



## **Class of 2009 Urged to “Do Something Wonderful With Your Lives”**

Rainy and unseasonably cool weather did little to dampen the celebration today as Hollins University conferred 173 bachelor’s degrees and 66 master’s degrees during the school’s 167<sup>th</sup> Commencement Exercises, held Sunday, May 17 on the historic Front Quadrangle.

Guest speaker Wyndham Robertson ’58, the first female editor at *Fortune* magazine and the first female vice president at the University of North Carolina, told the graduates to expect to be asked “What is Hollins?” many times in the years to come. She encouraged them to use that opportunity to talk about what makes Hollins distinctive. She praised the openness of President Nancy Gray and the faculty, and also saluted the graduates themselves.

“You are uncommon women, not crowd followers,” she said. “What could be rarer than a student body of independent thinkers, each having access to a tailor-made education?”

Robertson noted that Hollins is most distinguished by the accomplishments of its alumnae.

“Hollins alumnae are standouts, highly visible, doing transforming things,” she said, citing the university’s four Pulitzer Prize winners; trailblazers in journalism, politics, science and the arts; innovative entrepreneurs; and community volunteers.

Robertson assured the Class of 2009 that “there will always be a market for smart, hungry, talented Hollins graduates” and told them to “go out and do something wonderful with your lives.”

Following her address, Clark Hooper Baruch '68, chair of the university's Board of Trustees, presented Robertson with an honorary degree in recognition of her career achievements and dedication to Hollins.

Two seniors were honored during the morning ceremony for their academic achievements. Jessica Joy Talley and Jennifer Holmes Eaton each received the Faculty Award for Academic Excellence for having the highest and second-highest grade point averages among this year's graduates, respectively.

The following awards were also presented:

- *The Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award*, given by the New York Southern Society in memory of the founder, recognizes members of the campus community who have shown by daily living those qualities which evidence a spirit of love and helpfulness to other men and women. This year's recipients are Jillian Grace Crawford '09 and employee Vince Rewekant, who is retiring from Hollins this spring after 25 years of service.
- *The Annie Terrill Bushnell Award*, established by the late Mrs. William A. Anderson in memory of her mother, is presented to the senior who has evidenced the finest spirit of leadership during her days at Hollins. Megan Stephanie Doldron is this year's honoree.
- *The Jane Cocke Funkhouser Award*, honoring a member of the Class of 1911, recognizes the junior or senior who, in addition to being a good student, is pre-eminent in character. Courtney Frances Chenette '09 received this year's award.
- *The Hollins University Teaching Award* honors secondary school teachers who have devoted their lives to preparing students to achieve and excel in a higher education setting. Each year, Hollins seniors are invited to nominate the teachers who inspired them or contributed significantly to their intellectual and personal growth. This year's winner is Timothy Donahue of Hermitage High School in Richmond, Virginia. Dallas Lewis of Amelia Academy in Amelia, Virginia, and Charlotte Wood of Albemarle High School in Charlottesville, Virginia, were named runners-up.

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