Dear Preferred First Name,

When I ask students what seems most different to them about Bryn Mawr from other places they have studied or visited, I expect to hear about our beautiful campus, the attentive faculty, or their interesting friends from all over the world. To my surprise, they often talk about self-governance and the Honor Code.

To be treated as a person worthy of trust and responsibility elevates your sense of who you are and what is possible for you. During their years at Bryn Mawr, our students internalize these expectations. They hold themselves to high standards of integrity not only for their own sake, but also because they know their behavior impacts their friendships, their families, and their communities. They hold others to those standards as well. We hear this from alumnae/i too – that self-governance and the Honor Code have made a difference in how they conduct themselves later in life. Integrity, honesty, and community-mindedness become life-long values.

When students united in 1892 to form the Self-Government Association, Bryn Mawr became the first institution of higher education in the United States to give students responsibility not only for enforcing rules of behavior upon themselves, but also for deciding what those rules should be. This is still our approach. Students, staff, and faculty are partners in creating our college community. As a result, Bryn Mawr launches our students toward where they want to go in the world versus where they must or are expected to go. This is an essential part of our history as a women’s college and why I hope you will make Bryn Mawr a philanthropic priority.

Mikecia Witherspoon ’12, Deputy Chief of Staff to Mayor James Kenney, Philadelphia, noted in her Defy Expectation profile from the Summer 2018 Bulletin, “You will emerge from Bryn Mawr with a stronger understanding of yourself than you will get anywhere else. It makes you think hard about who you are by placing you in a diverse community that challenges the concepts of gender identity, socioeconomic status, culture, ethnicity, sexual preference, race, and more — both in the classroom and among your peers. Bryn Mawr prepares you for the many ways the world will see you, and how you will see others.”

Over, please
With its esteemed faculty, rigorous academic environment, and commitment to providing an education that adapts to changing times, Bryn Mawr enables graduates to lead and transform the world. Self-governance under an Honor Code uplifts the values of freedom, trust, and accountability. To spend four impressionable years of one’s early adulthood in this kind of environment is invaluable. We are, after all, preparing students not only for a career, but also for a life. Your gift to The Bryn Mawr Fund makes this extraordinary education possible.

Thank you,

Jennifer L. Walters
Dean of the Undergraduate College

P.S. Please consider supporting The Bryn Mawr Fund this year by returning the enclosed contribution form with your check or credit card information, calling (610) 526-5127, or going to Bryn Mawr’s secure website at www.brynmawr.edu/makeagift.