As we commemorate Meredith College’s 125th anniversary, it brings me great joy to celebrate the tremendous success of the College’s strategic plan, Meredith Forever. I am so proud of all that we have accomplished together, as a community, during the plan’s first three years.

The results are impressive. You’ll see in these pages numerous achievements in every pillar of the plan: educational excellence, enrollment, financial strength, facilities and technology, visibility, and quality of life. I am deeply grateful to each person who helped fuel these successes, especially our faculty and staff, who have wholeheartedly embraced the plan and moved it forward with great energy.

But this is just the beginning. We have worked hard since the plan’s inception to chart a course for a stronger Meredith. And with the attainment of one milestone comes the march toward another: an expanded strategic plan that will guide the College well into 2021.

Thank you for being part of this important journey. Our future is bright, and I can’t wait to see all the ways Meredith College becomes even stronger.

Jo Allen, ’80
President
Meredith Forever. Two simple words that have impact beyond measure. With the third year of our strategic plan complete, Meredith College is stronger than ever. Increased enrollment, expanded academic programs, and record-breaking fundraising headline a long list of accomplishments and opportunities that not only bolster Meredith’s foundation but also empower the College to innovate and grow.

Meredith is committed to providing a unique and powerful combination of liberal arts education and professional preparation. Meredith is a community – a family – of students, faculty, staff, and graduates dedicated to living lives of impact and distinction. And Meredith is a beloved institution, rich in tradition, with a strong history, and an even stronger future.

In short, Meredith is Going Strong. Forever.
PILLAR 1  |  EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

There’s a reason educational excellence is the first pillar of Meredith’s strategic plan. Providing students with an unparalleled academic experience – while preparing them to be the next generation of leaders in the workforce and the community – is the most important thing we do. Building on the College’s strong reputation for academic excellence, we develop innovative academic programs, offer one-of-a-kind experiential learning opportunities, and support our students through unique advising and career planning programs. As a result, Meredith graduates are strong, bright, confident, and well-equipped to make a difference in the world.

THREE-YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

• Created and implemented StrongPoints®, a unique advising and personal coaching program that focuses on academic and experiential learning, financial literacy, and career preparation

• Launched Stronger U, non-credit personal and professional development programs for women in the community

• Initiated several new academic programs:
  – Post-baccalaureate certificate in pre-health
  – Public health (B.S.)
  – Human resources concentration (MBA)

• Celebrated our successful graduates – on average, 96% are employed or pursuing graduate study within a few short months of graduation

• Further developed our partnership with WakeMed Cary, expanding Meredith’s Dietetic Internship program

• Created new varsity lacrosse and track and field teams (winning two tournament titles in lacrosse) and captured the College’s first-ever USA South Women’s President’s Cup

• Established new service opportunities: Campus Kitchens to address childhood hunger and nutrition education, and Triple S (Sisters Supporting Sisters), an anti-human trafficking effort
There is no such thing as a typical Meredith College student. Our students – 2,000 and counting – come from a variety of backgrounds, with unique strengths and diverse perspectives. They are highly-qualified, driven, and eager to take advantage of all that a Meredith education has to offer. Continuing to enroll strong, capable students is paramount to our mission, as is strengthening retention rates and expanding our reach to attract new populations. Over the last three years, we’ve exceeded enrollment goals and retention rates, creating an even stronger Meredith student body.

THREE-YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

- Met or exceeded undergraduate enrollment goals, including enrolling Meredith’s second largest class in 2014
- Established Office of Retention and Student Success and enhanced freshmen retention rates to almost 80%
- Celebrated 4-year graduation rates that surpass national averages
- Increased enrollment in Wings – Adult Education at Meredith, after name change and renewed emphasis on the program
- Raised enrollment in the College’s post-baccalaureate certificate programs
In its silent phase over the last three years, Beyond Strong | The Campaign for Meredith has generated not only record-breaking giving, but also a renewed spirit of commitment to and excitement about the College among our alumnae, friends, faculty, and staff. Our community is investing in a strong Meredith. And with continued support, the College will grow even stronger. As we enter into Meredith’s 125th year – and the public phase of the campaign – we’ll continue to build on this tremendous momentum with confidence and an eye toward the future.

THREE-YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

- Raised more than $50 million in the silent phase of Beyond Strong | The Campaign for Meredith, surpassing the College’s entire previous campaign by more than $8 million
- Tripled the national average of faculty and staff participation in annual giving to 71%, with 15 departments at 100%
- Significantly improved the College’s unrestricted cash position and enhanced the plant fund, which supports capital projects and facilities needs
- Earned highest rating from U.S. Department of Education for financial stability
- Reaffirmed bond rating and received neutral financial outlook from Standard & Poor’s, a significant designation among peer institutions
Stepping onto Meredith’s campus for the first time can be a life-changing moment for prospective students. Our historic campus also is a significant point of pride for current students, alumnae, friends, faculty, and staff. In order to keep our institution strong, we must continue to preserve its physical home, as well as create new spaces for learning and growing. Several restoration and construction projects have been completed in the last three years, in addition to overhauling our technology infrastructure. The icing on the cake? The start of major renovations to Johnson Hall, the heart of Meredith’s campus.

THREE-YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

- Upgraded campus wireless network and technology infrastructure, completing several cabling projects for reliability and security of the IT network
- Replaced windows and roofs on Jones Auditorium and Wainwright Music Building
- Renovated Belk Dining Hall (upstairs, downstairs, and patio) and Cate Center (entrance, second-floor lounge)
- Launched an extensive renovation of Johnson Hall (interior and exterior)
- Created StrengthsLab, a student space with resources supporting StrongPoints®
- Continued to improve campus accessibility for all
- Completed energy management projects resulting in $800,00 in savings to reinvest
In just three years, the Meredith College | Going Strong brand has evolved from a spark of an idea into a powerful campaign that has significantly raised the College’s visibility at local, regional, and national levels, resulting in a notably positive impact on everything from enrollment to fundraising. Perhaps even more gratifying, response to the brand by the Meredith community has been overwhelmingly positive, demonstrating the campaign’s potential not only to capture the authenticity of the Meredith story and raise the College profile, but also to unify, strengthen, and generate new excitement among our stakeholders.

THREE-YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

- Launched and executed the Meredith College | Going Strong brand campaign
- Created marketing materials for Beyond Strong | The Campaign for Meredith
- Launched a new website and increased traffic from unique visitors to meredith.edu by 71%
- Increased social media following by 64% since August 2013 across all channels (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn)
- Published *The Status of Girls in North Carolina* and *The Status of Women in North Carolina Politics* reports, part of a new series on opportunities for and issues facing women and girls in our state
- Extended advertising via web, television, newspapers, magazines, and billboards
- Enhanced visibility of faculty and staff media experts in outlets including CNN.com, *Huffington Post, The Christian Science Monitor*, and *Forbes*
Meredith College is only as strong as its people. We are committed to enhancing the quality of life of our students, faculty, and staff by providing programs and opportunities that address everything from leadership to physical fitness. Meredith has long been recognized as a great place to work, and we strive to support each person as a whole, in turn demonstrating to our students the value of a more balanced lifestyle. Each and every member of the Meredith community is central to our mission. And ensuring their well-being will only make the College stronger.

THREE-YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

- Conducted a full compensation study
- Restored systematic raises
- Established faculty/staff development funds and leadership opportunities
- Enhanced WOW! (employee wellness program) offerings
- Initiated Meredith PEARLS (Peer Educators Advocating Responsible LifeStyles), a student-led health education program
- Tested a Flexible Work Schedule Program and made permanent options available for employees
THE NEXT PHASE OF **MEREDITH FOREVER**

While the first three years of Meredith’s strategic plan have come to a close, our work is not done. In fact, priorities for years four and five are already approved and in the works, which will eventually lead to a five-year plan that will guide the College into 2021.

The beauty of a rolling three-year plan is that it has allowed the College to be nimble and responsive to the ever-changing landscape of higher education, the economy, and society at large. As we encountered challenges or discovered new areas of need along the way, this model enabled us to adjust our path while remaining steady – and strong – on our course for excellence.

The six pillars of **Meredith Forever** will remain the anchor for the plan. But the next slate of priorities for the five-year span – to be approved by the Board of Trustees in 2016-17 – will allow us to think even bigger, with the assurance of using reliable data, following best practices, and assigning accountabilities.

As the College forges ahead into this exciting new phase of our strategic plan, we are encouraged to be bold not only by the successes of the initial plan, but also by the overwhelming community spirit that has enabled Meredith to grow even stronger.

**Learn more about Meredith Forever at:** meredith.edu/strategic-plan
EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE. FINANCIAL STRENGTH. ENROLLMENT. FACILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY. VISIBILITY. QUALITY OF LIFE. 

Going Strong