

# A School By Another Name, Will It Be the Same?

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Mary Washington College could soon become the University of the Potomac or possibly even the University of the Chesapeake, in response to a survey sent to students by the College Image and Stafford Name Committee.

According to The College Image and Stafford Name Committee, they are in pursuit of two new names. One will be for the Stafford campus, and the other will be an umbrella name encompassing both campuses, Fredericksburg and Stafford. However, Mary Washington College, Fredericksburg campus, will not be directly affected by the name search, according to Kathy Mehford, chair of the College Image and Stafford Name Committee. "There is no possibility of a name change," Mehford said, referring to the Fredericksburg campus.

The committee members and focus groups brainstormed the names found on the survey sent to students. They chose the names so that students and faculty could have examples of what to suggest for names of the Stafford county facility and the possible umbrella name for both campuses.

According to Ron Singleton, vice president for college relations, the first choice of the committee for the Stafford campus was James Monroe College. Singleton said that

other choices included College of Continuing Education, Potomac College, Kenmore College, James Farmer College, George Washington Institute and Alvey College.

Three suggestions are also before the committee as possible umbrella names for both campuses. These include Washington and Monroe University, James Monroe University and the University of the Potomac, according to Singleton. Mehford said that this list is expected to change as the survey results are tallied and all the suggested names are added to the list.

"Maybe somebody out there will have a name that grabs everybody," Mehford said.

Students, however, appear less than excited about the suggested names.

"I'd like to meet whoever came up with the names University of the Potomac and the University of the Chesapeake," senior Bill Sherman said. "As a geography major, I can't help but question their intelligence."

Other students wondered why another name was needed at all.

"I don't think they should use a different name. Why

not make it simply Mary Washington College Stafford Campus," junior Sarah Jerley said.

At the beginning of the week, Singleton said that students have completed and returned approximately 200 surveys. His office will forward the survey to the National Institute for Organizational Research and Problem Solving. They will process the data for analysis.

According to Singleton, current MWC students represented one of four groups that will be surveyed. All 485 faculty and full-time employees will be mailed surveys on April 28. The committee will also send surveys to 3400 prospective students in mid-May.

These prospective students were randomly selected from a sample of 44,000 students who have the academic qualifications needed to attend MWC, including a score of 1200 or better on the PSAT, said Singleton. The college purchased these names from the College Board.

"This is a very important committee. I am really looking forward to seeing the outcome, the comparison of our

view of the college to the prospective students' view. The future of the college is in the prospective students," Mehford said.

Mary Washington has not conducted an extensive student survey since the mid-1980's, according to Singleton.

The fourth group, MWC alumni, will receive surveys in June. A computer will randomly select 1000 alumni from a group of more than 25000, said Singleton.

Singleton also said that college funds are not being used to finance the survey. Private contributions cover all the costs of the project. He estimated the consulting fee to be around \$20,000, but said it is too early to estimate the cost of the entire project.

The committee has 21 members from different groups that represent the college. There are three members each from the Board of Visitors, the alumni association, the faculty, the administration, present MWC students, the foundation board, and Fredericksburg area community leaders.

According to Singleton, the college planned for the naming of the Stafford facility to coincide with its ground breaking; however, the architectural plans are in Richmond pending approval. Construction is expected to begin in early 1998, and the first building is projected to open for classes in the fall of 1999, said Singleton.