



Hollins Trustees Establish Largest Endowed Chair of Any Women's College in the Nation

\$3.25 Million Gift Creates "Super" Endowment In Honor Of Late President

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Roanoke, Va. – The Hollins University Board of Trustees is celebrating the life of the school's tenth president by making the largest initial gift ever to endow an academic chair at a women's college.

In just three weeks, the Trustees raised \$3.25 million to create the Nora Kizer Bell Endowed Chair in the Humanities, which will support salaries, research and travel for faculty at the university.

Dr. Bell died on January 24 due to complications from pneumonia.

"Our Trustees were so passionate about this effort that they didn't want to just establish an endowed chair but a 'super' endowed chair," said Mark Whittaker, vice president for development and alumnae relations at Hollins. "Instead of the usual \$1.5 to \$2 million that colleges raise for an endowed chair, the Trustees ambitiously set out to raise \$3 million. They not only met that goal, they surpassed it, and did so in a remarkably short period of time."

Board member Wyndham Robertson, Hollins Class of 1958, was the catalyst for the endowment.

“Immediately after Dr Bell’s death, Wyndham wanted the Board to do something sensational in the president’s memory. She pledged to give \$1 million to endow a chair if the rest of the Trustees could raise \$2 million by the date of our Founder’s Day celebration,” explained Whittaker.

Robertson stated she was looking for the best way to remember Dr. Bell and create a meaningful legacy in the face of such a sudden, demoralizing loss.

“I felt this would energize our Board at a time of real sadness and grief,” she said. “Two of Nora’s goals were to grow Hollins’ endowment and to be considered among the top tier of national liberal arts colleges. Establishing this chair supports those goals and shows that Hollins will go on. It was gratifying to see everyone work so hard to make that happen.”

Dr. Bell became president of Hollins in July 2002 and during her time in office raised funds to endow two chairs at \$2 million each.

“She recognized that the endowment of chairs is extremely important to the future of any college or university,” said Whittaker.

Hollins is an independent liberal arts university offering undergraduate education for women, selected graduate programs for men and women, and community outreach initiatives. Founded in 1842 as Virginia’s first chartered women’s college, the university has been named number one in the country for overall quality of life by The Princeton Review for the past two years.

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