynn Rainville has been named associate dean of academic affairs at Sweet Briar College. She will continue in her role as director of the Tusculum Institute.

In her new role, Rainville will be the College’s point person for its library, sponsored research, the Honors Program, institutional effectiveness and study-abroad opportunities. “I’m grateful to Lynn for her willingness to take on this role and ensure that these important aspects of our educational community continue to get the attention they deserve,” said Dean of the College Rob Granger. “In addition, she understands the importance of the humanities and social sciences at Sweet Briar and I look forward to her good counsel.”

A nationally recognized authority on African-American history and overlooked communities, Rainville joined the Sweet Briar College community in 2001, teaching anthropology and archaeology courses. Since then, she has received a number of awards and grants, including a National Endowment for the Humanities grant in 2005 that enabled her to investigate historic African-American cemeteries in Virginia.

“Sweet Briar has been fertile ground for studying our shared and complicated past,” Rainville said.

In 2008, she was asked to lead the new Tusculum Institute for historic preservation and public history. In that role, she has worked on ethno-historic research and, together with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, worked to promote environmentally sustainable historic preservation initiatives throughout the Commonwealth. She will continue to work on these projects as part of her new duties.

Rainville attended Dartmouth College, where she



double-majored in history and anthropology, was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and graduated magna cum laude. She earned her Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in Near Eastern archaeology and spent more than a decade directing projects in Turkey and Syria. For the last 17 years, she has been uncovering Virginia’s forgotten histories, including research into enslaved communities, poor farms, and the state’s role in World War I. Her work has appeared in four books and more than two dozen articles. She has shared her research with Sweet Briar students, as well as large public audiences, through regular public lectures, online databases and social media.

Rainville has held leadership positions in several community and professional organizations, including the National Database of Enslaved Americans, Preservation Piedmont, the Virginian WWI/WWII Centennial Commission and the Virginia History Forum. She has also served as a guest curator at several museums and historical societies, as a fellow at the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and a National Lecturer for the Archaeological Institute of America. ■

### **CLASS NOTES.**

Send your updates to your class secretary  
or submit them online at

[sbc.edu/alumnae-development/class-notes](http://sbc.edu/alumnae-development/class-notes).



On September 27, 2017, the Office of Alumnae Relations and Development launched the Sweet Briar Fund for the 2018 fiscal year. With that effort, the College began supporting class officers in communicating with their classmates to help them reconnect and to encourage each and every alumna of Sweet Briar to make a gift to the Sweet Briar Fund before June 30, 2018.

Since this past summer, class officers attended the Alumnae Leadership Training Conference, participated in webinars, and formed strategies within their classes to maximize engagement and fundraising. All of these efforts contribute to Sweet Briar's new paradigm of alumnae engagement: to give back time, talent and treasure to their alma mater in every way possible.

## GET READY FOR MARCH DAYS OF GIVING!

In March of 2016, Sweet Briar began a new tradition: a series of Days of Giving, in which the College sets a fundraising goal to kick off Sweet Briar Forever Month. In 2018, Sweet Briar will kick off its March Days of giving on **Thursday, March 1** with a goal to raise **\$500,000**. From **March 2 through Saturday, March 10** our goal is to raise **another \$500,000**. In March of 2016, the College raised \$1.1 million; in March of 2017, it raised \$1.8 million. Start rallying your classmates and friends to beat this year's goal!

Class Year	Giving	Participation
1940	\$11,400	7.5%
1941	\$550	5.0%
1942	\$300	2.1%
1943	\$14,000	3.4%
1944	\$13,900	18.6%
1945	\$1,900	10.5%
1946	\$27,100	8.9%
1947	\$1,100	6.1%
1948	\$10,896	10.2%
1949	\$159,273	15.2%
1950	\$3,250	9.1%
1951	\$6,025	14.1%
1952	\$22,516	14.3%
1953	\$16,905	15.3%
1954	\$122,400	21.3%
1955	\$5,925	13.4%
1956	\$25,210	13.5%
1957	\$70,719	15.8%
1958	\$48,936	18.4%
1959	\$212,075	13.7%
1960	\$64,283	22.3%

Class Year	Giving
1961	\$
1962	\$
1963	\$1
1964	\$
1965	\$
1966	\$
1967	\$
1968	\$
1969	
1970	\$
1971	\$
1972	\$
1973	\$
1974	\$
1975	\$
1976	
1977	\$
1978	\$
1979	\$
1980	\$
1981	\$
1982	\$
1983	\$
1984	\$
1985	\$
1986	\$
1987	\$
1988	\$
1989	



# Class Challenges

Have you and your classmates  
made your gifts yet?

Make a gift online at [sbc.edu/give](http://sbc.edu/give) or call **(800) 381-6131**.

Giving	Participation
23,575	14.1%
04,112	22.8%
78,853	23.0%
68,616	17.5%
19,860	18.5%
42,584	13.6%
30,606	20.7%
88,400	18.3%
54,600	3.5%
26,502	13.9%
28,000	14.3%
62,963	12.6%
21,580	14.3%
37,412	16.0%
41,882	12.3%
55,228	10.1%
13,498	10.8%
86,045	15.6%
74,164	11.2%
23,306	15.7%
56,326	9.8%
14,007	10.5%
12,876	9.6%
14,108	8.5%
22,186	8.4%
14,597	13.2%
35,200	8.4%
17,770	11.2%
55,820	7.0%

Class Year	Giving	Participation
1990	\$12,216	9.2%
1991	\$1,847	8.1%
1992	\$6,143	8.3%
1993	\$12,701	11.5%
1994	\$5,420	7.7%
1995	\$6,145	8.9%
1996	\$30,255	11.0%
1997	\$3,003	8.0%
1998	\$14,122	8.9%
1999	\$6,885	6.3%
2000	\$3,341	6.9%
2001	\$25,565	8.5%
2002	\$3,278	7.9%
2003	\$9,357	9.0%
2004	\$5,464	6.3%
2005	\$3,897	9.6%
2006	\$4,949	7.6%
2007	\$2,524	7.4%
2008	\$1,910	5.7%
2009	\$2,935	8.5%
2010	\$807	4.5%
2011	\$3,361	7.9%
2012	\$2,205	5.5%
2013	\$392	3.4%
2014	\$557	5.3%
2015	\$2,320	7.1%
2016	\$1,363	11.8%
2017	\$1,660	5.7%

Data reported as of December 31, 2017.



## Sweet Briar College and Girl Scouts announce scholarship for Gold Award achievers

Sweet Briar College has announced a new scholarship in partnership with the Girl Scouts of the USA for girls who have completed the Gold Award. The announcement was made at the Virginia Skyline Council's Gold Award Ceremony on Saturday, Dec. 16, in Roanoke.

"Sweet Briar College and the Girl Scouts share a commitment to supporting young women who are go-getters, innovators, risk-takers and leaders. With these values in common we have come together in a national partnership to establish a Girl Scouts Gold Award Scholarship at Sweet Briar College," said Melissa Farmer Richards, vice president for communications and enrollment management at Sweet Briar College.

Two awards, each valued at \$2,500, are available for eligible incoming first-year students who have achieved the Girl Scout Gold Award. One is designated for a student who is a member of a Girl Scout troop in Virginia, while the other is open to a Girl Scout troop member anywhere in the United States.

The scholarship is renewable for four years of study at Sweet Briar if a grade point average of 3.0 is maintained. Scholarship winners will be judged on the following criteria:

1. Acceptance to Sweet Briar College and a commitment to attend
2. Current (or recent) active membership in a Girl Scout troop and completion of the Girl Scout Gold Award (Please provide copy of the certificate or letter)
3. Letter of recommendation from the troop leader
4. Essay on how you have demonstrated a commitment to community service, leadership and/or sustainability

The scholarship is funded by several generous Sweet Briar alumnae who are former Girl Scouts and who care deeply about advancing women's leadership.

"The Girl Scouts of Virginia Skyline Council is



Roanoke's vice mayor Anita Price (from left), Sweet Briar's vice president for communications and enrollment management Melissa Richards and Girl Scouts VSC CEO Nikki Williams.

honored that Sweet Briar College will announce this new scholarship initiative at our Gold Award Ceremony so that our girls will be among the first to know they are eligible," said Nikki Williams, chief executive officer for Girl Scouts of Virginia Skyline. "Sweet Briar's new core curriculum focused on women's leadership and the Girl Scout leadership experience have a compelling synergy."

Gold Award winners can apply to Sweet Briar College at [sbc.edu/admissions/apply-now](https://sbc.edu/admissions/apply-now). For questions, contact William Allen, dean of admissions and financial aid, at [ballen@sb.edu](mailto:ballen@sb.edu) or 434-381-6142.

In September, Sweet Briar announced a reduced tuition of \$21,000 for the 2018-2019 academic year, now competitive with public institutions. The goal is to make the cost of attending a private institution more transparent by eliminating the confusion over discount rates, a term that describes how institutions discount published rates. Sweet Briar's 32 percent tuition reduction is part of a comprehensive "reset" in the College's pursuit of academic excellence, relevance and affordability. Sweet Briar has been recognized nationwide for announcing plans to replace its general education curriculum with a core set of courses focused on women's leadership.

For more information about joining Girl Scouts, visit [girlscouts.org](https://girlscouts.org). ■



## New working group of the Alumnae Alliance seeks additional members

The Alumnae Alliance has formed a new working group, the Young Alumnae Squad (YAS). YAS was created as an effort to better engage with young alumnae and is seeking a team to lead the movement to re-engage and cultivate the community of young alumnae strengthening our bond with each other and the College.

The focus of YAS will be on fundraising and goal setting, events and activities, engagement and volunteering, outreach and fostering the next class of young alumnae. With each of these areas we see fantastic opportunity to collaborate and allow YAS to make their mark!

**We want you to help us make it happen! #sayYAS**

We are seeking 15 leaders to help achieve these four pillars. Alumnae who graduated within the last 15 years are specifically invited to nominate themselves or their contemporary alumnae to join the Young Alumnae Squad as working group members. All Sweet Briar College alumnae and holders of honorary degrees, and those who completed at least one semester of coursework, are members of the Alumnae Alliance and may nominate themselves or any other member of the Alumnae Alliance for these positions.

### Responsibilities:

- Work closely with YAS co-chairs
- Report bi-weekly on all activities to co-chairs on status/result of current projects
- Participate in monthly YAS calls
- Continue to assess and evaluate objectives of sub-committee
- Will run new projects & ideas by co-chairs
- Cross collaboration with Co-Chairs of other Alumnae Alliance Council working groups
- Volunteer time commitment up to 5-10 hours per week through July 2019

### Desired criteria include:

- Alumna out of Sweet Briar anywhere from 1 – 15 years
- Collaborative and open-minded nature
- Ability to handle/facilitate multiple projects at once
- Must have strong communication and time-management skills
- Specific skill set needs may differ based on sub-committee

### Positions available:

**Development – 4 positions**

**Events - 4 positions**

**Outreach - 3 positions**

**Engagement - 4 positions**

For more information and to make a nomination, visit [sbc.edu/alumnae-development/alumnae-alliance](http://sbc.edu/alumnae-development/alumnae-alliance). ■

## YOU CAN HELP RECRUIT THE NEXT CLASS OF SWEET BRIAR WOMEN!

Sweet Briar is asking alumnae and friends of the College to personally refer prospective students to the Admissions Office through a new referral form that can be found on both the Admissions and Alumnae pages of our website as part of a referral initiative. There is no time commitment or follow-up required, so please keep it in mind as a simple but significant way to help Sweet Briar's growth and renaissance. Visit [sbc.edu/admissions/refer-a-student](http://sbc.edu/admissions/refer-a-student) to make your first referral today!

## All-Class Reunion 2018

**June 1-3, 2018**

All alumnae from all classes (and their families!) are welcome, and we will honor those classes ending in a "3" or an "8." Please mark your calendar now!

Registration will open online at [sbc.edu/reunion](http://sbc.edu/reunion) by the end of January. To register by phone, please call (800) 381-6131. This year's Reunion will feature:

Celebration Gala

Farm to Table Dinner

Class Meetings

Alumnae Colleges

Special Class Dinners

Tours of Campus

and much more!



Save the date for Reunion!  
June 1-3, 2018

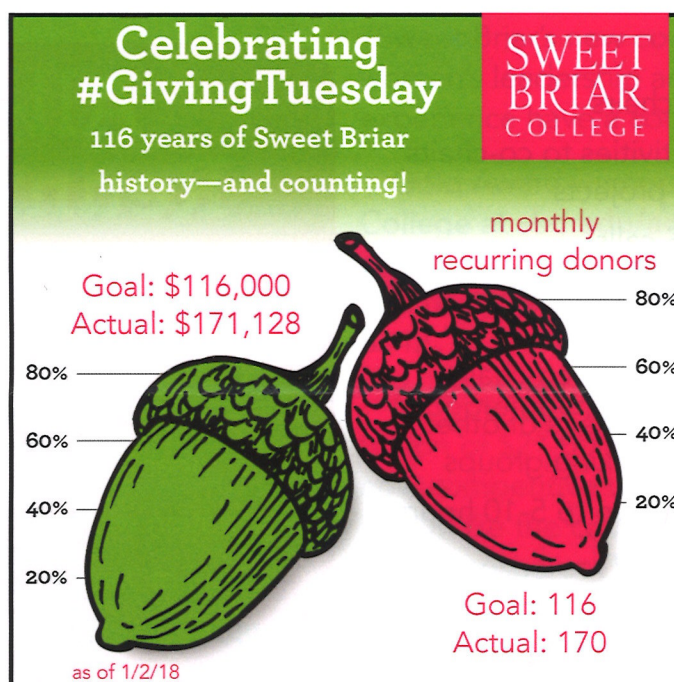
2017's Successful

# #GI♥INGTUESDAY

It's no secret that Sweet Briar women consistently achieve the goals they set for themselves. What hasn't yet been revealed until now is yet another goal that our alumnae and friends have exceeded: 2017's #GivingTuesday.

In the College's second year participating in this international day of philanthropy, Sweet Briar set a goal to raise \$116,000 and to increase the total number of monthly, recurring donors to 116. We chose 116 as a number for both goals to honor SBC's 116-year history.

This year, 507 alumnae and friends generously gave \$171,128 on #GivingTuesday. Not only



**507 gifts totaling  
\$171,128!**

did the total number of monthly, recurring donors increase to 116, it blew past that goal and reached 170! We are honored and inspired by the generosity of all of these donors.

Thank you to everyone who made a gift on #GivingTuesday!

We also appreciate the fantastic efforts of our volunteers who shared all of the updates from Sweet Briar College Now and Forever on Facebook. You all helped us reach our goal and offered some great words of encouragement, too.

Again, thank you to everyone who participated—every gift matters! ■