

21 October 2020

Dear Director Martin,

The William & Mary Varsity Women's Swim Team first would like to acknowledge the efforts of Interim Athletic Director Jeremy Martin to speak with student-athletes and to reinstate the varsity women's programs. We feel strongly that Tribe Swimming is not the same without the men's team. Our goals have not changed; we strongly urge you to reinstate the Men's Varsity Swim Team.

During yesterday's message to the athletics community you expressed commitment to seeing the reinstated women's programs thrive in the future. Ensuring the existence and security of our men's team contributes greatly to this goal. Without them, recruiting alone will prove difficult: studies show that 63 percent of female prospective student-athletes prefer schools that offer coed programs. Our combined team has been an asset in recruiting, as we attract talented student-athletes even without a fully funded program. Without our men's team, prospective student-athletes will likely overlook W&M in favor of a school with a coed team, as many of us would have. We committed to this school for its coed program, and may not have come here otherwise.

As you know, our men are arguably the most competitively successful team in the Athletic Department. Last season alone, Colin Wright was ranked fourth in the country in the 50 freestyle, four men (and one woman) qualified for the 2020 US Olympic Team Trials, and our 200 freestyle relay ranked 17th, ahead of Power-5 schools such as UVA and Virginia Tech. Our women train next to the men every day and are pushed to new levels of success because of it. We have won two of the last five CAA titles and out-swam JMU every year. When we have finished second, it is only due to diving points. Northeastern, another women's-only program, boasts the highest swimming budget in the CAA yet finished last at the 2020 Championships. This trend has been proven across the country—85 percent of all conference championships in the last decade were won by coed programs. We are, without a doubt, stronger as one.

These successes have been heavily supported by an expansive alumni base, which grows stronger every year. Our alumni donations are some of the highest in the department, and financial networking is made infinitely easier by keeping both teams. Failing to reinstate the men's team means the university will lose a substantial amount of its donations from Tribe Swimming. The already-minimal cost of the program will be more financially stable with both men and women, as it has been in the past. Additionally, our program supports Title IX compliance: we train together, travel together, have the same coaches and training resources, and receive the same opportunities. Continuing the men's swim team *does not* create Title IX issues for W&M.

Taking away half of our team leaves us with a sense of loss for our family. Each and every one of us came to W&M in part because of the tremendous 55-person family we would immediately become part of. We came to this special place because One Tribe, One Family means that each member of the team is equally important, whether points are shared at the end of the day or not. We practice at the same times, compete at the same meets, and share in each others' victories and losses. Our teams make each other better, and we will not give up on half of our family. Save Tribe Swimming not only means the women's team; simply put, Tribe Swimming is incomplete without our men, and we will continue to fight for the preservation of

our team as a whole. *We write this letter not as the women's team, but as one half of Tribe Swimming unable to reconcile having the other half of our family ripped away from us.*

Time is of the absolute essence. As we write this letter, the recruiting clock is ticking and offers for next season are dwindling. We sincerely hope that our voices, as well as the voices of passionate alumni, parents, faculty, and community members, are taken into consideration while W&M undertakes these next steps. We urge the university to make the right decision, not only for our own benefit but the benefit of the greater community.

Respectfully,
The William & Mary Varsity Women's Swim Team

Megan Bull	Peyton Proffitt
Missy Cundiff	Sydney Querner
Corinne Davenport	Sarah Rice
Maura Graff	Rebecca Rogers
Ellie Henry	Tess Ruona
Madeline High	Katie Stevenson
Elizabeth Intihar	Tara Tiernan
Courtney Isley	Grace Tramack
Kim Jogis	Diana Tramontano
Anna Kenna	Annie Tuttle
Elizabeth Kuhlkin	Kat Vanbourgondien
Brooke Lamoureux	Gabby Zhang
Inez Olszewski	