

## World-class scholarship

BY DALE ROGERS MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

In all the U.S., only two private colleges this year had students win a Rhodes, a British Marshall and a Truman scholarship. Wheaton was one, of course; Brown University, with an undergraduate enrollment roughly four times greater than ours, was the other.

I never tire of bragging about Wheaton's scholars and watching how impressed people are when they hear about this stunning success. The Rhodes, won by Miles Sweet '01, and the British Marshall, won by Rebecca

Chamberlain '99, are firsts for Wheaton. Fred Marcks '02, who earned a Truman Scholarship for public service, is the second student to earn this award during my tenure at Wheaton. All three students are outstanding scholars and leaders, and I feel very fortunate to have watched them grow and mature during their college careers.

Having students win all three of these awards in one year is extraordinary, but this year has been even better than that. This spring, while we celebrated our pride in the achievements of Miles, Rebecca and Fred, four more students won prestigious academic scholarships: Laura Steele '01, Andrea Christoforou '01, Susan Habas '01 and Arnulfo De La Cruz '00 won Fulbrights for work and study abroad; and David Giuliano '03 received a Morris K. Udall Scholarship for studies in environmental public policy. And two faculty members, Professor of History Alex Bloom and Assistant Professor of Music Matthew Allen, also won Fulbrights for study abroad.

Taken together, the scholarship competitions won by our students this year simply confirm something we have always known: Wheaton is a close community of learners who possess superior abilities to make a difference in the world. That has long been true, and it is gratifying to watch as the rest of the world discovers the college. The *Boston Globe* recently wrote a story on Wheaton's achievements, noting the academic strength of our students, the phenomenal growth in applications for admission, and the outstanding results of the Campaign for Wheaton as evidence of the



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college's successful transition to coeducation.

This record is something to which we all contribute and in which we can all take pride. Visitors to Wheaton frequently sense the strength of our community from their first visit, just as Miles Sweet did. "I came to Wheaton because of the spirit of the community I felt when I first stepped on campus," Sweet said. "That feeling has been with me my whole time here, but never more than when all these professors from different departments came together to help me prepare for the Rhodes interviews." And Miles' experience is not unique. Faculty, alumnae/i, and administrators offered advice and participated in mock interviews with nominees for all of these awards. The support made a difference, according to the students, who say that they felt much better prepared for the grueling interviews than did their peers at most other colleges.

During the past nine years as president of the college, I've had ample opportunity to get to know Wheaton's alumnae/i and I consider it to be one of the greatest pleasures of my job. Alumnae/i excel in literally hundreds of roles from politics to parenting and have been unfailingly generous in sharing their expertise. The time that alumnae/i spend mentoring students, attending college fairs, and making connections for graduating seniors and for each other has an incalculable benefit. Equally important is the support alumnae/i lend to the college through gifts to the Annual Fund and to capital projects. It's important to note that four of the seven students who won these scholarships were the recipients of advanced study awards (such as the Davis and Mars fellows programs), established during the Campaign for Wheaton.

Wheaton's faculty currently is engaged in a comprehensive review of the college's curriculum, asking what a liberal arts education should be in the 21st century. Nearly every part of academic life at Wheaton is up for discussion. The one thing we'll never change is the closeness of our community. That's what makes Wheaton special, and it always will.