Berry officials nominated institutions making the most promising and innovative changes in the area of academics, faculty or student life. U.S. News and World Report’s 2014 Best Colleges Announced in edition; based on results from a spring 2013 survey in which liberal arts college following areas of emphasis:

- Promote financial health, good stewardship and the Berry story
- Invest in academic programs that inspire and challenge students
- Enhance the vibrancy of the residential campus-life experience
- Make the most of Berry’s campus as an incomparable asset
- Foster initiative, intentionality and integration in students and encourage them toward lives of lasting value and purpose
- Grow in size (from 1,800 to 2,100 undergraduates) and diversity
- Promote financial health, good stewardship and the Berry story
- Build the nation’s premier four-year Work Experience Program
- Enhance the educational plan as it does on the advancements that have given that plan new vigor. It also speaks volumes about the faculty, staff, students, alumni and supporters who have committed themselves and their resources to Berry’s purpose of producing citizens with the knowledge, experiences, character and conviction to improve the places where they live and work.

As the college embarks on its next chapter via a new strategic plan (see President’s Essay on page 8), the editors of Berry magazine are honored to share with our readers a small sampling of the recent progress upon which the next 10 years will build. These accomplishments are broad-based, yet have been focused in the following areas of emphasis:

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2. Build the nation’s premier four-year Work Experience Program
3. Foster initiative, intentionality and integration in students and encourage them toward lives of lasting value and purpose
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5. Make the most of Berry’s campus as an incomparable asset
6. Grow in size (from 1,800 to 2,100 undergraduates) and diversity
7. Promote financial health, good stewardship and the Berry story

Such achievement required great effort and significant resources, but as Martha Berry avowed, “The pursuit of the difficult that makes us strong.”

Indeed, Martha Berry’s plan was considerably ahead of its time, for she anticipated the concept of engaged and active learning. Berry’s educational plan has stood the test of time. Berry’s own special identity and character. Berry will not realize its full potential and gain visibility by being Berry at its best. After much thought, I remain convinced that our great opportunity and primary advantage is Berry’s own special identity and character. Berry will not add to its reputation by becoming like some other institution. Instead, Berry will realize its full potential and gain visibility by being Berry at its best.

BERRY PRESIDENT STEVE BRIGGS (2007)

Less than seven years after President Steve Briggs made the above remarks during his inaugural address, college leaders across the country named Berry the No. 1 up-and-coming liberal arts college in America. This accolade – made powerful through peer selection – reflects as positively on Berry’s enduring educational plan as it does on the advancements that have given that plan new vigor. It also speaks volumes about the faculty, staff, students, alumni and supporters who have committed themselves and their resources to Berry’s purpose of producing citizens with the knowledge, experiences, character and conviction to improve the places where they live and work.

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The Cage Center opens, quickly becoming the center of campus activity while paving the way for Berry’s move to NCAA Division II for athletic competition, as well as the addition of the exercise science major (which soon becomes one of Berry’s top five).

- Berry passes the EPA’s 2008 Peer Audit with flying colors.
- The Campbell School of Business launches an entrepreneurship program, the first step in a growing entrepreneurial mindset across campus.
- WinShape Retreat Center wins a National Preservation Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

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Seven-year summary

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- First-year students are introduced to Plan-Award, a four-year process of self-appraisal, goal-setting, planning, reflection and refinement through which students take responsibility for their own educational experience and seek out powerful learning experiences.
- Animal science becomes Berry’s largest major with 146 students; that number soars to 280 by fall 2013.
- Service- and community-based learning are boosted through the Evans School of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences’ participation in the Inside Out Prison Exchange Program and, later, establishment of a community ESL program.
- Berry launches a strategic marketing study leading to the “Experience it Firsthand” brand.

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- Student-operated campus enterprises become the entrepreneurial heart of the Work Experience Program; new pilot projects get underway.
- Berry remains stable during national economic crisis.
- Construction begins on two new residence halls as Berry focuses on increasing residential capacity; Dana and Clara residence halls undergo extensive renovations following earlier improvements to Morton-Lemley, Pilgrim and East Mary halls.
- Berry expands the Krannert Center dining hall and ballroom; adds a new softball field and additional soccer/lacrosse fields.
- NCAA Division III grants Berry exploratory status.
- The Annapolis Group invites Berry to join its organization of leading independent liberal arts colleges.
- Berry baseball makes its first-ever trip to the NCAA Baseball World Series.
- President Briggs is a charter signatory of the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment.

BERRY PROGRAMS
2009-10

• The stunning Morgan and Deerfield anniversary celebration of Teddy Roosevelt Cabin is renovated, and initial restoration work on Roosevelt Cabin is completed in time for a 100th anniversary celebration of Teddy Roosevelt’s visit to campus.

• Softball and swimming and diving are new varsity sports; NCAA Division III provisional status begins.

• The Berry Farms genetics student enterprise goes international, selling 50 jersey cow embryos to Jamaican dairies.

• Four decades of excellence by the Berry Forensics Union culminates in receipt of the Dr. Seth Hawkins NFA Founder’s Award for most points accumulated in national competition.

• Kilpatrick Commons opens, creating a beautiful gathering space between the renovated Kramen dining facilities and the Cage Center.

• Berry ranks No. 12 on a list of the nation’s 17 best-managed university endowments.

2010-11

• Emphasis on the student work program culminates in a new system of classifying student work positions into levels based on increasing knowledge, skills and responsibility and creating developmental paths that lead to advanced leadership/management positions; all aspects of student work – pre-enrollment job placement through postgraduate career searches – come under one umbrella.

• A new initiative encourages seniors to develop a resume capturing the breadth and depth of their college experiences.

• The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching recognizes Berry with its Community Engagement Classification.

2011-12

• A pair of bald eagles joins the campus ecosystem, nesting near the campus entrance and generating widespread attention.

• A $10 million matching-gift “Oronor Opportunity Fund” is established by an anonymous friend to spur creation of Gate of Opportunity Scholarships; all funds are claimed within two years, supporting an eventual 130 four-year endowed scholarships in perpetuity.

• Berry is honored with an invitation to become a charter member of the Southern Athletic Association of academically excellent residential liberal arts colleges; the decision is made to add football and track and field as varsity sports.

• A renovated art gallery is the showcase piece of visual arts facility upgrades powered by an anonymous donor.

• The Work Experience Program develops new partnerships with off-campus employers as efforts continue to expand the quantity and quality of firsthand work experiences available to students.

• Berry announces plans to add a baccalaureate degree program in nursing, helping to meet local, state and national need for nurses prepared to lead in the complex health care environment.

• Travel + Leisure names Berry one of “America’s Most Beautiful College Campuses.”

• Historic Julia Cottage is transformed into a student residence after being damaged during an April 2011 storm that took down more than 1,000 trees on campus; Sunshine, Hope and Louise cottages and Poland Hall also are converted into student housing.

• Berry’s selection by peers as the No. 1 “up-and-coming” liberal arts college in the nation is announced by U.S. News & World Report.

• More than 6,700 students, alumni, friends and supporters gather for Berry’s first football game, held at Barron Stadium in Rome.

2012-13

• First-year competition in the Southern Athletic Association brings Berry tournament championships in volleyball and men’s soccer and regular-season titles in volleyball, softball and men’s lacrosse.

• As the world watches via webcam, Berry’s bald eagles return to their nest, successfully hatching and nurturing a pair of eaglets that captivate nature lovers around the globe.

• Campus renovations include conversion of Catherine and Emily cottages to student housing and new roofs for Ford Auditorium and the Berry College Chapel.

• An academic studies program becomes the newest offering of the Evans School of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences.

• Oak Hill and The Martha Berry Museum receive a grant to restore the historic Hillsile Garden as part of a larger project to return the grounds of Martha Berry’s home to their original state.

• Berry’s undergraduate enrollment record breaking at 2,121.

• Renovations transform Roy Richards Memorial Gymnasium into a field house for tennis, football, and lacrosse that includes a state-of-the-art conditioning facility for all students; a refurbished gym floor, and a new dance-lab floor.

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