



A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

September 27, 2019

Dear Madeira Community,

With profound optimism and excitement for Madeira's future, it is my distinct pleasure to announce that the Board of Trustees has voted unanimously to appoint Gretchen Warner as Madeira's tenth Head of School, effective July 1, 2020.

Gretchen is uniquely qualified to steward our mission and actively drive our evolution into the next iteration of Madeira. In addition to Gretchen's background in education and administration, the Head of School Search Committee was drawn to her warmth, grace, and sense of humor. Her enthusiasm for community building, her energy as a leader, and her dedication to innovative education were evident to every Madeira constituency.

When interviewing candidates, the Search Committee looked for qualities identified by the Madeira community as important: exceptional communication skills, the ability to understand and embrace Madeira's culture, and a leader to articulate our story. We endeavored to find the person who could lead Madeira today, and guide the School toward the future. With authenticity and elegance, Gretchen rose to the top of an exceptionally talented pool of impressive national and international candidates.

A vibrant passion for girls' education

Gretchen brings remarkable positives on the subject of girls' education. As Director of the Upper School at The Archer School for Girls in Los Angeles, CA (Grades 6-12, all girls, 495 students), she provides leadership to faculty, students, and parents. During her visit to Madeira, Gretchen demonstrated her passionate commitment to girls' learning and an immediate connectivity with our community.

An inspiring leader and accomplished community builder

"In one word, I would describe Gretchen as inspiring," states Anne Faircloth '87, Co-Chair of the Head Search Committee. "Witnessing her time on campus with all constituents reinforced my belief that Gretchen is a true visionary, with unusually powerful communication skills."

Her extensive experience as a girls' school administrator has prepared Gretchen for this headship. In addition to her responsibilities as Director of Archer's Upper School, Gretchen has been heavily involved with strategic planning and secondary school accreditation. She has also served as Dean of Academic Affairs, Dean of Students, and STEM Coordinator.

Gretchen brings a compelling record in faculty hiring, retention, diversity work, and team-building. Head of School Pilar Cabeza de Vaca notes, "Gretchen is a born leader who represents the future. We speak the same educational language, and I know that Gretchen will build upon the good work that we have accomplished during my tenure. I'm so excited that Madeira is in good hands."

Head of School Search Committee

Co-Chairs

Anne Faircloth '87 and
Tracy Savage '66

Search Committee

Gaither Smoot Deaton '88,
Board Chair

Kate Wisniewski Weir '02,
Alumnae Council President

Lee Carol Cook, P '19

Carrie Southworth
Johnson '95

Harry J. Klaff,
P '12, '13, '17

Nancy Miller
Montgomery '60

Forward-thinking educational innovator with strong STEM background

Gretchen began her career as a chemistry teacher, and has a depth of experience in the STEM fields, including STEM facilities expertise. This background positions Gretchen to enhance the work that Pilar Cabeza de Vaca envisioned with the exciting new academic building that focuses on interdisciplinary opportunities. At Archer, she brought university partnerships, global learning opportunities, and enhanced technology.

In assuming the headship at Madeira, Gretchen and her husband, Robin, will relocate back to Virginia, where they have family and spent their undergraduate years at Virginia Tech. After college Gretchen went on to earn her master's degree from the University of Virginia. Her boarding roots run deep, as she is a graduate of Mercersburg Academy and spent her early teaching years at Woodberry Forest School.

I am eternally grateful to our steadfast Head Search Committee Chairs, Anne Faircloth '87 and Tracy Savage '66, as well as our dedicated committee members, for their tireless commitment and thoughtful counsel throughout the search process.

This is a time of great celebration and reflection for Madeira. As Tracy Savage '66, Co-Chair of the Head Search Committee shares, "We are overjoyed that we can follow Pilar's strong leadership with the bold, sparkling future we anticipate for Madeira with Gretchen."

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gaither". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Gaither Smoot Deaton '88
Chair, The Madeira School Board of Trustees