

Don't place faith in ranking

For the past several years, Meredith College has made national rankings in *U.S. News and World Report's* annual college ranking issue. This year, Meredith placed seventeenth on the list of southern regional university rankings, dropping five places from last year's twelfth.

From the Editor

The rankings are based on academic reputation, retention of students, faculty resources, student selectivity, financial resources and alumni giving.

Other colleges on the southern regional universities include UNC-Charlotte and Appalachian State University.

While Meredith staff, faculty and students should be proud of their school, they should also keep in mind that rankings are not what make Meredith the school that it is.

What makes Meredith is the recent news that last year's freshmen class was the strongest in a good while. The class of 2003 had the highest grades since 1961, a very high retention rate and the most entering students in Meredith's history.

What makes Meredith is the way that faculty members make students feel like they can accomplish great things, whether the students are incoming freshmen or graduating seniors.

What makes Meredith is the feeling of being at home while walking across campus, the feeling of knowing fellow students, staff members, faculty members and administrators.

What makes Meredith is the support that the students and faculty receive from each other.

Meredith, as the rankings suggest, does have a good academic reputation, strong alumni support and is growing more and more selective.

But if Meredith were not on the list, would it be a worse school? Meredith community members must remember the reason they are here, and it's probably not because they read a ranking in a magazine.

Meredith Herald

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How to reach the Herald:

If you have an article idea for the staff, contact the office at 760-2824. You can also e-mail the paper at <maxwell1@meredith.edu>. All ideas will be considered but may not necessarily be used.

Campus forum

Gone, not forgotten: Seniors, remember friend with doll

Dear Editor:

This letter is addressed to the class of 2001. I've never been a very vocal member of our class, not having much in common with many members of it. I do, however, have a group of close friends whom I rely on and who rely on me.

And it is because of a friend that I am writing this letter. I, unfortunately, missed the first senior class meeting of the year, but my roommate reported back to me on what occurred.

I didn't think we would talk yet about the class doll, but we did. The subject of what ethnicity the doll should be came up.

And since my freshman year, I have thought of what the doll should look like: a sweet Oriental face; straight, black hair; and deep, black eyes, all in remembrance of one of my friends, Akie Segawa.

I don't know how many of you knew Akie, but I know she touched the lives of the 1997-98 first Vann residents and many other people in the Meredith community in the short time she was here.

She especially touched the lives of Christine Furmick (her roommate), Kate Sension, Shara Vanguess, Jessica Garton, Debra Stinson, Christian Melvin and me. Christine, Kate, Shara and Jessica were present at the time of her death.

I can still remember the call from Christian and the pain and confusion I felt. She was so young, my age, and full of life the last time I saw her.

I remember getting back to school and being asked to talk at the hall meeting since the others were in a hotel room together. As I walked into that hall meeting, I remembered the advice to "remember the good times," and that is what I told my hall mates about--"the good times."

I remembered that Christian called Akie her "Japanese girl" and Akie called Christian her "American girl." I remembered how Jessica told Akie that Jessica's family was going to adopt Akie, and her name

would be Akie Garton. Akie thought that sounded so funny.

I came to learn that on the day she died, she found out what cheesy poofs are and what the word *crunchy* means. The week before her death, she had noticed Christian's Miss Piggy doll and we played the song "Rainbow Connection" for her. She had wanted to learn more about the Muppets, and I promised her that I would bring my copy of *The Muppets Take Manhattan* back to school on Sunday night for her to watch.

Thankfully, I was unable to find the video that weekend.

I did, however, find it this summer when I was going through my video tapes. I thought of Akie although it isn't like I don't think of her every day.

As our years have progressed at Meredith, I have really wished she was here for this or that event or happening. And though I know her spirit watches over us and that she knows we think of her, I want her to know that we remember her and want her spirit to never be forgotten here at Meredith.

The best way to do that is to immortalize her in our class doll, the symbol of our class.

I heard there is to be a vote at our next senior class meeting concerning how the doll should look. Maybe I'm not the best person to make this urging, but I feel someone has to, and I've taken that job.

So if you'd like to support me in this campaign, then please attend the next class meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 26 at 9 p.m. in Belk Dining Hall.

If you cannot attend, the please let it be known that you want the class doll to be in remembrance of Akie.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lynn Witt, class of 2001

Editor's note: Akie Segawa, a Japanese exchange student and member of the class of 2001, died on Sunday, Feb. 15, 1998, as a result of cardiac arrest from a condition called diomyopathy.

Posters depicting alcohol, residence halls mix again

Dear Editor:

My name is Heidi LeCount, and I am the new director of Residence Life here at Meredith. I am writing in response to the *Meredith Herald* opinion piece ("Opinion: Ridiculous rule must go," Aug. 30) that addressed the issue of residence hall students not being permitted to hang posters depicting alcohol in their rooms. I would like the opportunity to clarify this issue.

The information about not permitting alcohol posters in rooms is written in the Residence Life manual, which is used by all Residence Life staff. The resident assistants hold floor meetings at the beginning of the year to introduce themselves and to outline Residence Life policies among other things. It is most likely that the information regarding alcohol posters was discussed with residents by RAs.

The policies in the Residence Life manual are also reflected in the Student Handbook and Activities Calendar and the Guide to Community Living.

In the Guide to Community Living, the alcohol policy states, "Memento bottles, shot glasses, alcohol bottles with sand or other alcohol paraphernalia are not allowed." This policy does not--and should not--exclude posters from residence hall rooms.

Next year, we will be sure that the information and policies concur in all of our publications.

It is through students' voicing their concerns that the alcohol-poster policy discrepancy was discovered. If at any time you have a question about a Residence Life policy, please contact me in the Office of Residence Life, at 760-8633, to discuss your concern. Thank you to the students who brought this concern to our attention. I hope that your semester goes well.

Sincerely,

Heidi LeCount,
director of Residence Life