



June 17, 2014

To the Members of the Washington College Community:

The accompanying letter from Mitchell Reiss, which announces that he has accepted the position of President and CEO of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation effective October 6, affords me the opportunity to express my gratitude and that of the Board of Visitors & Governors for the numerous contributions Mitchell and Elisabeth have made to our College, campus and community.

Since Mitchell's arrival in July 2010, Washington College has attained many notable achievements, not least of which is re-accreditation from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Reflecting on Mitchell's leadership, the review team noted, "The students, faculty, and staff members use a shared language of the mission statement, which was revised and revitalized soon after President Reiss's arrival. It is striking how central and guiding these terms were in all of our conversations. It is a way to differentiate Washington College from its peers. Most mission statements generally make declarations about the individual student's growth and stop there. Washington College takes a different turn by adding larger social expectations and values, such as civility and moral courage. This is now a touchstone for the College's identity and self-confidence. Further and admirably, the College rediscovered the significance of its namesake, thereby linking itself by history and image to a powerful global brand. The renewed determination and excitement that originate with these brief sentences and phrases about the College's purpose carry through consistently with the responses heard from board members and the campus community."

We are grateful to Mitchell for the leadership he exhibited in revising and renewing the College's mission statement and for linking both our mission and our institutional character more closely to that of our College's namesake. Our students now sign the College Honor Code on the grounds on Mount Vernon early in the fall of their freshman year. They return four years later to celebrate their graduation from Washington College in a rite of passage that has quickly established itself as a cherished tradition.

During Mitchell's tenure, the College has added 10 new tenure track lines to an already stellar faculty and created a new department of Environmental Science and Studies. He has recruited an extraordinary senior management team, including a new Provost and Dean of the College and vice presidents for Admissions, Advancement, Finance, and Student Affairs, to join a talented and committed staff in guiding the future development of the College. Through stewardship and new gifts, the College's endowment for the first time exceeded \$200 million.

Mitchell's leadership has contributed to the transformation of our historic campus: a thoroughly renovated Miller Library, a first-ever Hillel House, an expanded Johnson Fitness Center and, most recently, a bright new Admissions Visitors Center. He secured a \$3.6 million grant from

the State of Maryland to support construction of a new academic building on the site of the former Board of Education property. The purchase of the Chestertown Armory and an adjacent parcel has laid the foundation for the expansion of the College boathouse and construction of a new academic building and home for the Center for the Environment & Society.

In Chestertown and beyond, Mitchell has modeled citizen leadership for our students. He has worked diligently to strengthen and improve the partnership between Washington College and the Town of Chestertown. He has served as a trustee to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, the Maryland Independent College and University Association, the Independent College Fund of Maryland, and the Centennial Athletic Conference. He has continued his role as a leading national expert on the issue of global terrorism.

Though leadership changes can be challenging, ours comes at a good moment in our history. Last year, we finalized an ambitious, forward-looking Strategic Plan that proposes to leverage our distinctive place, culture, history, and environment to the benefit of our students; to expand engaged teaching and learning opportunities within and beyond the classroom that inspire critical thinking and genuine discovery; and to promote interdisciplinary teaching and learning that challenge and inspire students to see the world from new and multiple perspectives. We are in the final stages of preparing a comprehensive campaign to raise the funds necessary to realize the ambitions of our plan. As a result, Washington College is poised to play an even more impactful role among our nation's leading liberal arts institutions.

The task before us now is to find a new president worthy of the example set by Mitchell Reiss. As the Board of Visitors & Governors gathers on campus this Thursday, we will commence the process of searching for Washington College's 28th president. Our plan is to secure the services of a nationally known search consultant without delay, and to empanel a representative committee, drawn from the ranks of trustees, faculty, staff, alumni and students, to conduct a search that will result in a recommendation of a candidate or candidates to the Board of Visitors & Governors by the close of the fall semester. I will ask the leadership of this committee to enter into conversations with the College community at the start of the new semester, most likely through a series of structured listening sessions, where all will have an opportunity to share their thoughts on the desired qualities of our next president. The Board will also begin discussions of an interim leader and will share that news with the community before the start of the new semester.

Please join me and my fellow trustees in expressing to Mitchell and Elisabeth Reiss our appreciation of the contributions they have made to ensure the continued success of Washington College.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed P. Nordberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Edward P. Nordberg '82, Chair
Board of Visitors and Governors