

WOFFORD COLLEGE

Achini Bandara, a Wofford pre-med student from Columbia, S.C., spent the summer of 2007 working in an Anglican-sponsored hospital operated by the Christian Health Association of Malawi. In the remote and desperately poor village of Chamama, the clinic was a difference-maker, particularly for young mothers and their babies. However, disturbed by the incomplete hospital building, Bandara returned to Wofford determined to make things better. Little by little, she personally raised more than \$12,000. She also met with Dr. Ron Robinson, Perkins-Prothro Chaplain and Professor of Religion. They developed a January Interim project that allowed her to travel to Malawi during the dry season. When she arrived with her funds, construction was in progress, but substantial work remained. Bandara purchased supplies, arranged warehouse space, and dealt with the government to ensure tax exemption for key materials. After her graduation, she plans to return to Malawi, and eventually, she hopes to practice medicine in the developing world.

The work of Achini Bandara demonstrates why Wofford was placed on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Of the 635 colleges and universities on the honor roll, Wofford was one of only 83 to earn its place "with distinction." It was a confirmation that "Wofford's commitment to sustained civic engagement and social justice is strong and thriving," says the Rev. Lyn Pace, associate chaplain and director of service learning.

To sustain this momentum, Wofford has organized a College-Church Council that meets three times annually. Chaired by Trustee C. Michael Smith of Greenville, the council includes trustees, administration, staff, students, clergy and laity. Though it has carefully reviewed the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry's study of branding of United Methodist colleges, it has focused on various aspects of the college's connection with the local church, such as the congregational internship program that now involves eight students and the Emerging Leaders Initiative (ELI) that supports 20 participants. The College-Church Council also is promoting Wofford's annual United Methodist Student Gameday, which is scheduled for October 17, 2009. Finally, the council seeks to lower barriers to Wofford's full participation in activities such as the annual Methodist Campus Ministry service trip, which usually falls during the mid-May exam period.

Of course, the struggling economy is on the minds of everyone charged with responsibility for the college operation, and major steps are being taken to conserve, reduce, cut back, and economize. Losses to the endowment value (approximately 30 percent) will have a negative impact on the college's ability to fund scholarships and other programs in the next few years, making even more crucial the efforts of local churches to sustain and grow the Senior College Scholarship Fund within their apportionment items. Wofford seeks your prayers, guidance and support in continuing a tradition of church-related educational excellence.

Respectfully submitted,

Benjamin B. Dunlap, President