



# NEWS

A Newspaper for Faculty, Staff and Students

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## Commencement 2005

# 'Who are you?' Sullivan asks 2005 graduates

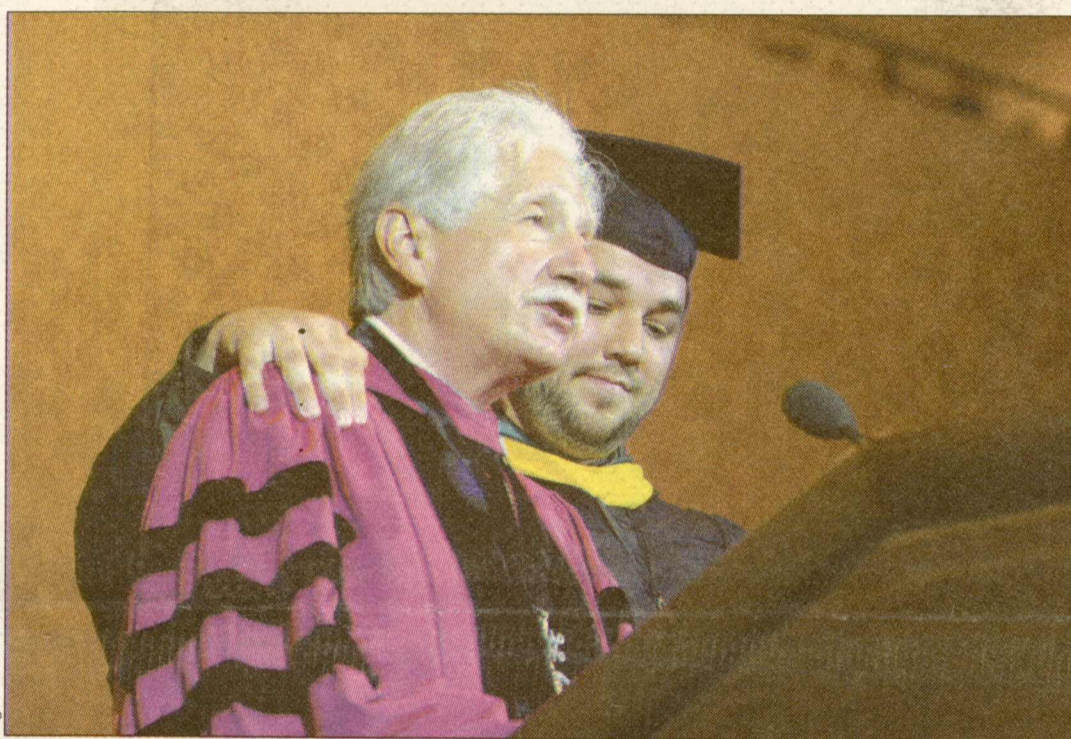
President tells senior class that 'your values are your destiny'

President Timothy J. Sullivan urged members of the College of William and Mary's class of 2005 to begin their post-college lives by trying to answer a not-so-simple question.

"Who are you?" Sullivan asked rhetorically at the College's commencement exercises on May 15. "It seems simple enough, I know, but even this question is harder to answer than you think."

Sullivan, who is serving out the last weeks of his 13-year presidency, is the first president of the College to serve as commencement speaker, according to Rector Susan Aheron Magill. She said that this year's speaker was chosen according to the usual criteria—"the most eloquent, the most meaningful, and the most appropriate speaker to address the class."

William and Mary awarded approximately 2,020 degrees on Sunday, including 1,350 to undergradu-



C.J. Gleason/VISCOM

Featured commencement speakers Sullivan and Kimble share a moment at the podium.

ates. Author and historian Sir John Elliott and linguist Margaret McKane Mauldin were presented with honorary doctorates as well.

President Sullivan's address made little reference to his 32-year career at William and Mary, which included service as a professor and later as dean of the Marshall-Wythe School of Law. Keep-

ing the focus on honorees, he spoke directly to the graduates in a message stressing the importance of values and advice from his own experiences laced with illustrations and quotations from a diverse group that spanned from Homer to Einstein and K.T. Oslin.

"We live in a culture that is dominated by a presump-

tion of entitlement. That culture makes us want to believe that effort and achievement are disjointed—and that's not right," he said to a standing-room-only gathering in William and Mary Hall. "In my life's experience, what is achieved is almost always an expression of what is valued and what is earned. Put another way—your values are

## Inside coverage

'Help others in need'  
Edwards tells law grads  
page 5

Remember Emilie, the  
sandwich-board girl?  
page 5

The next big name from  
William and Mary  
pages 6-7

At baccalaureate Tiefel  
takes God seriously  
page 8

Benji Kimble conquered  
nerves as senior speaker  
page 8

your destiny."

He called on the graduates to embrace four qualities:

■ Be honest: "To trifle with truth will corrupt everything else you try to do."

■ Be fearless: "To be in thrall to fear means that you are ruled by weakness and that almost always means bad decisions which will make a  
*Continued on page 4.*

## Inside W&M News

### Choir takes a long goodbye



A summer tour ensures that choir seniors can extend their William and Mary experiences.

—page 2

### Raises announced

College continues move toward its compensation goals.

—page 2

### A look at some writers



Three students who won English department prizes share their thoughts.

—page 10

## William and Mary fire brings community response

Members of the College community breathed a collective sigh of relief that no students were injured as a fire gutted the top floor of Preston Hall and caused extensive smoke damage to neighboring Giles Hall. Then they pitched in to assist students who had lost their homes and most of their possessions.

The fire, which broke out early in the afternoon of May 3, started in the attic of Preston Hall, a "language immersion house." Preliminary reports suggest it was caused by a faulty electrical vent in the third-floor exhaust fan.

Fire departments responded from the City of Williamsburg, James City and York counties, Newport News, Camp Peary and the Yorktown Naval Weapons Station. They were assisted by the Virginia State Police and Colonial Williamsburg security staff, in



Tim Jones

Fire caused the roof of Preston Hall to collapse.

addition to William and Mary police officers. Before emergency personnel left the scene, donations for housing and supplies already were being received by the College, assistance that continued for days.

"The William and Mary community is today grateful beyond words," said President Timothy J. Sullivan in the immediate aftermath. "We are grateful, first, that all of our students and staff are safe and for the emergency personnel whose wonderful work ensured their safety."

"We are also grateful for the outpouring of support and supplies from our friends, neighbors and local businesses. Your generosity has overwhelmed us and helped students affected by the fire begin returning their lives to normal."

*Continued on page 3.*

## Extending the William and Mary experience

# College's choir and chamber singers to embark on summer tour

Regardless of their degrees or final GPAs, recent graduates who spent the past four years here as members of the William and Mary Choir and Botetourt Chamber Singers might be among the most clever and most resourceful to receive diplomas this year. They have, through several years of planning and guidance from their conductors, figured out how to squeeze one last drop out of the William and Mary experience—a summer tour in the Balkans.

"Graduation is bittersweet, but it's nice to know that it isn't the end and that we can save our goodbyes to some of our closest friends for another three weeks," said tour manager and recent graduate Rebecca Nelson. "And we get to spend three weeks in four countries together."

The tour takes the choir and the "Bots" through 13 cities in Romania, Hungary, Slovenia and Croatia for nine concerts, affording undergrads and recent graduates alike ample time to enjoy what choir president and 2005 graduate Katherine Penick said is one of the most exciting aspects of the tour—spending time with close friends.

"It's a time of bonding. The thrill of being somewhere new with friends and doing what we love to do—sing together—it's a really cool way to celebrate being in the choir," she said.

An international tour every three years is a long-standing tradition for the William and Mary choir, but this year marks the first year the Botetourt Chamber Singers also will make the trip overseas with the choir—a perfect celebration for the group's 30th anniversary.

For many years, the choir traveled mostly in England. Then in 1996, when James Armstrong, the director of choirs, arrived, the group's itinerary was broadened.

"The students themselves have a strong say in where they'll go each tour. I tell them they can look the world over—the world is their oyster in a lot of ways. They inform themselves on places they may want to go, and then we agree," Armstrong said.

The first tour was to Western Eu-



Tim Jones

Armstrong leads the choir in a rehearsal prior to their leaving for the Balkans.

rope—Italy, Austria, Czech Republic and Hungary. The second tour three years ago took the group through Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Estonia. This year, it's the Balkans.

"The Balkans is an especially exciting place because of the folk-music traditions, particularly the singing and choral traditions that are indigenous that we in this country know a little bit about, but there is a whole world there we are unaware of," Armstrong said.

And there's no better way to learn than to go and experience firsthand, said Jamie Bartlett, associate director of choirs and director of the Botetourt Chamber Singers. Neither Bartlett nor Armstrong shies away from performing music in foreign languages, making the international experience all the more important.

"How can I get the students to understand more about the music they are singing—just telling them, 'Well, this is what it might be like,' when you can actually take them there?" Bartlett said. "They can come to a deeper understanding of the whole cultural atmosphere that goes along with singing a four-minute piece, and I think it helps them get closer to the music they are performing. I think that's really important, and whether it affects them this year or it's something they pull out in

three years, it's something tangible, not just dots on the page and me telling them to sing a syllable a certain way."

Like many places in the world, music is the culture in the Balkans, Armstrong said. "Singing is a part of life. It's not an adjunct. It's essentially the equivalent of food—you can't live without it," he said. Students will have no trouble being immersed in the music during the entire three-week trip, whether they are performing or not.

Venues on the tour range from the famous to the remote, though the tiny hillside churches often turn out to be the "diamonds in the rough," Nelson said. If past experience is any indication, audiences will be engaged.

"In places where music is a deep part of culture, it becomes patrimony. The hunger for music of all sorts is strong, whether it's foreign or native," Armstrong said.

"I think a lot of it is also the young people who participate," Bartlett added. "The reason that they sing is that they are good human beings. They tend to be receptive, generous and kind outwardly, so when you walk into a room and see a choir of people who are available, I think the audience is much more readily willing to accept them."

Armstrong and Bartlett have assembled repertoires that should satiate any audience. The choir's program includes American and European music and borrows from monastic tradition, following parts of a monastic day—the transition from darkness into light. Bartlett, too, chose pieces to fit the theme of darkness to light, including a good deal of contemporary American music. Both programs also include spirituals, crowd favorites throughout the world that are certain to delight audiences.

"We may not always have the biggest audience, but they are always so appreciative. Just that they are there to hear the William and Mary choirs—they are the best audiences," Nelson said.

"I think you can tell when an audience is engaged," Penick said. "Even if they can't understand the words you are saying, they understand. Music can transcend culture."

Sharing American musical traditions, and more generally, the immense talent of the William and Mary choirs with the world is, both Armstrong and Bartlett said, a responsibility.

"It's a matter of musical ambassadorship," Armstrong said. "It is incumbent on us as artists and members of a learning community that we share what it is that we have."

In return is the experience for students and teachers alike. There are the obvious opportunities, such as the exposure to new cultures and ideas, and there are the trivial benefits, such as the record stores stocked with choral music available nowhere else in the world.

But when all is said and done, it is, as Nelson and Penick said, about the relationships. It is a chance for William and Mary to meet the world and for the world to meet William and Mary. It is a chance for teachers to watch students learn and for students to share what they have learned. It is a chance to enjoy what it is that keeps the choirs so close—each other.

"They say you join choir for the music," Penick said, "but you stay because of the people."

by Tim Jones

## Raises announced: College keeps momentum toward competitive salaries

Faculty of the College of William and Mary will receive an average salary increase of 6 percent effective Nov. 25, and administrative and professional faculty and staff will receive average increases of 4.4 percent on the same date.

"I am delighted that the College and the state have been able to maintain the momentum this year toward securing equitable salaries for our employees. We should consider this an additional down payment for the future, as we rebuild the compensation structure of the campus," said President Timothy J. Sullivan.

The recently passed state budget included an increase of 4.8 percent for faculty, and William and Mary has supplemented that increase in order to continue to move salaries back to a competitive level with those of its peer institutions.

"The raise of 6 percent in November 2005 will follow an average 6 percent raise in November 2004," said Sullivan. "We estimate that the two-year increase will lift the average faculty salary from the 23rd percentile of the average salary paid by comparable universities to the 37th percentile. We must continue to push hard to reach the state's 60th-percentile goal."

Last year, the average salary increase for administrative and professional salaries was 5 percent, a figure that will be bolstered by an additional 4.4 increase in Novem-

ber 2005. The College is supplementing a 4 percent increase provided by the state by an additional 0.4 percent this year.

Matching the average increase of the administrative and professional faculty, the average increase for staff will be 4.4 percent. The state provided a 3 percent salary increase, plus a \$50 supplement for each year of service for staff employees who have five years or more of state employment. The supplement will be included in each employee's base salary. The overall average increase for staff will be 4.4 percent, the same as for administrative and professional faculty.

In addition to the funds designated to enhance compensation, the College also has been able to allocate \$2.5 million for increased student financial assistance over the two-year period. Other areas receiving incremental support include plant operations and maintenance, as well as funds to bolster critical programs, purchase instructional and research equipment and advance faculty and student research initiatives have been allocated. The total pool invested in William and Mary for the coming year will amount to \$7 million.

"Last year we were able to invest a total of \$4.5 million in our programs, and thus the total for two years is \$11.5 million," said Vice President for Finance Sam Jones. "We are pushing forward steadily on the Board of

Visitor's five-year plan to increase budgetary support for the institution to the point that it is adequate to fund our core programs."

This investment follows a period during which William and Mary responded to reduced support from the state by both cutting funding for programs and activities and by increasing tuition. From 2001 to 2004, the state's support for the College's annual academic budget was reduced by more than \$14 million.

"The Board of Visitors' five-year investment plan recognizes the impact of this reduced support and the need to use all resources at our disposal to protect and enhance the quality of college programs," said Sullivan. The president stressed that additional state support as well as College-generated revenue increases will be necessary to reach the goal of adequate funding for core educational programs over a six-year period, as envisioned by the recently passed restructuring plan.

"Ultimately, the vitality of Virginia's system of higher education is dependent on the reinvigoration of a partnership among the Commonwealth, students and parents, and colleges and universities. With the active support of all parties we will be able to ensure that all Virginians can continue to enjoy outstanding public higher education," said Sullivan.

by William T. Walker

## Community responds to exam-week fire at the College

Continued from front.

Even as the fire burned, students were being comforted by College administrators. Sullivan and Sam Sadler, vice president for student affairs, led a cadre of officials inquiring as to immediate needs and meeting them. From the students' perspective, the most pressing concern involved final examinations. Presumed destroyed were notes and computers, along with papers. Other losses included passports, clothes, wallets and cell phones. Regular announcements from Sadler helped assure students that their needs were being met. He told them that plans had been made for temporary housing at the Governor's Inn in Williamsburg, that information-technology technicians were already setting up computers and a phone bank for them, that a shuttlebus service would be started at 3 p.m. and that Provost Geoff Feiss had given assurances that faculty would be flexible in working with them. It later was decided that exams could be rescheduled or that existing semester grades could be accepted.

Meanwhile, students embraced each other and inquired about classmates and friends. Many talked about where they were when the fire broke out. Ed Moreno ('07), a third-floor resident at Preston, said he was alerted by housekeeping personnel, who urged him to evacuate. Sulaiman Bah ('07) said he thought it was "a drill" when housekeepers alerted him, so he left his immigration papers.

Amy Weiss ('07) was in her first-floor room working on a paper when she was evacuated. "I had noticed the smell," she said, "but I just assumed someone had been cooking and had burned something again. When RAs (resident assistants) came and tried to get us to move, we wanted to stay put. I was working on a paper."

Another resident, Selena Foo ('05), sat outside the building worrying about her research. "After we knew everyone was safe, our first concern was really our school things," she said. "All my friends were obsessed. I had a final paper due at 4 p.m."

As they spoke, resident assistants and staff members helped to organize inventories. One RA, D.J. Yu ('05), when asked why everyone seemed relatively calm, pointed toward Sadler and Sullivan. "Timmy J. is here," she said. "Sam is here. They obviously care about us. We know our professors are great and they're going to help us. That is why we do not panic."

Response of the local business community was swift. Within minutes of hearing about the fire, officials at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation offered



David Williard

Above: Numerous members of the College community found themselves embracing when they were informed that all students were safe and accounted for. Right: Even before the fire was out, College administrators, including President Sullivan, were reassuring students and planning for their welfare.



David Williard

temporary housing to the more than 140 students who were displaced by the blaze. Wal-Mart and Farm Fresh were also quick to help. Each donated sizable amounts of items such as toiletries, clothes and shoes. Ukrop's sent over food and other items. Many other businesses brought bags of supplies, and it seemed everyone in town wanted to provide support—including Williamsburg City Manager Jack Tuttle, who joined Sullivan and Sadler at the scene.

Bob Hershberger, executive vice president of the Williamsburg Area Chamber of Commerce, said his office received overwhelming responses from its members.

"I'm very much proud of how our community has responded," he said. "I think it's a testimony to the folks that live in this community and how much the College of William and Mary and the student body mean to them."

The Chamber of Commerce sent out an e-mail announcement advising its members about the situation and asking for whatever support could be provided. Nearly everyone, Hershberger said, wanted to provide help. For example, Prime Outlets granted each student affected by the fire a \$25 gift certificate. The Tommy Hilfiger outlet offered a \$75 gift certificate.

### Students thank their 'friends and neighbors' in Williamsburg community

The following letter was written to "friends and neighbors in the Williamsburg Community by students affected by the fire. —Ed.

*Of all the residents of Preston and Giles halls, most of us would probably agree that this is the hardest letter we have ever written. There are no words strong enough, no script elegant enough to truly capture and express our sincere gratitude and appreciation for what you have done. You have given us not only your belongings but also your tears, your compassion, your prayers—all in all, your hearts. Tragedy struck us and devastation faced us, yet we did not despair. That is because of you. Anxiety seized us and fear crept upon us, yet you pulled us through with your caring and kindness. You helped us handle the pain, shun the sorrow. How could we have ever made it through this ordeal without you? The sheer magnitude of your generosity has overwhelmed us and filled us with great hope. If ever anyone doubts the goodness of mankind, they should simply take a look at the people of Williamsburg, Virginia, and they would know true humanity. Your thoughtfulness and charity will never be forgotten. Whether strangers on the street or students on campus, you have shown the true colors of our wonderful town, and they are beautiful. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you.*

—Residents of Preston and Giles halls

Busch Gardens Williamsburg and Water Country USA, owned by Anheuser-Busch, donated \$5,000.

Tim Andrews, director of public relations for the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, explained the generosity. He said, "We did what any family member would do under these types of circumstances, and that is to extend any help that we can. It's extraordinary to see the way the community and people pull together in times of difficulty. It's a reminder to all of us on the remarkable and wonderful nature of the Williamsburg community."

by Brian Whitson and David Williard

## Student EMTs assist frontline responders during fire at Preston Hall

Bethany Spector ('06) was shopping at the outlets when she thought to check her voice mail. Jason Fransiak ('05) was out for a run on Duke of Gloucester street when he saw the smoke.

Spector and Fransiak are among the 10 or so William and Mary students who serve as volunteer emergency medical technicians (EMTs) with the Williamsburg Emergency Medical Service. Both dropped what they were doing to respond to the May 3 fire at Preston Hall.

"I came back and parked kind of illegally," Spector said. "My EMT uniform was in the wash and my turnout gear was at the station, so I just put on running shorts and a T-shirt and ran over."

Despite the fortunate absence of medical emergencies, there was plenty to keep the EMTs busy.

"My primary job is to help with the recovery process," said Fransiak, a senior biology major from Chesapeake and a two-year veteran of the EMT squad. He explained that firefighters can stay in a burning building only for a certain amount of time before they are required to come out to rest and see an EMT for a brief physical checkup.

Fransiak helped run checks on about 10 firefighters.

The student EMT involvement was just one part of

**My EMT uniform was in the wash and my turnout gear was at the station, so I just put on running shorts and a T-shirt and ran over.**

—Bethany Spector

a multifaceted response from all segments of the campus community. It seemed that the hundreds of people asked the same two questions: "Is anyone hurt?"—then, "How can I help?" There were organized gestures. Philip DiBenedetto of ARAMARK not only brought out snacks for the students but also extended a free meal to the displaced residents—including those who were not on the food plan. William and Mary students carried bags filled

with clothes and toiletries to each dorm's duty office to be sorted and distributed by residence life workers.

And there were the dozens, maybe hundreds, of informal, spontaneous offers of assistance from members of the William and Mary community who wanted to take care of their own. A professor made a point of letting administrators know that he had an empty bedroom at home and could house, feed and clothe a student or two. President Timothy J. Sullivan circulated among the students, offering support and reassurance, saying, "We're going to make everything as right as we can for you." One student hugged her friend, asking, "Do you need something to wear?"

EMTs and other volunteers were on the scene until early evening, assisting firefighters, helping to control traffic, rolling up hoses and cleaning up.

"Food service was just great, bringing out food and water for the firefighters," Fransiak said. "But some of the firefighters, the ones running the pumpers, couldn't leave their posts, so I helped to take the food and water around to them."

by Joe McClain

## Commencement 2005

# Sullivan urges pursuit of honesty, fearlessness, gentleness, tenacity

*Continued from front.*

moral desert of your life.”

■ **Be gentle:** “By gentleness I mean a quality that cultivates a serene self-containment and which reflects self-discipline.”

**For the complete text of Sullivan’s commencement speech, see page 9.**

■ **Be tenacious:**

“In the world you are about to enter, you will find no shortage of people with brains, winning ways and great ideas. What you will find in short supply are those with the tenacity to stick

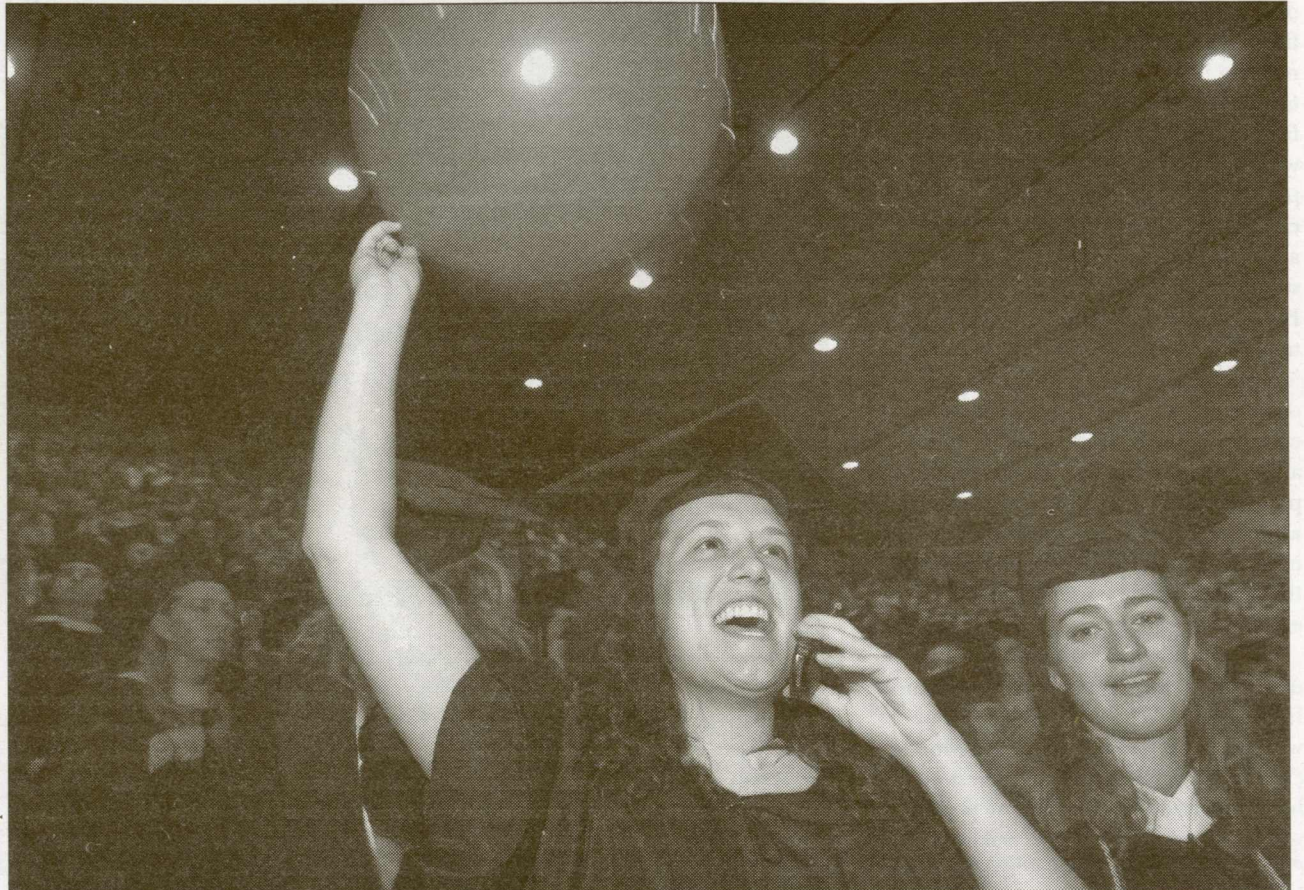
to a plan.”

The traditional student remarks were delivered by Benjamin (Benji) Kimble, who cited work as a tour guide for the admission office as being one of his most rewarding experiences, especially the opportunity to tell prospective students of the “big names” associated with the College.

“So I want to tell members of the Class of 2005, you are the next big name,” he said. “Future generations at William and Mary will mention your name with George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Jon Stewart.”

During the ceremony, Sullivan presented the traditional College awards recognizing excellence in scholarship and service to the community. (See article below).

by Joe McClain



Members of the class of 2005 celebrate commencement as they anticipate the start of formal ceremonies.

## College awards are given during commencement exercises

### Lord Botetourt Medal

**Dimitar Vlassarev** received the Lord Botetourt Medal from the College. The award was established in 1772 by Norborne Berkeley, Baron de Botetourt, Governor of Virginia. The Lord Botetourt Medal is awarded “for the honor and encouragement of literary merit” and is given to the graduating senior who has attained the greatest distinction in scholarship.

Vlassarev graduated with a double major in physics and mathematics. He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, from which he was awarded the John McKnight prize. In nominating Vlassarev for the award, a faculty member referred to him as “one of the most brilliant students I have had the honor of working with.”

Vlassarev’s research, “Impact of Large-Scale Substrate Roughness on Giant Magnetoresistance Multilayers,” has been presented at a major international magnetism conference and was part of a submitted publication.

### James Frederic Carr Memorial Cup

**Jason M. Fransiak** received the James Frederic Carr Memorial Cup. The award is given to a graduating senior who best combines the qualities of character, scholarship and leadership, the same qualities that characterized James Frederic Carr, who entered William and Mary in 1914, served in World War I and lost his life before he could return to college.

“It’s not an understatement, Jason, to say that this community has benefited from the way you have lived out your life during your years here,” President Timothy J. Sullivan said in presenting the award to Fransiak.

A pre-med student who ranks near the top of his class and received a bachelor of science degree in biology, Jason is a mem-

ber of Phi Beta Kappa. He has conducted research on cancer treatment and was president of his fraternity and also served as president of the Council of Fraternity Affairs.

In addition, Jason served as a volunteer with the Williamsburg Fire and Rescue Squad and was on duty as an EMT May 3 and responded to the residence hall fire at Preston Hall.

“You are the kind of student for whom the Carr Cup was meant, and it is a special privilege for me to present it to you,” Sullivan said.

### Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award

Three people received the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award this year. It recognizes the characteristics of heart, mind and conduct as evincing a spirit of love for and helpfulness to others.

**Alicia Grace Browder** received the Sullivan award at this year’s commencement. While Browder’s academic achievement is impressive, it is her spirit that has captivated the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS). One nominator wrote of Browder, “She has been such a contributor to our community that it is difficult to imagine it without her.”

Browder, who received a master’s degree in marine science, is highly respected by her peers at VIMS. In nominating her, one of her peers explained, “She is always the first to volunteer to help with fieldwork that is not her own and then is instrumental in its success.” Browder is often described with phrases such as “conscientious and kind,” “so willing to help,” “self-sacrificing” and “brings happiness to others.”

Perhaps the best description of Browder comes from one nominator’s words. “Grace is quick to bring joy and laughter to any situation, and to help shed

light and find the good side of any challenge. Her enthusiasm and kind spirit make any interaction with her a valuable one. I cannot think of any single person who exudes heart and compassion the way she does.”

**Rev. Dr. William Sidney Parks** has served the College as the Baptist campus minister for the past 22 years. He will be leaving the position soon to become a chaplain at Sentara-Norfolk General Hospital. Because of his quiet demeanor, many members of the William and Mary community may not know Parks. While he has helped countless Baptist students explore their faith journey, Parks’ career is noteworthy for the extent to which his ministry has extended beyond them to the entire campus.

One of the things that has distinguished his tenure is his special ability to be truly ecumenical and to always respect the boundaries that define religious expression in a public university.

Parks helped to develop and to lead the memorial services in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, and following the tragic loss of alumnus David Brown, an astronaut who perished in the Columbia space shuttle disaster.

**George Srour**, who completed a major in government and a minor in international relations, exhibited his deep concern for others through the Christmas in Kampala project he undertook in the fall. Profoundly moved by the plight of orphans in Uganda he met while working with the United Nations, Srour returned home committed to building a school for the youngsters. People at the orphanage were unaware of what he was attempting until he arrived at Christmas and provided the funds needed to build the school.

While Srour has received considerable attention for some of the projects he has initiated, there have been numerous other ways he has displayed the extent of his commitment to others—most of which have been private and were not witnessed. For example, Srour is devoted to a special needs friend and has frequently, at his own expense, traveled to Special Olympics competitions so the two of them could compete together.

### The Thatcher Prize

**Amanda Lynn Howard** received the Thatcher Prize for Excellence in Graduate and Professional Study. The award honors the 21st Chancellor of the College, Margaret the Lady Thatcher, and is presented annually to recognize an outstanding student from among those completing advanced degrees.

Howard received her doctorate in American studies. Her major field is 20th-century cultural history and her minor is documentary, film and gender studies. Her dissertation examines ways tenants cross racial and ethnic lines to challenge the state to make public housing into “home,” and it argues the need to look at local settings to understand the public housing program and its impact. Howard is the author of 14 presentations and publications.

Howard also has directed the College’s Keio Summer program through which students from Keio University in Japan study at William and Mary each summer. She has taught in the College’s American studies and film studies programs. She has also served as a president’s aide and is a recipient of the Ewell Award for Service to the College.

Howard recently became the associate director of the Corella and Bertram F. Bonner Center for Civic Engagement at the University of Richmond.

Commencement 2005

## Edwards urges law school graduates to help eliminate poverty

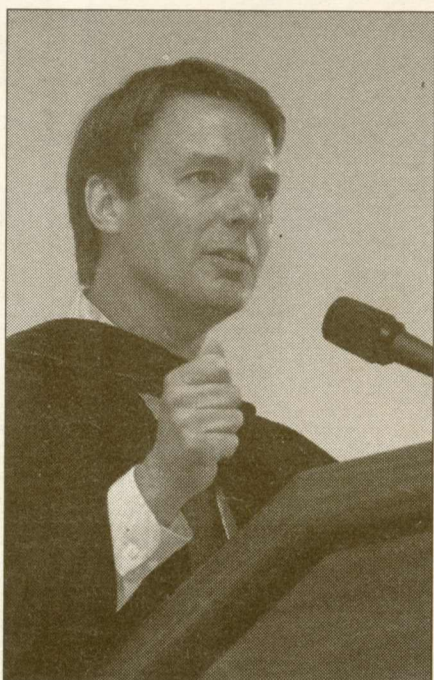
With the 2004 presidential campaign behind him and his professional career now focused on ending poverty in America, John Edwards issued a simple challenge May 15 to the 200 graduates of the William and Mary School of Law: Help others in need.

The former U.S. senator and vice presidential candidate told graduates they can make a difference, whether through spending one week a year offering free legal services to those who have lost everything or volunteering regularly at a church or local homeless shelter.

"I am here to ask you to join me in working to eradicate poverty in America," Edwards said. "It is time for you ... to lead us in a cause that's bigger than all of us. If we believe that there is dignity in hard work, then poverty has no place in our country."

Edwards, who represented North Carolina for one term in the U.S. Senate, was selected in 2004 as Sen. John Kerry's Democratic Party running mate for the White House. The University of North Carolina School of Law announced earlier this year that Edwards would lead a new Center on Poverty, Work and Opportunity.

Edwards, who was born in Seneca, S.C., and raised in a two-room house in Robbins, N.C., told William and Mary Law School graduates about his own



Steve Salpukas

Edwards said we must shine light on poverty in order to address it.

humble childhood. His father had to borrow \$50 to get him out of the hospital when he was born.

"My father worked hard, my mother worked hard, and I worked hard," he said. "Eventually, I was the first in my family to go to college. I continued to work and save, and I was able to achieve

success I never thought possible. We were lucky, but for other young people who grew up with me, I saw things turn out differently."

A layoff meant someone would have to sell their house. An illness for some would mean wiping out their life savings and closing their family businesses. One tragedy after another meant families could never build something better for their kids, Edwards said.

"In a nation of our wealth and our prosperity, to have 36 million working full-time and living in poverty every day is wrong."

Edwards asked the approximately 2,000 people attending the ceremony in the Sunken Garden to focus on four things to eradicate poverty in America.

First, it is time to finally shine a bright light on the problem, Edwards said. Good people from all different backgrounds and beliefs care about the issue. "We need to put this back on the national agenda," he said.

Second, it is time to raise the minimum wage in the United States. People do not want a free ride, they want a fair chance to succeed, he said.

Third, the country needs to provide health care and child care for everyone who needs it.

"Let's strengthen the foundation for families that work," he said.

Finally, it is time to make sure families are not just getting by but getting ahead.

"Today, more than 25 percent of America's working families are living on the edge of poverty," Edwards said. "They can't survive more than three months if something happens to their income. Let's help them save, get an education and buy a house."

Before speaking to graduates on Sunday, Edwards met with a small group of students and members of the media at the law school. While his name has come up as a likely presidential candidate in 2008, Edwards said that decision has not been made.

Right now, Edwards said, his primary focus is on the health of his wife, Elizabeth, who was diagnosed with breast cancer shortly after the November election, and his work at UNC.

Edwards also spoke about his relationship with William and Mary President-Elect Gene R. Nichol, who as dean of the law school in Chapel Hill hired him this spring to run the poverty center. Nichol will succeed retiring President Timothy J. Sullivan this July.

"I know Gene well, and he is a good man," he said. "He's a strong presence and he's somebody who speaks out about issues he cares about. I think he'll do a terrific job here."

by Brian Whitson

## Remember Emilie Dubois? Sandwich-board girl completes four years at College

Remember Emilie Dubois—the sandwich-board girl? Yes, the high school senior from North Smithfield, R.I., who was wait-listed for admission to William and Mary in May 2001. She is the one who rode a train for 13 hours to get to Williamsburg and then paraded around campus with a sandwich-board sign pleading her case to become a member of the class of 2005.

Well, guess what. The class of 2005 has graduated, and Dubois was among the 1,700 young women and men wearing mortarboards in William and Mary Hall.

President Timothy J. Sullivan admitted the plucky young lady, whose stunt led to worldwide publicity and an appearance with Bryant Gumbel on CBS' "The Early Show." Once on campus, Dubois donated the sign to the admission office, discovered anonymity in the freshman class and got down to the work at hand.

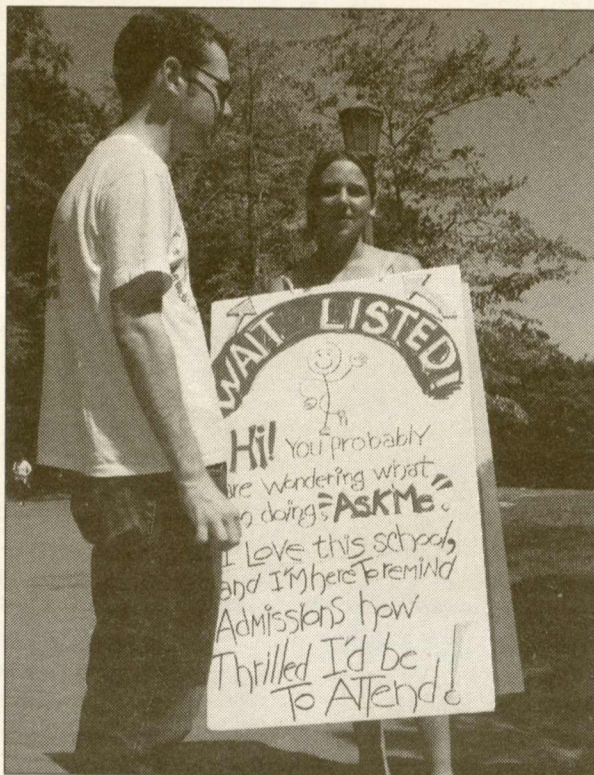
Technically, Dubois will receive her diploma later this summer, once she completes independent study related to Incan history, but rest assured, this young lady has done the College proud—both in the classroom and out. She also has matured and looks back at her trip to Williamsburg with some mixed emotions.

"In some ways I think I don't know the girl who carried the sandwich-board sign, but in other ways, I know that she's still there," said Dubois recently. "What motivated the stunt was my intense desire to be a part of this College, and I still stand up strongly for what I believe."

One of the things that Dubois believes in is helping others. For the past two years she has served as a residence hall adviser, including a stint for the past year as head resident of the Bryan Complex.

"This enabled me to get to know a wide cross section of the student body and to give back to the community by helping others along," said Dubois. She is also active in Planned Parenthood activities as a member of Voices for Planned Parenthood and as a volunteer phone counselor. She also has planned a summer trip to conduct a study of reproductive health among the indigenous people of South America.

Dubois' interest in the Indians of South America arose from her studies with Kris Lane, the David B. And



William T. Walker

Dubois makes her case for admission in 2001.

Carolyn D. Wakefield associate professor of history and international studies. Lane recruited her for a summer service and educational trip to Ecuador.

"Our mission that summer was to teach English to the indigenous tribes of the Ecuadorian Andes," said Lane. "That fall Emilie and the five other students on the trip also completed an independent study based on their travels—a project that led to another independent study for Emilie."

She returned from South America with a growing interest in an arcane form of Incan writing called *quipu*, an Incan form of record-keeping consisting of a strings tied to a central rope. Knots tied in the strings recorded

data and language, and scholars have conducted research for years trying unsuccessfully to decipher the code.

"Emilie's independent study this summer will examine all of the various methods that scientists and linguists have used to try to decode the messages," said Lane. "She's already put on an exhibit in the library explaining the knots and the various theories. She's a great student and a joy to work with."

Although Dubois is completing a difficult double major in history and psychology and expects to graduate magna cum laude, she still has had time for extracurricular activities. She is a member of Chi Omega, and for two years, she ran track for the Tribe. Dubois admits that her short stature—and correspondingly short legs—limited her athletic success.

"My goal was not to come in last, but I always had to struggle to beat the last-place finishers. The most important thing, however, is that I did meet some of the best friends that I will ever have running track," she recalled.

At the moment, Dubois is focused on completing her independent study and planning a move to New York City at the end of the summer. With the assistance of the Career Center, she met alumnus Lanier Saperstein ('92), who helped her land an interview with his law firm, Simpson Thacher & Bartlett, one of the city's largest.

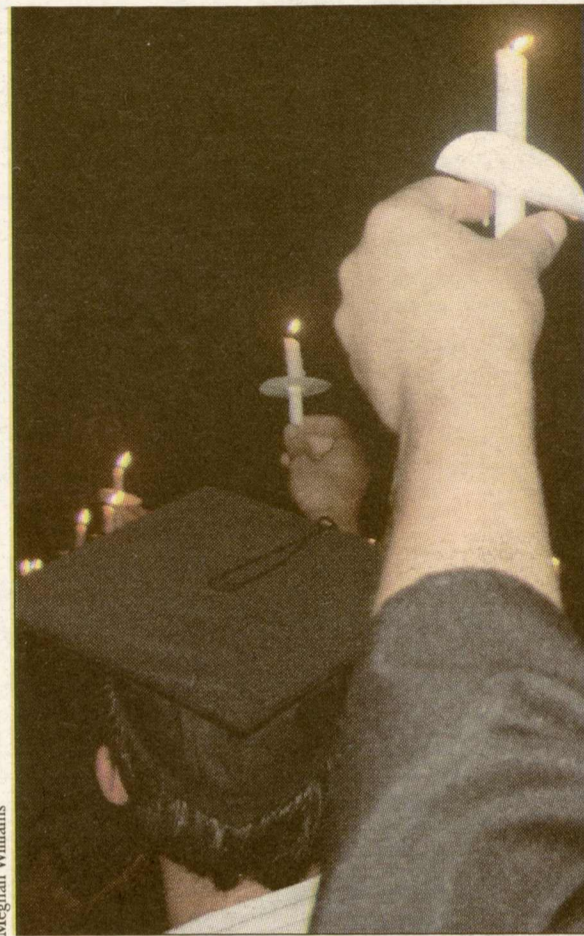
"I plan to work as a legal aide to see if I like the profession and then go on to law school if I do," said Dubois. The firm has an excellent record of placing its successful legal aides in law schools in the Northeast.

Dubois looks forward to being in the big city, but she knows that she will miss the College.

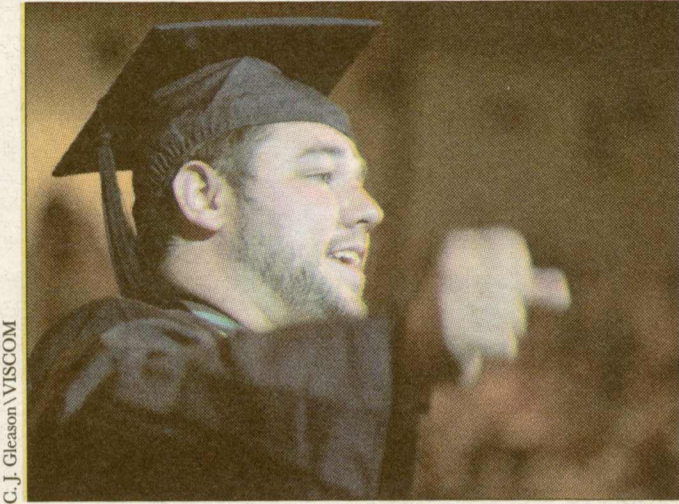
"The other night, just before my last final exam, I was doing the typical William and Mary thing—studying in the library," she said. "When the librarian came through ringing the bell to send us all home at 3 a.m., I began to think about how special it's been to be a part of the College. I've been able to grow intellectually, meet many caring faculty members and be a member of a strong community. It's all very rewarding, because here at William and Mary you feel that everyone is rooting for you."

by William T. Walker

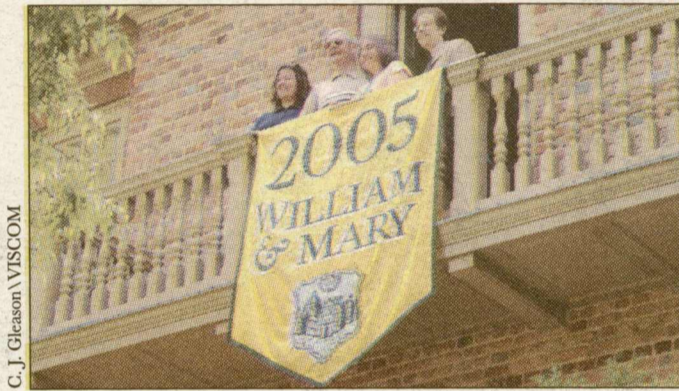
### Commencement 2005



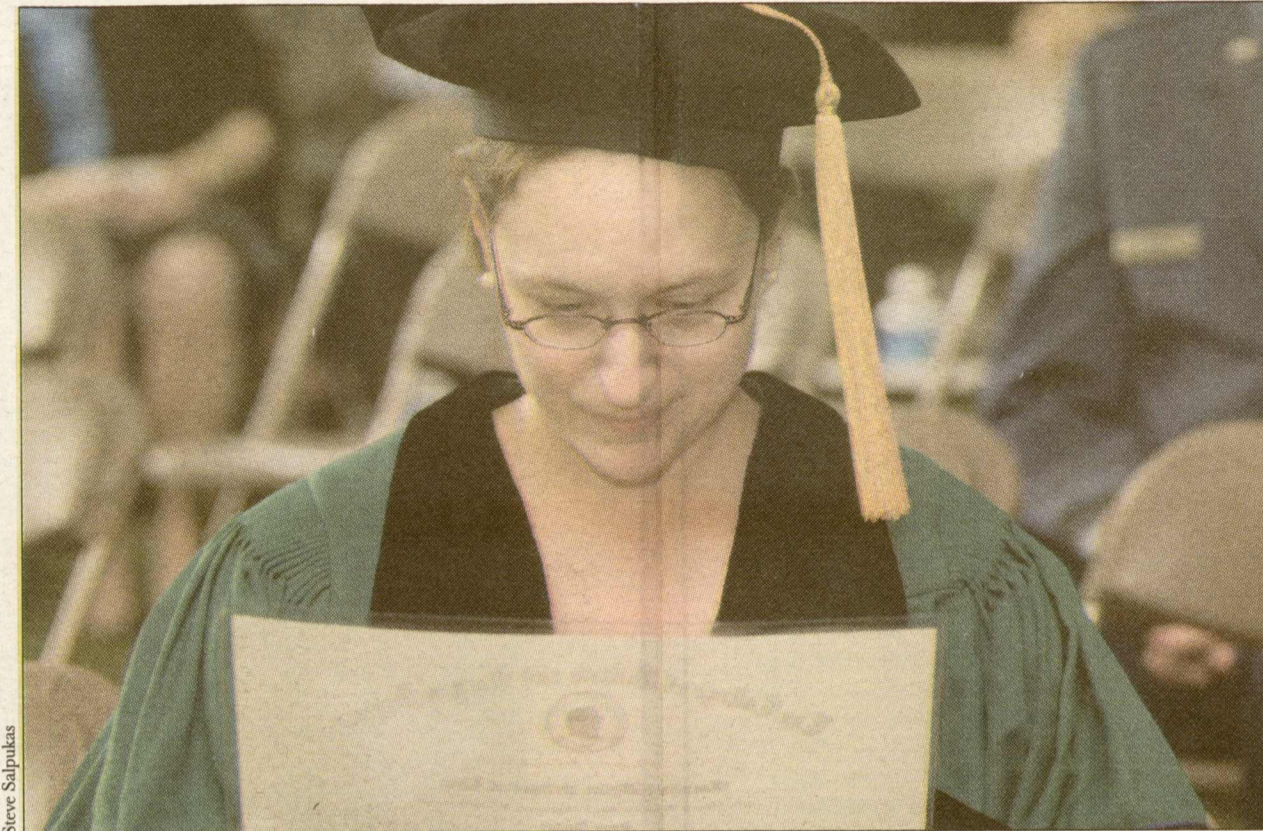
Meghan Williams



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C. J. Gleason/VISCOM



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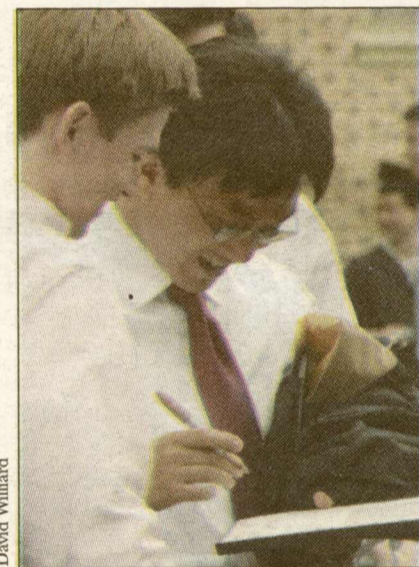
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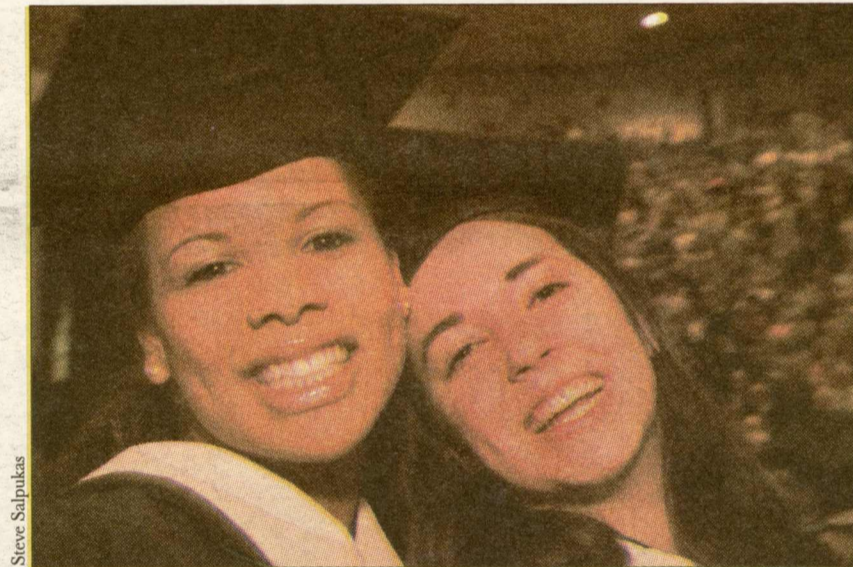
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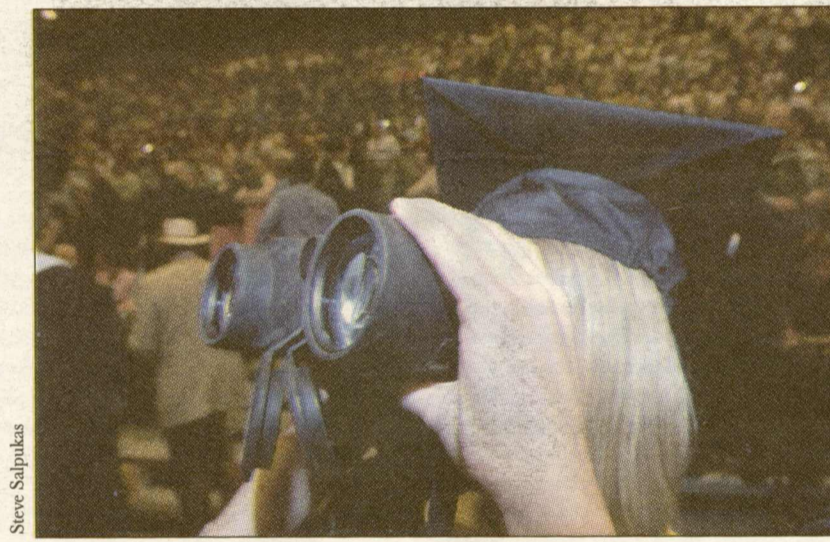
## The next big name from William and Mary

*Following is an excerpt from Benjamin Kimble's 2005 student graduation speech. The entire text will be posted on the Student Impacts Web page at [www.wm.edu](http://www.wm.edu). —Ed.*

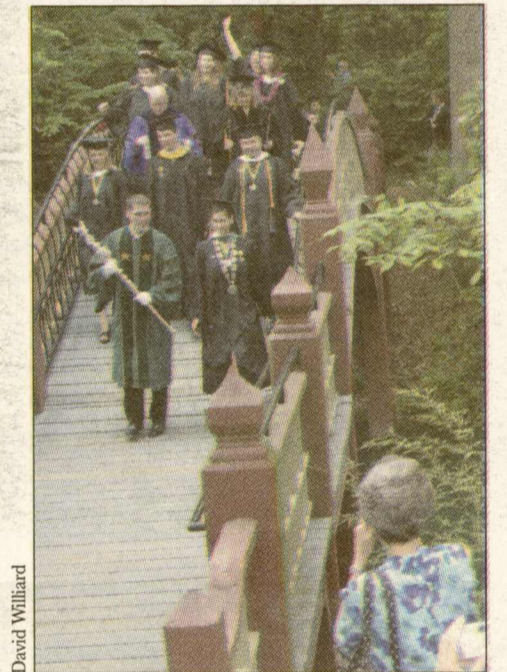
Today, we are on the verge of something big. Just as the big names in William and Mary's history once did, we now embark on the path that destiny has laid out for us: a destiny that bleeds green and gold and wears a tricorn hat. Class of 2005, you are the next big name from William and Mary! Years from now, tour guides will mention your names along with George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Jon Stewart. They will laud your accomplishments and celebrate your accolades. Future William and Mary students will wonder if they are sitting in a seat you once sat in as a student at the College. Sitting to your right or your

left could be the future winner on "American Idol," a future award-winning author, a future president of the United States or even a future National Football League Most Valuable Player. I foresee Tribe fans in the future enjoying many a Friday-night championship football game under the lights of the Lang Campbell Memorial Coliseum. Or better yet, you could become a future president at the College of William and Mary, where you will forever be immortalized by your childhood nickname followed by your middle initial. ...

I love this place. I love its reputation and traditions. I love its rich history and promising future. And I love you all like family. Graduates, my family, live with honor, strive for excellence and become what you are destined to be—the next big name from William and Mary.



Steve Sulpinkas



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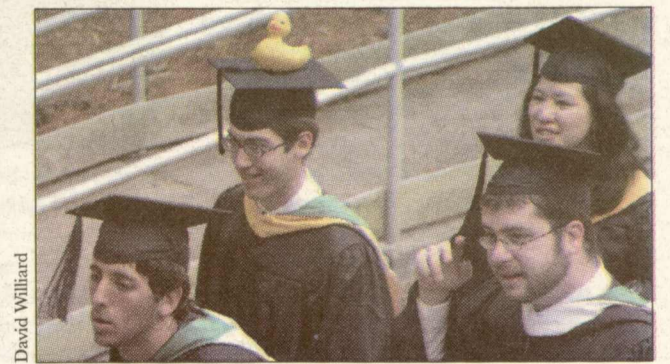
Steve Sulpinkas



Meghan Williams



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## Commencement 2005

### Tiefel hoped to generate a pause during baccalaureate address

As he prepared the College's 2005 baccalaureate address, Professor of Religious Studies Hans Tiefel envisioned invoking one sacred moment of communal reflection. Certainly his address would be "laden with ethical ideas," he said; for 30 years, he had been a teacher of

ethics at the College. Certainly he would talk about God; he is a religious man.

"My speech will be about trying to get a perspective on our future," he said. "These graduates are young people beginning their professional and vocational lives. I think one needs to pause before one jumps in, and I want to do some of that pausing with them."

During that pause, Tiefel would have them think ahead 50 years and ask themselves, "When you look back on your life from the future, knowing that not just you but also God

will look at it, what will make both God and you glad? Perhaps he can, in the process, help them consider an observation about people that keeps adding to what he calls his "own pessimism" about the world—a pessimism that stems from "the bad choices we have made and continue to make."

"Both individually and nationally, we are inclined to confuse what we want with what God may want," he said. We need to differentiate, he believes. If we do not, when we do look back, our answers may reveal only despair.

Tiefel's pessimism reflects many symptoms. As he listed some, he called them "worrisome things." There is the U.S. involvement in the Middle East. He has spoken bluntly against the preemptive invasion and subsequent war in forums on Iraq and in speeches dating back to the initial mobilization.

"We should not be in the Middle East with our troops today," he said. "We are occupiers. What we are involved in now is totally unjustified and inexcusable. We are just causing so much grief and suffering in the world—so much death."

### Kimble admits nervousness as he prepared student commencement speech

Few, if any, in the William and Mary community who have met Benji Kimble ('05) would describe him as nervous. In

A transcript of Kimble's senior speech will be posted on the Student Impacts Web page, available at [www.wm.edu](http://www.wm.edu).

fact, many might wonder whether his confidence ever falters. He has been hard to miss on campus for the last four years. Whether leading a tour group, helping oversee intramural sports

or painting his chest with the "B" of Tribe Pride at football games, Kimble usually has been front and center in whatever activity he participated. Even the 2005 commencement ceremony would be no different as Kimble served as the student speaker.

But he insists that he was nervous before he was chosen for that honor, when he had to face the commencement committee. "I was terrified going in there," he admitted. "They had something I really, really wanted."

Fortunately, Kimble was given what he



Tiefel helps the audience "take God seriously" as he delivered the College's baccalaureate speech.

He mentioned the Bush administration, which he called "bad on ever so many counts, not just on the occupation of Iraq but in regard to the environment, in matters of tax law, in failing to support the most dependent and needy citizens among us." He cited U.S. President George W. Bush specifically. "He is the president of the rich; he ought to be the president of us all," he said. "He seems to have given up on the best in us and brings out the worst in us."

His list included people who invoke end-times theology to inform political decisions. He is impatient with "fundamentalist Christians" who will underwrite "a gung-ho foreign policy supporting Israel uncritically because they think that the vindication of Israel to its rightful place is somehow going to bring the Messiah and the end of the age. They think in terms of 'forcing God's hand into the establishment of the Kingdom of God.'" In so doing, they "forget all about what Jesus really taught," he said.

As he talked, he considered topics he has addressed in his classes. "I teach a course on ecology, and I think the country has no sense of global warming and the dangers to our future and to our descendants," he said. "Politically, we have no sense of the limits of our own powers," he added. "We want other nations, whom we call rogue states, to have no access to weapons of mass destruction—even though the United States has 'more and better weapons

than anyone else." He said he is amazed at how we deceive ourselves with language. In business, terms such as "downsizing" point away from the human element. In warfare, terms such as "collateral damage" serve to mask death and suffering.

Even as his list grew, however, he resisted pointing to the issue underlying his lingering sense of sadness. Finally, he said, "I am pessimistic in the sense that I think we are only being true to ourselves—to the worst in ourselves."

In essence, helping people to differentiate between what they want and what God wants is all Tiefel ever hoped to accomplish, whether in his classrooms or in his speeches. If the baccalaureate were part of a commencement address, God—in part, at least—could be left out, he said. A humanistic approach gives people "human reason, human dignity, rights traditions and notions of justice," he said—certainly plenty of fodder for Tiefel to bring ethics into the discussion. But, as a religious man, he knows that reason alone can only give "clear thinking."

"To know what is important we need to rely on the experiences of things that really count in our lives—what we find to be supportive, constructive and good," he said. Getting married, having children, enjoying the work that one does and having friends are among his examples. For believers, worship of God is essential.

In the future, many graduates will look back without God, he knows. Some will have given themselves to other pursuits, such as power or beauty. "There are all kinds of good things that are of a limited good, and to devote ultimate concern to them is really sad," he said. Others will have carried belief and patriotism hand in hand. To those, he would call to mind where Jesus stood or of where Jewish tradition leads: "We should imitate God but not God's judging, not God's anger," Tiefel said. "I think the point is to let God do his own, or her own, judging."

As to where he stands: "Frankly, our lives are to be shown to God. In sober moments we all judge our personal and our communal lives, but believers confess that we are not alone in looking at our lives. The conviction that a loving, just and demanding God scrutinizes us creates a different perspective for how we see and judge our own lives."

At the baccalaureate service, he would say just that. "It is a religious service," he explained. "It's a different ballgame with different assumptions. You take God seriously."

by David Wilhard



Kimble never has been one to be shy or nervous at William and Mary.

wanted—the chance to say the last words to the rest of the class of 2005 before degrees were conferred upon them by President Timothy J. Sullivan. "William and Mary

has been such an amazing experience. ... I really feel this is part of my family."

Kimble's speech would complement one by Sullivan, who was asked to give the main commencement address as one of his final official acts as College president. Kimble lauded the choice of Sullivan as speaker: "I love that we have someone who has given his heart and soul to the College his entire life." He added that sharing the stage with Sullivan added to his excitement. "Being part of the class that's graduating at the same time he's leaving—I think that's the coolest," Kimble said.

Kimble had been thinking about the topic for his speech for more than a year, since last year's main speaker, comedian Jon Stewart ('84), was announced. Kimble was part of a group that spent time discussing the choices and mentioned ideas about what they would say if given the chance to speak to graduating students. He recalled one person saying he would advise graduates to avoid acting young and idealistic and instead realize that they do not have much power to change the world.

"It really made me angry," Kimble explained. "He would get booed off the stage if he tried doing that at a William

and Mary graduation" because students here tend to have idealistic goals. "I really feel like our school has prepared us to do exactly that."

Kimble wanted his speech to encourage those tendencies in his fellow graduates, prompting them to become "the next big names" among William and Mary alumni. His original idea remained intact through a combined application and audition process, and he appreciated the many helpful suggestions from members of the commencement speakers committee. "There are a lot of people there in the committee that I really respect," he said.

In the end, Kimble had an admirable plan to face the anxiety that past speakers Adam Stackhouse ('04) and Chris Henel ('03) promised him he would have. He put a few jokes toward the beginning of his speech. "Once I get people to laugh, I feel really comfortable from then on," he said. "My confidence just grows, and I get better and better from that point." So while a nervous Kimble is not one that many people are familiar with, the Kimble on stage would be "absolutely the same: passionate about William and Mary, funny, loud."

by Meghan Williams ('05)

## Commencement 2005

## Who are you? Sullivan inspires graduates to consider values

Following is the complete text of President Sullivan's commencement speech. —Ed.

I haven't said anything yet! My advice to you is to wait and see what I say.

The truth is I am nervous, and I am surprised. Except for the first time, 13 years ago, I have not been nervous, that is. But this is the last time for me—and the only time for you. And then last year was Jon Stewart. His speech was magnificent—funny, profound, entirely irreverent and completely relevant, but what I remember best is what he said immediately after I finished introducing him. I sat down; he turned to me. I was sitting right there. You know what he said? He said, "Thank you, Mr. President. Until just now I had forgotten how crushingly dull these ceremonies are, so thank you." Maybe now you know why I am nervous.

I have told you the truth about me. What about you? Here you are perched precariously on the brink of the great unknown. Some part of you must be exuberant; another must be apprehensive. And the question that little voice that haunts us all must be whispering to each of you is, What will my life be like? The trouble is, the question can't be answered. Oh, yes, for the briefest moment you might think you see a flickering, fluttering sign of what fate foretells. But that is self-delusion, wholly understandable, but self-delusion still. None of us can know the outcome of a story yet to be written.

So let me put to you an easier question, one that is at least partly within your power to answer. Who are you? It seems simple enough, I know, but even this question is harder to answer than you think, for the "who" is not about your GPA or what your major was or all the honors that light up the best lines in your résumé [and] the "you" does not query the depth of your longing for a large net worth or your hope for vaulting fame.

The question does not ask for answers about those things. It wants to know what lies at your soul's center. Its purpose is to discover what about you is uniquely you. It is about the values and the strivings that will define your life and by which and for what you are prepared to sacrifice almost anything to achieve. The question, it turns out, is not really one but two: First, what is my life worth living for? And second, when my life is over, will it have been judged to have been well lived?

A wise man once wrote, "It is foolish to wait for your ship to come in unless you have sent one out." We could debate the meaning of that thought, but we don't need to do that and besides we don't have the time. I think it is about the powerful and fateful connection between effort and reward. We live in a culture that is dominated by a presumption of entitlement. That culture makes us want to believe that effort and achievement are disjoined, and that's not right. In my life's experience, what is achieved is almost always an expression of what is valued and what is earned. Put another way, your values are your destiny. There is luck, of course, but I wouldn't advise you to rely on it. Luck is by definition capricious and so supremely unreliable. Take care that the values by which you choose to live have the potential to earn the sort of success that will give you comfort in that oh so distant future when you have learned the hard way what matters and what does not.

It is not my intention to disparage an ambition for wealth or the hope of fame—

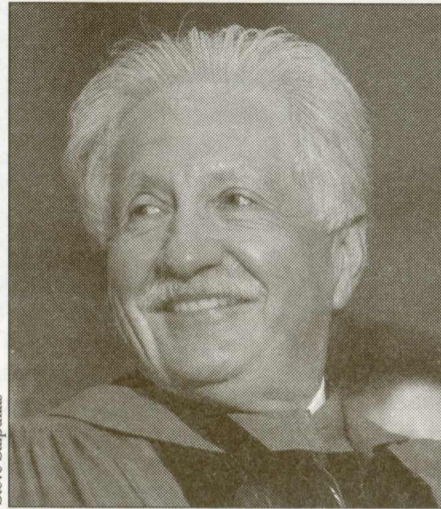
far from it. These are the worthy objects of an honorable ambition, but wealth and fame are not alone enough, even if you have them both. They're not enough if you would be worthy of what has happened to you here, not enough if you consider not just the privilege your talents allow but the obligations they impose.

In a long lifetime, I have learned some things about values and success. I wish I could tell you that they were profound. They are not, but they have mattered to me and they have made my life better—not because they have helped me contend with the counterfeit intoxication of success but because they have given me the strength to deal with the really big hurt of failure. In telling you this, I am mindful of how ridiculous can be the conceit of the old giving advice to the young, but we know each other. We know each other well. I have confidence or, at least, real hope that you will understand the spirit in which I speak. And here are four things I want you to know.

Be honest. All depends upon the durability of your integrity. To trifle with truth will corrupt everything else you try to do. Little lies are no better than big ones. By degrees, little or big, lies corrode the only sure basis for sustained and loving human relationships. What you gain by the indulgence of untruth is never worth what you lose, and what you lose is a part of the best part of yourself. One of my heroes—I doubt you know him—Judge Elbert Tuttle said it better than anyone I know: "For what is a share of a man worth?" Judge Tuttle asked. "If he does not contain the quality of integrity, he is worthless. If he does, he is priceless. The value is either nothing or is infinite." So the choice is yours to make: nothing or infinite.

Be fearless. "Fearless" isn't really quite the right word, but I can't think of a better one. No woman or man in the whole of human history has been entirely fearless. Fear is as much a part of the human character as the capacity to love or the disposition to be cruel. What I mean is never—never—allow yourself to become the captive of your fears. To be in thrall to fear means that you are ruled by weakness and that means, almost always, bad decisions that will make a moral desert of your life. Fear is all the more insidious because of the many masks it wears. We rationalize that a fear-driven decision is the most practical choice, not ideal but the best we can do. Fear-driven decisions usually require us to convince ourselves (and it is not hard to do) that while we are perhaps afraid to make the decision we know to be right, it doesn't really matter in the long run. There will be other chances, so we think, to retrieve the wrong, to address the insult done to decency because in the moment we are afraid to do the right thing. None of that is true, you know. Almost certainly you won't have another chance. You won't be given a second opportunity to make up for the first when you cravenly turned away from the honorable choice. And the worst of it is, a decision founded on courage—a choice, in other words, which defies fear—in the end is really no harder to make. And the penalty for being wrong—if the choice was made in honor—is so infinitely small compared to the consequences of a decision made in the shadows of fear and so disfigured by it.

Listen to Homer. He got it right. He wrote this in *The Illiad*: "Fate is the same for the man who holds back, the same if he fights hard. We are all bound in a single honor, the brave and the weaklings. A man dies still if he has done nothing as one who



Timothy J. Sullivan

has done much."

Be gentle. By this I mean be gentlemen and gentlewomen. It is not always an easy thing to do. Should you choose this path, you will have joined a company that is far too small. It is hard, but sadly true, to say that we live in a time when vulgarity is fashionable. This is the age of celebrity—a peculiarly soulless state—in which the celebrity is celebrated for nothing worthy, and those who celebrate celebrity are themselves equally empty. Both parties to the transaction have nothing to offer that should detain a sensible person for 10 seconds, and you must not allow it to detain any one of you.

Success that matters has no need to trumpet its triumphs. People who count for something worthy of emulation know that personal achievement is never a license to indulge in an orgy of overt egotism.

By gentleness I mean a quality that cultivates a serene self-containment and that reflects a self-discipline that makes the joy of great achievement all the more meaningful for its lack of self-advertisement.

By gentleness I also mean good manners, which are the sure mark of the true gentlewoman or true gentleman. On this subject, George Washington wrote, "Every action done in company ought to be done with some sign of respect for those that are present." Can you imagine how much better this world would be if Washington's advice mattered to more people? Do your part to bring that better world nearer. Live by Washington's advice.

Be tenacious. Youth is impatient. You feel it in your bones. Your natural impatience, wonderful in some ways, is reinforced by a popular culture in which some of the most widely used words and phrases are "the 10-second commercial," "the sound bite," "the New York minute." There is even some truth in the sort of joke that "we live in a time when, for too many, instant gratification takes too long."

In the world you are about to enter, you will find no shortage of people with brains, winning ways and great ideas. What you will find in short supply are those with the tenacity, the simple grit, to stick to a plan when it gets tough, really tough—to hang on. You will see the backs of a multitude who were brilliant at the beginning but nowhere to be found at the end. They will have fled to new projects and new ideas from which they will yet again detach themselves when the battle is joined, when personal risk is real and failure is more than a distinct possibility.

If you care about success that really matters, steel yourself to be one of the few for whom the real risk of battle for real things is an inducement to engage, not an

excuse to seek another opportunity elsewhere. A favorite popular singer of mine, K.T. Oslin, has a great line in a good song: "If you can't take the fall, you shouldn't take the ride." I beg of you, don't be one of the crowd who is afraid to take the ride, but I beseech you, when you fall, as you will, get back on the horse fast—really fast.

If you do these things, there is a price to be paid. You will enjoy fewer flashy up-front successes, but that kind of success isn't worth the trouble. The glow of it is gone before you even have the chance to boast about it.

I have assumed since the day you arrived here that each of you has staying power, that all of you were in the game for the real thing and for the long run, that greatness was your goal and that you were out to change the world. Greatness is within your grasp. You can change the world. No, let me say it differently, you will change the world, but only if you frame your ambitions with a long perspective and only if you go about achieving those ambitions with a determination to fight through to the end—no matter that the end will prove more elusive and more difficult than you could ever have first imagined.

You don't have to believe me. Listen to Einstein—1905 was his *annus mirabilis*. He published three papers: one proved the existence of the atom, another showed the validity of quantum physics and the third advanced his special theory of relativity. Not bad for a year's work. In trying to explain these achievements, he said, "It is not that I am so smart. It is just that I stay with problems longer."

If it is ultimate, not superficial, success that you wish to make the object of your ambitions, remember Einstein.

Having felt entirely free to offer my advice unvarnished and in terms unqualified, I should also make a confession. I have not always been honest. I have not always been fearless. I have not always been gentle. I have not always been tenacious. I am not alone. All of us will stumble. All of us will fail, time and again, to live up to the standards we know to be right. This can't be helped. We are all human after all, but what we can do is to protect our determination to try again—to try better. Resolve inspires hope, and hope opens the door to redemption.

So the question at the end is the same as it was at the beginning. It is the question of your lives: Who are you? I know that every one of you will try to make yours a life lived to good purpose and with high honor. But you are the ones—the only ones—who can give concrete definition to that purpose and critical and specific context to the meaning of honor.

Saul Bellow in his Nobel address said, "At the center, humankind struggles with collective powers for its freedom; the individual struggles with dehumanization for the possession of his soul." No one could deny the greatness of a life lived for the protection of human freedom and for the integrity of one's soul. As I have said, the choice is yours and yours alone. Long ago, I resolved to make my quest one that Bellow would have understood, although it was only last month that I first read what I have just read to you. Believe me, I have never regretted the choice I made, even when I have fallen so far short that I despair of myself. If you make the same choice, as I hope some of you will, it is a choice—I promise—that will never make you wish you had made another.

Good luck and Godspeed.



## English literary winners find audiences with their art

Words come hard for winning writers. For days, weeks or even years, phrases churn in the mind, mental scribbles becoming physical notes carried in backpacks along paths through places like the Sunken Garden. Finally they are cast—cast and recast, remixed, refined and reduced. Finally there is submission.

"Yes it's a struggle. Of course it's a struggle," said Emily Bludworth ('05), who received this year's 2005 Academy of American Poets Award at the College, one of a series of literary awards judged by faculty in the department of English. "For me, it's important to not write something that is very obvious, because then there would be no point in writing it. If I wanted to say something directly, that is something I would do in a conversation."

Bludworth won the award for a collection of poems. Each is plaintive, juxtaposing sharp phrases within experiences embraced either as memory or potential. In "Low Sun" she writes, "Now I blush at the obviousness of words. I am ashamed and a little sad that I will be like the white wicker chairs we used, paint fainting into dusk, flaking into years."

In writing the series, Bludworth wanted to "mix together bits of color and concrete images" along with her self-described "sort of hedonistic" philosophy to create something that "fits together and makes sense."

"A certain amount of manipulation goes into what I am writing," she said. "It's not just like I'm vomiting personal emotion; it's like I'm actively creating something."

None of the winning pieces seemed self-indulgent. Each had an audience. Each attempted to evoke complex discussion from personal insight.

That task was perhaps most intense for Sara Nunley ('07), who won the Glenwood Clark Fiction Award. Her entry, "Little Flowers," dealt with a daughter's response to a father's attempt to take his own life. It was based on her own experience.

"I got stuck in this piece," said Nunley. "The thoughts are there and the words just won't come. That happens, especially when it's personal."

Within her story, six months after the attempted suicide, Sara struggles with the question of why bad things happen to good people. Members of her family are still in touch with her. She still visits with her father. "We go to the Cheese Shop every Thursday at 11:15," she wrote. "Then we go to the Wythe and buy candy. One pound of fruit slices." But a splotch of spring flowers is aggravating. Finally one night she tramples it. "I wanted to give up," she wrote. "I picked up the broken bits of pink flower, and I cried even more. The plant was gone, but the flowers were gone, too. I knew that the little flowers wouldn't be there tomorrow or the next day or maybe ever again, and I think now I wanted them to be."

Reflecting on those words, Nunley quickly explained that the part about the flowers was made up—"No, I did not destroy any plants on William and Mary property," she said. Then she considered what she hoped to affirm. "I feel like if you see something beautiful in the world when you are feeling a lot of pain, that beauty seems kind of pointless," she said. "But then you realize that just because one thing is bad, you just have to take whatever good things are there for what they're worth and appreciate that."

Nic Willcox ('07) seemed the most surprised at being named a winner. Her piece, "I am a Rock," won the Tiberius Gracchus Jones Literary Award. Her main character, Ethan Blackstone, bears little resemblance to his author, Willcox said.

In her story, Ethan becomes disillusioned at the prospect of ever making an intimate human connection, and he seems resolved to find happiness in his own writing. At one point, Ethan informs the reader, "I have, in the past, made efforts to reach out, to set afloat that message in a bottle from my lonely island to see whether I am truly the only bit of land in the dark sea. I went out on dates; I can still see the faces of most of them, if I think about it. Emily, whose type I was not. Tamara, who didn't think it could work out. And Cassie, who was in it all for the fun and excitement and for whom I was neither fun nor exciting." Although he has not dated since, Blackstone makes this observation: "Besides, how



David Williard

Bludworth



David Williard

Nunley



David Williard

Willcox

could I find happiness with human imperfection when I can create the ideal, can form, by writing, my own soul mate."

In a last-ditch effort, Ethan contacts an acquaintance from many years before who happens to write a personals column for "Relationships" magazine. Ultimately her advice to him is, "If one wants to be an island, that's all well and good, but why be a desert island?" The columnist suggests that he take advantage of other types of relationships. Then she adds, "I suggest you get a dog."

For Bludworth, a poem called "Clouds" was the hardest to write. She struggled to connect two ideas: the disappointment of a male character who desires a female knowing that his feelings will not be reciprocated and imagery taken from the arid Southwest, where

rain will not come. "Sometimes rain will fall and be evaporated before it reaches the ground," she said. "I thought it was an interesting idea, but it was difficult to work through. I rewrote it and rewrote it and rewrote it."

Another of her works, "Extranjeros," "was hard because it was autobiographical," she said.

"Most of the poems I kind of make up—I take patches of my real life and other people's lives and kind of put them together. On the one hand you want to stay faithful to truth and reality, but on the other hand you have to lay something on top of it that will make sense to whoever is reading it."

In the poem, she wrote, "The chemical dyes in color photographs dissemble into rust and gold after twenty years have passed. In the head color often bleeds; more rarely, it condenses into nearly immovable tufts."

"I was just using my memories to say something about memory: that it is fleeting and it will fade," Bludworth explained. "The only thing that is still with this figure is the way the sky looks in the morning; all the activities have muddled together."

One can only hope to read in coming years new works by each of these authors. At this point, only Willcox, a chemistry major, has a definite plan to publish, even though she has never taken any English classes at the College. She is working on a fantasy manuscript about a six-year-old prince who gets into trouble through the use of magic. "It makes about as much sense logically as Harry Potter," she said. As for entering the contest, she was prompted by a flier: "I only knew where Tucker Hall was because I had been playing Dungeons and Dragons there on weekends," she said.

Bludworth, who has graduated with a double major in English and anthropology, is trying to choose between pursuing a fine-arts graduate degree or enrolling in a graduate school of education.

Nunley is focused on an upcoming summer internship. She intends to continue writing, at least for herself. "It's an outlet when I'm stressed out or excited about something," she said. She probably will submit pieces for additional contests. "I've gotten a lot of encouragement," she said. "The English department has been great: I haven't had a bad teacher. Whether I go to the Sunken Garden or somewhere else to think and to write, it is just a great atmosphere."

by David Williard

Following are examples of the winning works. Additional poems by Bludworth, as well as the complete text of stories by Nunley and Willcox, will be on the Student Impacts Web page available at [www.wm.edu](http://www.wm.edu). —Ed.

### Clouds

by Emily Bludworth

**It would be useful for him  
To know of that rare, but well-documented  
Phenomenon which occurs in certain arid lands,**

**Such as that stretch of crumbling desert which overlies  
Vishnu schist and the Tapeats sandstone,  
That strange but unpreventable occasion**

**When the water from summer thunderstorms  
Evaporates before it reaches ground,  
For he, in his young ache and windy pulse,**

**Subjects himself to lay down low, close to the ground,  
Wanting nothing but to feel her from above ...  
Feel her falling ponderously, like the great dripping tongue**

**Of a spring downpour, when the lawn is damp,  
And the soil is breathy, and even the most dignified  
Of trees submit to wading knee-deep in gathered pools.**

**The desert formations, stretched and gaping,  
May behold the clouds, but the clouds—!  
The fat and laughing clouds will gird their bellies**

**With the arid clime, withholding themselves  
As they wander and skim overhead,  
Or hang heavy and low, but never fall.**

### Little flowers (conclusion)

by Sara Nunley

It's been six months, but it feels like six years. I'm still here, and so is my dad. We go to the Cheese Shop every Thursday at 11:15. He gets tuna on wheat, and I get peanut butter and jelly. Then we go to the Wythe and buy candy. One pound of fruit slices. He always loved routine. It's far from putting on the suit and heading to the office, but it will have to do. He's going to Egypt with grandmother in the fall. Dad's not in denial anymore. He really can't be; everyone knows. The disease will never go away, and I'll always worry if he's at home by himself or if he's sad or lonely or if he's even there at all. Mom calls me a lot at school. I think she's lonely, and that makes me really sad. It's hard to talk to Dad now, so I guess she talks to me. I miss her. She puts in long hours teaching at the high school because Dad can't work anymore. She looks a lot more tired than she used to. Michael is a lot quieter. Kate calls home more often. I still don't know why bad things happen to good people, and I don't use the downstairs bathroom anymore.

It's been six months, and I still think about it a lot. The stupidest things remind me. There was this little plant at the edge of a shallow ravine that I passed every day on the way to classes. The plant had three pink flowers and looked terribly out of place. I went there one night a few weeks ago, and I trampled it. In the darkness I stomped on it until it collapsed, until all the flowers were gone. And I cried because it had been there for so long. Every day it was there, and I fucking hated it. I wish that plant had never been there at all. I was tired of looking at it and thinking about it and knowing about it. It didn't belong, and I just wanted it to give up. I wanted to give up. I picked up the broken bits of pink flower, and I cried even more. The plant was gone, but the flowers were gone, too. I knew that the little flowers wouldn't be there tomorrow or the next day or maybe ever again, and I think now I wanted them to be.

### I am a rock (excerpt)

by Nic Willcox

It's not that I am unhappy. I do feel something is missing in my life which others have, but I do not know what it feels like to have it, to be whole. A person born without legs cannot miss running. So I am not unhappy. Nor am I socially crippled—not entirely. My ego, which is my name for what I suppose must be my identity, hidden inside the stony wall, can be quite socially acceptable. I can talk, I can listen, I can even laugh a little, though it does not often come naturally to me. I need these skills so that I can do routine tasks, shopping and such. Still, there are times when I am caught off guard, and the walls are up before I even realize it. This happened some time ago, at the beginning of a series of events, which leads to my now sitting in my rocking chair, Chopin playing in the background, looking again at the "Letters to the Editor" page of *Relationships* magazine. ...

[Settled in my rocking chair, I remembered the magazine. I had left it on the table in the dining room ... and I went to get it. ... I opened it, intending to read it as I do books: cover to cover. However, I only got as far as the "Letters to the Editor" page before I took a long pause. The reason was that the photograph of the editor—a smiling woman of perhaps mixed race, with a tan skin and brown hair which appeared to grow almost in vines—seemed familiar. I thought that I knew someone of that appearance, and I looked for her name on the page. Shari Ford. Yes, it was, wasn't it. But she looked happy now. ...

## college notes

### Biggs to serve as Harriman fellow



Allison Biggs

Allison Biggs ('06) of William and Mary has been awarded a Pamela Harriman Foreign Service Fellowship for 2005. She joins Joshua Boehm from Yale University and David Peloquin from Carleton College as recipients of the honor.

Biggs will serve her fellowship in the U.S. Department of State. Boehm will serve his fellowship in the U.S. Embassy in London. Peloquin will serve his fellowship

in the U.S. Embassy in Paris.

Biggs is involved in a variety of organizations and honor societies at the College, including the Mortar Board Service, Order of Omega, Golden Key and the Leadership honor societies. She serves on the Student Alumni Council and as a tour guide and summer intern for the office of undergraduate admission.

"I am deeply honored to be selected as the Harriman Fellow in Washington, D.C.," Biggs said, "and I look forward to representing William and Mary and pursuing the ideals put forth by Pamela Harriman herself."

Boehm, a sophomore at Yale, graduated from City High School in Iowa City, Iowa, where he was the valedictorian, a National Merit Scholar and an Iowa Governor's Scholar.

Peloquin, a junior at Carleton College in Northfield, Minn., is an accomplished classical pianist as well as a choir member at the Northfield Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. David was named to the Carleton College dean's list in 2002-2003 and in 2003-2004.

The Harriman Foreign Service Fellowships are a national fellowship program for college students honoring the late U.S. Ambassador to France, Pamela Harriman. The fellowships are sponsored by the College in conjunction with the U.S. Department of State.

### VSF prepares summer line up

Under the artistic direction of Christopher Owens, assistant professor of theatre, the Virginia Shakespeare Festival will present a three-show lineup extending from July 7 through August 14. Unlike previous seasons, the shows will be presented sequentially instead of in rotating repertory.



"Changing to sequential production—meaning running one show for two weeks, closing and then opening another the following two weeks—will allow us to have unique settings for each of the productions instead of the same unit set that has been used for the past few years," Owens said.

Opening first on July 7 and running through July 17 will be Shakespeare's final play, the grand romance "The Tempest." Opening July 21 and playing through July 31 will be the comedy "The Compleat Works of Wilm Shkspr (abridged)" by Jess Borgenson, Adam Long, and Daniel Singer. As the title says, this Shakespearean vaudeville takes on the daunting task of visiting every one of the Bard's works in some fashion during a 90-minute romp that has delighted audiences from Scotland to southern California. "Tempest" does not have a performance July 11, and "Compleat Works" will not be performed July 25.

The four-day turnover between the closing of "Tempest" and the opening of "Compleat Works" will facilitate the total scenic makeover of the main stage.

Opening on July 29 in the Studio Theatre and running through August 14 will be George Bernard Shaw's classic comedy "Candida."

The Festival box office opens June 3. All three productions are offered in a season ticket package of \$40 for all three shows. Individual show tickets are \$18 for adults. The Shakespeare Festival has instituted a new price of \$10 for students for any show this year, also designed to encourage attendance by families. Group discounts are also available for groups of 20 or more. For more information contact the Virginia Shakespeare Festival Office, (757) 221-2659.

### Alumni Association inducts members of class of 2005



The William and Mary Alumni Association formally welcomed more than 300 members of the class of 2005 during its second annual alumni induction ceremony on May 13 at the Alumni Center's Clarke Plaza.

"I'm not going to be the first person to tell you that your life changes here and now," Young Guard Council Chair Dan Maxey ('02) told the class of 2005, but he assured them that they were well prepared to face the challenges of the world. And he reminded the class that while their undergraduate chapter at the College was closed, they were still an important part of William and Mary. "Young alumni have a very active place in the alumni

community," he said.

That message of a continued relationship with the College was also voiced by Henry George ('65), vice president of the Alumni Association. "It is quite obvious that your presence here has made a difference," he said. "As a graduate of this institution, you can continue to make a difference."

As a symbol of their alumni status, each member of the class was given an alumni lapel pin. George instructed friends and family members to fasten a pin on each graduate. Once pinned, the newest alumni of the College were welcomed into the Alumni Center for refreshments and hors d'oeuvres.

### NCAA asks College to investigate use of 'Tribe' nickname

William and Mary and more than 30 schools nationwide have been asked by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) to examine their use of athletic nicknames that references American Indians.

The NCAA remains concerned that use of logos, mascots and nicknames could be offensive to American Indian populations. Other schools on the list, including Florida State University (Seminoles), Arkansas State University (Indians) and San Diego State University (Aztecs), were given until May 1 to submit a self-analysis regarding the appropriateness of their athletic nicknames. The College has been given an extension until Nov. 1 to enable President-Elect Gene Nichol to assume office.

Some universities have changed their nicknames in recent years as American Indian groups have expressed concerns. Notable among them are St. John's University (Redmen to Red Storm), Marquette (Warriors to Golden Eagles) and Stanford (Indians to Cardinal). William and Mary stopped various activities out of the same concern, including use of the nickname "Indians" and the term "reservation" to describe its football field.

Responding to concerns that use of the "Tribe" name might be offensive, Terry Driscoll, who has been athletic director at the College for eight years, told the "Richmond Times-Dispatch," "We have had no negative publicity or comments with regard [to being called the Tribe]. ... Our relationship has always been good with the Indian tribes here in Virginia, so I'm not aware of any issues right here with people being concerned about the name being the Tribe."

William Walker, associate vice president for public affairs for the College, said, "We hope that in studying the nicknames of various institutions, the NCAA does not lose sight of its more pressing work, specifically the effort to guarantee the academic integrity of intercollegiate athletics. In that regard, it's important to note that William and Mary ranks just behind Yale, Princeton and Penn in the most recent NCAA Academic Progress Report. A full 100 percent of our senior football players graduated last year, and since 1996, 35 William and Mary athletes were named to Phi Beta Kappa."

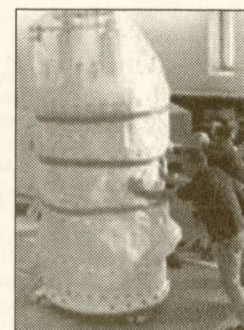


### New NMR magnet reaches full field: Experiments in sight

Installation, cooling and applying charge to the College's new superconducting magnet have been the focus of attention in the newly constructed nuclear magnetic resonance lab adjoining Small Hall since the magnet was delivered to campus on April 9 from the Bruker BioSpin plant in Germany.

Now that the magnet is at full field, work can begin on commissioning the spectrometer, the "business end" of the device. It is the instrument through which the science is actually done.

The 17.6-tesla magnet is one of the most powerful of its kind in the country and will allow scientists to gain new understanding



of the fundamental makeup of solid materials. Gina Hoatson, professor of physics, and Robert Vold, professor of applied science, are the principal faculty members at the new lab.

"The first experiment is in sight," Hoatson wrote in an e-mail announcing the magnet's reaching full field at 5:34 p.m. on May 8. "This is definitely the second-best Mother's Day gift I received."

