



F&M

September 3, 2008

Dear Friends of F&M Wrestling,

As set out in coach Schuyler's letter of August 21, F&M wrestling is undergoing some significant changes. Over the past five months a number of very important events have taken place that hold the potential to move F&M wrestling in a very positive direction. Last March F&M hosted the EIWA championships in Lancaster. The results were spectacular. Coach Schuyler and Coach Catullo along with significant assistance from athletic director Patty Epps as well as from the rest of the college hosted the EIWA championships. Mayser Gym was packed with wrestling fans from all over the East Coast for the entire two day championships. F&M's own Justin Herbert finished sixth in the 174 weight class. Other F&M wrestlers also wrestled very well, better than in past years. In all, the College received great press from the national wrestling community.

Hosting the EIWA championships had a very beneficial and unintended consequence. F&M alums, parents and friends of F&M wrestling were able to meet and discuss the olden days, the golden days and the prospects for F&M wrestling going forward. While it is true that F&M wrestling has not been as successful in recent years as it once was, the near universal consensus was that with the support of the College and with Coach Schuyler's leadership, the program could regain its former glory. This is not an easy task. The competitive landscape for wrestling at the Division I level today is fierce. Many schools are able to recruit from a wider applicant pool than F&M and are able to deliver financial aid that makes it difficult for schools like F&M to compete. Nevertheless, Ivy league schools have been improving the quality of their wrestling programs for a number of years. They don't offer athletic scholarships and they too have recruiting limitations. All we need do is look at the national success Cornell and Penn have recently enjoyed as well as the turn around in programs at Harvard, Brown and Columbia. We all left the EIWA's convinced that we had to do something but not quite sure what it was.

As a result of meeting at the EIWA championships, a small group of former wrestlers and current parents of wrestlers ("Friends of F&M Wrestling") met to talk about the program. The result was a series of open and frank discussions first internally and then between coach Schuyler, Athletic Director Patty Epps, Dean of the College Kent Trachte and ultimately President Fry. Candidly, the little band that constituted Friends of F&M Wrestling were concerned. In past few years the college has shown little enthusiasm and support for the program. To reinvigorate the wrestling program we would need the strong support of the college. We also needed to invigorate an alumni base that for a while has felt abandoned. To our great and pleasant surprise, we found our initial meeting in June with Athletic Director Epps and Kent Trachte quite different than we expected. Over the course of several hours we discussed the ways in which the wrestling program could be improved. We found both Patty Epps and Dean Trachte as concerned about the program as we were. Furthermore we found them open to potential solutions and suggestions and

willing to participate in finding creative solutions. We came away from the meeting believing the tide could be turned.

Given the current level of competition in the EIWA conference, we know that there are challenges ahead. Nevertheless, we believe that we can meet those challenges and overcome them with the cooperation of the College and with the support and assistance of the Friends of F&M Wrestling.

We are very pleased therefore, to announce the creation of the **Friends of F&M Wrestling**. The college, through the offices of President Fry, Dean Trachte and Athletic Director Epps have given us great encouragement and hope for the future. As coach Schuyler indicated in his letter, the objective of the program is to develop athlete scholars, compete for EIWA championships and to develop F&M All-American wrestlers. With the help and support of the college and Friends of F&M Wrestling, we believe this objective is achievable.

What is Friends of F&M Wrestling? Simply put, Friends of F&M Wrestling is the community of alumni and fans of Franklin & Marshall wrestling. You are all members.

What is its goal? The goal of Friends of F&M Wrestling is to create a community of F&M Wrestling fans that are informed, interested and willing to participate in the development of the F&M wrestling program and the development of F&M wrestlers while in College and post graduation.

How will this be done? The first step in achieving our goal is to establish better communication among the College, the wrestling program and its fan base. The wrestling program has a very exciting schedule this year and we want you to be part of it. The Michigan State open, the Navy classic, the Southern Scuffle in Greensboro North Carolina; not to mention matches against powerhouses such as Bucknell, Penn and Lehigh make this for an exciting year. We hope to improve communication in many of the following ways: (1) regular electronic newsletters sent to all members of the Friends of F&M Wrestling, (2) a special website dedicated to Friends of F&M Wrestling and (3) alumni gatherings, where coach Schuyler will have an opportunity to talk about the current program and his vision for the future. The website referred to above will contain in-depth information on current F&M wrestlers, regular updates by coaches Schuyler and Catullo, a full list of upcoming events including F&M wrestling matches, alumni gatherings with coach Schuyler, golf outings, banquets, forums to allow members to talk to one another about F&M wrestling, a place to post potential job openings for current wrestlers, recent grads and not so recent grads.... and more. The website will also contain, for subscribing members who wish to participate, contact information for other members, as well as video from recent matches. It will hopefully be a one-stop shop for the community that will make up the vibrant and growing Friends of F&M Wrestling.

We recognize this is long overdue, however, there is clearly an updated view as to the role of Franklin & Marshall wrestling in the College community. Without the support of President Fry, Dean Trachte and Athletic Director Epps, none of this would be possible. They have given great encouragement to the parents and alumni as well as the F&M wrestling family at large. Their support, along with the strong leadership of Coach Schuyler and the renewed vigor of the parent and alumni community, can help put F&M wrestling back on the map. We hope you share our view, will visit our website when it is completed this fall, come to see the Dips wrestle and will visit frequently and become an active Friend of F&M Wrestling.

If you have any questions or would like to help, please do not hesitate to contact Rick Gittleman at 202 431 2311 or at rgittleman@akingump.com or Patric Wallace at 973 543 8559 Ext. 1 or at patric@thewallacegroupinc.com. Furthermore if you would like to receive this letter in the future via email please send Coach Schuyler your email address and he will forward it to us for future notices. Coach Schuyler's email address is: peter.schuyler@fandm.edu.

Rick Gittleman P'10 Patric Wallace '83 Cleon Kassel '62

Rich Bucha P'10 Anthony Bongarzone P'11 Paul Liu '96