

{Madison Perspectives}

Welcome to Madison

JMU community embraces a new president and the Class of 2016

BY JAMIE JONES MILLER ('99), president, JMU Alumni Association

One of my favorite Madison memories is freshman move-in day. I will never forget seeing a father laboring to carry a mini-fridge on his back up three flights of stairs to 3-B in McGraw-Long Hall trailed by his daughter carrying nothing but a makeup case and not a drop of sweat on her brow.

In a room down the hall from mine, a mother was hard at work hanging curtains to match the bedspread and the towels. I shook my head and thought there was no way that I would ever be friends with that girl. Years later, we were maids of honor in each other's weddings. What we shared at Madison spawned a friendship that is 17 years strong.

Coming to JMU is an opportunity to open your mind and your heart to new experiences and new people. To the members of the Class of 2016 — take time to explore the campus, Harrisonburg and the Shenandoah Valley. It is the best way to become a part of the JMU culture.

Between College of Arts and Letters international affairs classes, my friends and I spent time on The Commons and the Quad (hoping that we'd be taken to Kissing Rock one day). We learned the *JMU Fight Song* and cheered at football and basketball games. We complained about hearing the Marching Royal Dukes practicing on Hillside field early on Saturday mornings, but we loved getting a preview of halftime shows. We joined sororities and supported each other's favorite charities. We got up early on the weekends to go to Mr. J's for a No. 6 on wheat and we stood in long lines to get a chocolate peanut butter shake at Kline's.

We went to the Green Valley Book Fair, Luray Caverns, Massanutten and Smith Mountain Lake. We smiled at visitors on

campus and held the door open for the person behind us even when we were rushing to class.

As the campus community welcomes our sixth president Jonathan Alger, his wife,

Mary Ann, and their daughter, Eleanor — as well as members of the Class of 2016 — reflect on your own Madison Experience. President Alger has embarked on a listening tour, which will give alumni, students, faculty and staff members, and JMU friends the opportunities to share our favorite Madison traditions, memories, people and places with him.


Tell him about your favorite May Day celebration and remind him that when you were at JMU you had a 10:30 p.m. curfew and were not allowed to walk on the grass, a violation

known as "cutting campus." Be sure to tell him how many Dukes attended

your wedding, how you were late to class because of the train, or how your *a cappella* group got its name. Talk about the class project that turned into a business, the Alternative Spring Break trip that changed your life, or a favorite professor who inspired you to take an internship far from home. I know it won't be long before President Alger and students in the Class of 2016 will have their own Madison Experiences to share.

If you cannot attend an upcoming listening tour event, you can connect to JMU and President Jonathan Alger in many ways. Visit the JMU Alumni Association at www.facebook.com/JMUAlumni and on Twitter at @JMUAlumni. Or browse the JMU "Why Madison?" website and leave feedback at www.jmu.edu/whymadison.

I'd like to tell President Alger and members of the Class of 2016 to definitely take part in these great Madison traditions:

- Learn the *JMU Fight Song*
- Take a lap around the Quad
- Snap a photo with the James Madison statue, "Jemmy"
- Enjoy a family picnic in the arboretum
- Enjoy the Marching Royal Dukes practicing
- Check out one of the many *a cappella* concerts
- Check out the Downtown Farmer's Market and Skyline Drive
- Join a Student Ambassador-led admissions tour of campus
- Get into Bridgeforth Stadium and cheer on the Dukes
- Enjoy our unique, historical campus landmarks (Kissing Rock, Duke Dog Alley, Hillcrest House). 



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