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COVER

Congratulations Class of '07!

SECOND COVER

An impromptu chest bump at April 20's employee recognition event celebrated 40 years of service by SC faculty members Phil Schmidt and Max Thompson. These good sports later recreated the moment for a photographer.

Unless otherwise credited, photos by Sunni L. Sheets, Charles Osen '94, Eloy Mendoza '06, Monica Springer '08, and Sara Weinert.

Unless otherwise credited, stories by Sara Severance Weinert.

From the President



Dear friends,

The terrible events at Virginia Tech had quite an emotional impact at Southwestern. Because of 24-hour news coverage, and the ability to connect through the internet with people who were close to the tragedy, we were all swamped by the horrors of the day. The fact that it all happened on a college campus – that students and faculty had been killed in residence halls and classrooms – made it painfully immediate.

Knowing that not all terrible things can be prevented, especially when the perpetrator doesn't value his or her own life, we have, nevertheless, undertaken a thorough review of our policies, our practices, and the assumptions that undergird them. We are making changes. Our coordination with law enforcement has been tuned up, we'll be upgrading our ability to communicate with students and employees in a time of emergency, and we'll train more diligently about what to do in a variety of emergency situations.

Our biggest challenge is to find a sensible balance between the desire for autonomy and independence, because they define what going to college is about, and the need to keep our community safe. We're very mindful of it. We'll do our best.

Thanks for all you do for Southwestern.

Best regards,

Dick Merriman

Dick Merriman
President

Administration Viewpoint



Each year at about this time, I suffer from empty nest syndrome.

A few weeks ago a couple hundred of "my" kids walked across the stage and received congratulations as new graduates of Southwestern College. Then they packed their cars and drove away from Southwestern, ready for new lives that for the first time in several years will not include returning to Winfield in the fall.

This year I have a special empathy with these students. As a doctoral student for the past 30 months, I knew the pressure that comes from combining school with a job, I know the sleepless nights that result from too many tasks in too few hours, I knew the bone-deep creep of panic that sets in when "I know I could do better" meets "I don't have time." I was deeply relieved when I successfully completed my degree, but I still felt a pang of loss and knew I would miss the intellectual stimulation and wonderful classmates I had gained in my program.

But the new SC graduates, like me, have been fortunate. We've learned from the best and been surrounded by the brightest. This combination means I now have an unquenchable and ineradicable love of learning, a love that will last a lifetime.

Welcome to your life, Class of 2007. We're new graduates, but we won't stop learning.

Dawn Pleas-Bailey

Dawn Pleas-Bailey
Vice President for Student Life
Dean of Students

SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE PRESIDENT

Dick Merriman

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Published quarterly by Southwestern College, 100 College St., Winfield, KS 67156-2499. Periodicals postage paid at Winfield, KS, and additional mailing office. USPS #0612-560.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Southwesterner*, 100 College St., Winfield, KS 67156-2499.

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