

## Fast Facts

Meredith Woo has been named the 13th president of Sweet Briar College. She will succeed President Phillip Stone on May 15, 2017, following his retirement.

### Search Process:

- President-elect Woo was chosen from a strong pool of candidates after a nine-month presidential search. One hundred and fifty persons inquired or were contacted; 42 candidates were identified and indicated interest; 29 candidates were reviewed; 11 candidates were interviewed.
- The search committee was comprised of members of the board of directors (7), members of the faculty (2), staff (1), alumnae (1), and students (1). All committee members were voting members.
- Search firm Storbeck/Pimentel & Associates assisted in the search.
- Storbeck led a comprehensive stakeholder inquiry analysis to find the right match for Sweet Briar, which included conducting extensive interviews on campus with the faculty, staff, administration and student representatives, as well as an electronic survey, to which nearly 1,600 stakeholders replied.
- The survey results, narrative comments and interview notes were used to craft a list of character traits and priorities for Sweet Briar's next president. That President Position Profile was the guiding directive of the search committee. Candidate interest, interview questions and candidate selection was based on these stakeholder driven criteria.
- The Position Profile and other pertinent search committee information was placed on the College's website and made available to everyone.
- President-elect Woo was the unanimous choice of the search committee and the board of directors.

### President-elect Woo was the successful candidate because:

- **She is an accomplished higher education administrator.** President-elect Woo served as the dean of the College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences at the University of Virginia for six years, overseeing 11,000 undergraduate students, 1,600 graduate students and 800 full-time faculty. She grew and strengthened graduate programs, international partnerships and fundraising operations. Annual philanthropic support for the College nearly tripled under her leadership. She was also an accomplished associate dean for social sciences and professor of political science at the University of Michigan.
- **She is a global advocate for higher education, and particularly the education of women.** For the last two years, President-elect Woo has been in London working as director of the Higher Education Support Program for the Open Society Foundations. This program has created and supported more than 50 liberal arts colleges in the former Soviet bloc and supported higher education for refugee populations — including women — in the Middle East, South Asia and Africa.
- **She is an experienced teacher committed to the liberal arts.** President-elect Woo has taught at Northwestern, the University of Michigan and Columbia

University. She came to the United States to study at Bowdoin College, which her son also attended.

- **She understands the unique role Sweet Briar plays in the commonwealth and in higher education broadly.** As a former resident of Virginia and a longtime higher education professional, President-elect Woo understands the importance of the kind of education Sweet Briar provides and is committed to building on the College's strong history of educating bold, confident and successful women.

President-elect Woo holds a Ph.D. in political science and an M.A. in international affairs, both from Columbia University, as well as a B.A. from Bowdoin College. Her husband, Bruce Cumings, is an author, lecturer, and the Gustavus F. & Ann M. Swift Distinguished Service Professor of History at the University of Chicago. Their son, Ben, 23, is a recent graduate of Bowdoin College and an aspiring actor.

President-elect Woo will work closely with President Stone beginning on April 3. This six-week transition process will ensure the smoothest possible handoff and allow the College to continue to move forward with great momentum. She will assume the presidency on Monday, May 15, 2017, which allows President Stone to preside at the May 13 graduation ceremony.

We expect that President Stone will be returning to Sweet Briar for Reunion as a special guest of then-President Woo. Numerous celebrations and recognitions to honor President Stone will be held prior to him stepping down as president and after that date.