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Education Advocate Among Honorees at Commencement

► Founded in 1842, Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, Virginia is among the oldest residential colleges for women in the nation, with an adult degree and graduate programs for men and women in five regional centers statewide.

► DID YOU KNOW?

Commencement Trivia

A fast-moving storm made Commencement in 1971 a memorable event. The ceremony was held outside for the first time, and it started as a beautiful spring day. College President William Kelly hurried his concluding remarks as a dark, ominous cloud appeared over Hunt Dining Hall, but the event did not end before the storm arrived. The benediction and recessional were cut as people raced inside. The violent storm uprooted trees, downed power lines, and caused local flooding.

Mary Beth Smyth '47, received the coveted Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award at Commencement May 18, recognizing her service, character, and spiritual qualities. Smyth's passion for education and loyalty to Mary Baldwin College have long guided the philanthropy of herself and her husband, H. Gordon Smyth, a former MBC trustee. After earning her English degree, Smyth taught in Waynesboro, Virginia, and was recognized as one of the top 20 teachers in the nation in 1951. Her steady advocacy for education was recognized with a lifetime achievement award from the Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges in 2002.

The Smyths established two lecture series at Mary Baldwin College that make it possible to bring inspiring female leaders and businesswomen to campus. The Smyth Leadership Lecture began in 1997 with Geraldine Ferraro, former U.S. Congresswoman and the first woman nominated by a major party for vice president of the United States. Recent Smyth Lecturers, such as former President of Ireland Mary Robinson and the late former Prime Minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto have had personal and professional impact on members of the campus community and residents of the area.

The Smyths also finance a math and science scholarship for a Mary Baldwin student each year. They meet, get to know, and stay in touch with the students they benefit. And it is appreciated. The Smyths are frequently invited to graduations and weddings. They receive cards and photographs. Not surprisingly, Mary Beth Smyth believes "Those students are part of our extended family."

The Smyths created a legacy in Nelson County where they lived for many years. Since 1990, their gifts have helped dozens of students in that county attend college through partial four-year scholarships. They sponsor study-related sabbaticals that may be used at home or abroad for teachers in Nelson County, as well as 10 prizes of \$1,000 each for school system staff.

Special Award Winners

Tromila Wheat, of Knoxville, Tennessee: **Algernon Sydney Sullivan Student Award**, recognizing "unselfish service, noble character, and spiritual qualities." An international relations major, Wheat is an Honors Scholar, a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Omicron Delta Kappa, and a Ronald McNair Scholar and a Benjamin A. Gilman Scholar. She distinguished herself as a vital member of the Mary Baldwin College

community as a resident advisor, a member of the President's Society, and as recipient of the college's Honor and Integrity Award. In 2007 she traveled to Oman to live with a native family and study the legislative processes and progress towards democracy in that country. She routinely shared her experiences with her fellow students, and parlayed her research into her senior thesis that was selected for presentation at the college's Capstone Festival. Wheat is headed to Georgetown University to study international security. Wheat graduated *summa cum laude* with distinction in her major and was also honored with the **Martha Stackhouse Grafton Award**, recognizing the senior with the highest cumulative grade point average.

Regina Dunklebarger, of Palmyra, Virginia: **Adult Degree Program Outstanding Student**. Dunklebarger distinguished herself as an outstanding biology major, particularly while working on her senior thesis, deemed "one of the best projects submitted to the department" by biology faculty, some speaking from nearly 30 years experience at MBC. Dunklebarger studied the effects of a component of red meat on prostate cancer cell growth, and she was selected to present her research at the college's Capstone Festival. She served as president of the biology honor society Tri Beta, and was "willing to help any of her classmates with their work," according to the professor who nominated her for the award. Dunklebarger graduate *cum laude* with distinction in her major, and will pursue a position as a high school biology teacher.

Lisa Johnson Black, of Scottsville, Virginia: **Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Student of the Year**. Black is a certified elementary teacher who came to MBC to earn her master's degree with an add-on endorsement in special education. She brought uniqueness to the program at MBC as a hospital educator at University of Virginia. Black has a state-of-the-art classroom on the pediatrics floor of the hospital where she provides daily instruction, based on the Virginia Standards of Learning, for students receiving medical treatment. Her master's research was titled *The Uniqueness of Hospital Education*. Black is a member of Kappa Delta Pi International Education Honor Society.

Sarah Enloe, of Staunton, Virginia: **MLitt/MFA Ariel Award**. Enloe has been indispensable in creating a strong relationship between the MLitt/MFA program at MBC and American Shakespeare Center (ASC) based in Staunton. She served as an official liaison between the two organizations, and she accomplished much by her own initiative. From "privy council" meetings with ASC actors, to a Texas recruiting trip, and even Sunday afternoon football games, Enloe was a driving force. She lobbied to include student one-acts at the Blackfriars Conference, and to use graduate students in presentations instead of ASC actors. Enloe's energy, competence, and organizational skills have made her the default go-to person for the program for most of her three years at MBC.