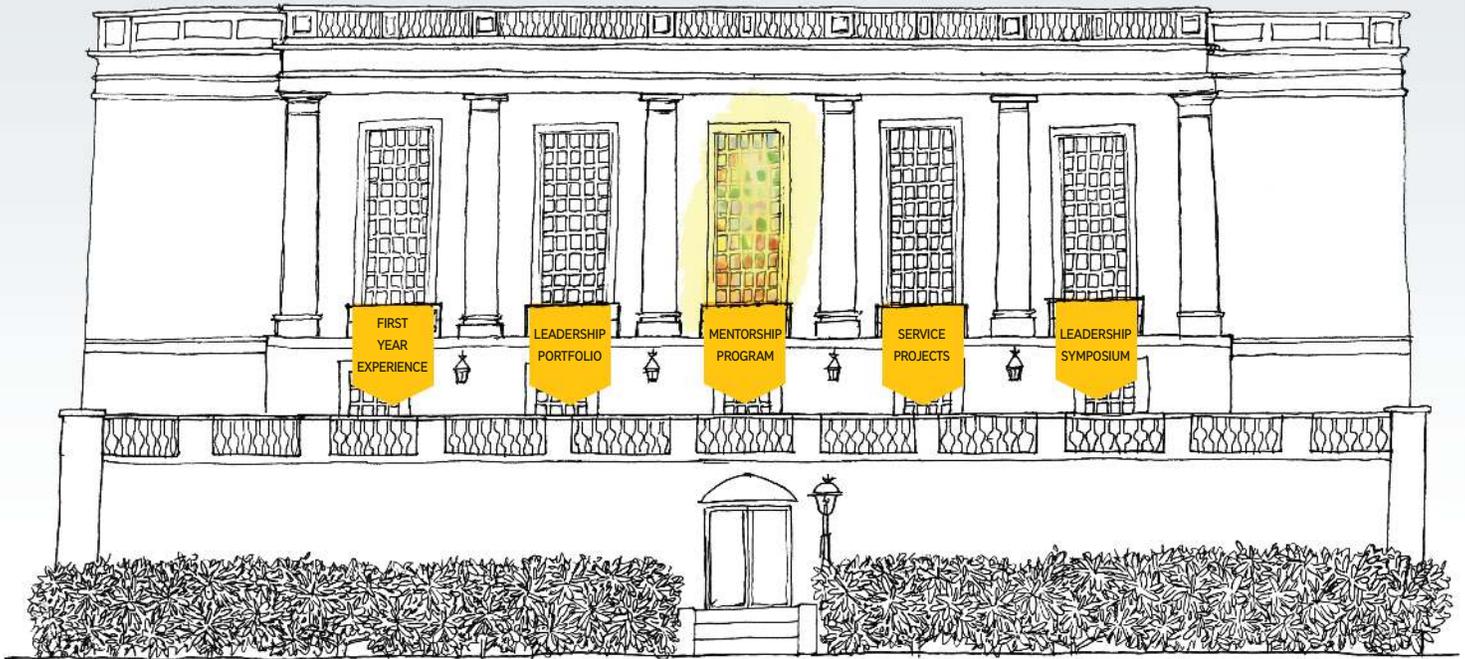


MARY BALDWIN COLLEGE FOR WOMEN



PREPARED REMARKS OF DR. CAREY USHER, DEAN, MARY BALDWIN COLLEGE FOR WOMEN

GRAFTON SOCIETY LUNCHEON

APRIL 27, 2018

Good Afternoon.

First, I would like to say congratulations to our new Grafton Society inductees, I am so very honored to be here with you today. I celebrated my own 20th reunion last year, and am thankful every day for the foundation my undergraduate experience provided to me, starting me on the path to find myself here, with you, today. I must say – I am much more likely to be found at a Mary Baldwin reunion than at my own alma mater, which really is a testament to the ties forged here, in this phenomenal place.

My own women's college experience ignited my passion for women-centered education, and I committed that passion to Mary Baldwin at a young and idealistic 26 years old. Today, having served this institution, and hundreds of young women, for 16 years, my love for Mary Baldwin has grown ever deeper, and my commitment to women-centered education and leadership have grown ever stronger.

I am so grateful, and so honored, for the opportunity to help guide the Mary Baldwin College for Women into this new era of excellence in women-centered education and in women-centered leadership. As a member of the Mary Baldwin Family, I, too, have been extraordinarily transformed here. Over these years I have learned as much (if not more) from my students, as they have learned from me. I have been mentored, educated and empowered through leadership opportunities and growth, and the unwavering commitment of our leadership, to the Mary Baldwin mission... Above all, I am privileged to serve our students, our legacy, and you.

The Mary Baldwin College for Women will continue to be the cornerstone of the multi-faceted Mary Baldwin University community. Proven in so many ways, over so many years...

The tenacity of our Mary Baldwin leaders over our 176 years, the grit and resolve to hold steady even during the most difficult times, have provided us with the foundation for our innovative growth.

- A side note, my 11 year old son was thrilled to share the story of how the Augusta Female Seminary remained open during the Civil War, through his Virginia history unit in 5th grade, last month... my 4 boys also believe that women run the world, as they have grown up on our campus, surrounded by strong and tenacious women –

Our unwavering spirit, our history of upholding academic excellence while responding to the needs of a changing world, have provided us with the framework for our forward-thinking development and growth, from Seminary, to College, to University.

Our women-centered legacy, our ways of knowing, our ways of being, have helped to forge the bonds we have here, today; they have built our Mary Baldwin Family.

Your presence here today, yours and that of the women around you, are a testament to the strength of our Mary Baldwin Family.

I am so thrilled, so grateful, and so humbled, to stand in front of such a distinguished group of people, as the inaugural Dean of the Mary Baldwin College for Women.

I am here today to share with you, our new College for Women programming.

First, let me be clear that the new programming is not my plan, alone. This Phase I programming is the result of hard work by our University leadership, our faculty and staff, our students, and the voices of our alumnae. We are all dedicated to the growth and development of the Mary Baldwin College for Women.

I am currently working with an amazing team, a Leadership Council. Our members include 3 faculty: Mary Clay Thomas, from the College of Business and Professional Studies, Social Work; Heather Macalister, from the College of Arts and Sciences, Psychology; and Stephanie Sebolt, from the College of Education; we have 2 staff members: Nell Desmond, Director of the Vantage Point; and Laura Cammaroto, in Student Life, Director of First Year Experience. The Leadership Council also includes 3 students: Mary-Ruth Wossum Fisher, a Senior, Faith Parker, a Junior, and Ascharya Balaji, a Sophomore. Faculty and Staff membership is a 2-year appointment with the possibility of renewal, and two first-year students will be added to the Council in the Fall.

Now, to our program:

Sometime during or around 1869 - 1871, Miss Mary Julia Baldwin and Miss Agnes R. McClung purchased a piece of land from the estate of the late Judge L.P. Thompson. That lot was adjacent to the Presbyterian Church and the Seminary grounds on the north side, and extended from New Street on the west to Market Street on the east. On this land, Misses Baldwin and McClung built a large brick house fronting New Street. This house, very creatively named "Brick House", served as a home for Mary Julia, Agnes, and other faculty of the Seminary.

Forty years later, in 1910, the Agnes R. McClung Residence Hall was constructed in the same location.

Almost 90 years after the construction, during the 1998 complete renovation and modernization of McClung Residence Hall, we discovered that the hall was literally built around Brick House. Today, there is a window on the landing between our administration building and McClung through which you can see the original bricks from Brick House. What a special place! Living in Mary Baldwin's actual room (renovated and modernized, of course) is a much-sought-after prize for our upper-class students.

This Fall, new Mary Baldwin College for Women students will live in our flagship Agnes McClung Residence Hall with their upper-class peers, along with Memorial Hall (only a stone's throw – uphill – from McClung).

Over the summer we will be building a true College for Women community experience in McClung Residence Hall, with the creation of a welcoming Dean's office and the renovation of a collaborative gathering space and lounge honoring Mary Julia and Agnes. I look forward to maintaining an office in such a meaningful space.

Phase 1 of our new programming is all tied to the first-year experience of College for Women students, but can be broken into 5 areas of emphasis – our 5 columns. My Alumnae Engagement Survey, released in March, has already identified 243 alumnae who are interested in working with new College for Women student programming, and that's only on the first pass. The 5 areas of program emphasis – our five columns of the Mary Baldwin College for Women...begin with

Column 1: A Distinctive First-Year Experience

College for Women students begin their time here with an immersive retreat in August, led by Dr. Lawanda Ravoira, President and CEO of the Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center, with assistance from experienced student leaders. The focus is on specific building blocks from See the Girl programming, which you will hear more about tomorrow, and is transformativite.

Students continue with a newly designed first-year seminar program connecting students back to their women-centered orientation throughout the year, and

Co-curricular programming to be facilitated in residence hall.

Column 2 is A Leadership Portfolio

An electronic leadership portfolio will be introduced during the first year seminar, and will be guided by the students' own interests

The portfolio will grow throughout the four years, culminating in a body of work that shows where our students have been, and where they are headed.

Column 3 is a Valuable Mentorship

Our College for Women mentorship program will see alumnae matched with incoming students, and will be facilitated by an excellent software program which includes mentor training, various mentee/mentor matching options, templates for communication and reminders for mentors throughout the year

The College for Women will also work with alumnae engagement to host "mixers" or networking events each semester for face-to-face contact between mentors and mentees.

Column 4 is Opportunities for Service to Women and Girls

See the Girl's "Girl Matters: It's Elementary" is our primary partnership. Students are exposed to the program during their orientation, and may choose to become active interns in the area schools during their second year,

We have an assortment of women-centered programming already in existence on campus, ready to be highlighted, and we are also developing new partnerships.

Finally, Column 5 is our Annual Leadership Symposium

An annual symposium which is tied to the annual theme of the University will bring women leaders to campus during the spring semester, with some components similar to our current Senior Capstone Festival, where we showcase the work of our graduating seniors.

The symposium is open to all of Mary Baldwin University and the surrounding community, but is planned and hosted by the College for Women.

This programming for the Mary Baldwin College for Women brings new and innovative women-centered practices together with the strong work to which we have committed for decades.

I am thrilled to be a part of this exciting moment in our history. Our commitment to women-centered leadership and women-centered education remains strong, and with renewed emphasis and focus, will have a long and sustainable future. Thank you.