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“Going Strong” Continues to Succeed

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From billboards on 40 to Pandora, the marketing department at Meredith College has utilized many advertising channels to promote Going Strong. The Going Strong campaign was created in the spring of 2013 to “increase perceptions of our academic rigor and awareness of [Meredith] as well as increasing enrollment,” said Karen Dunton, Managing Director of Marketing. Also, “Marketing is working to enhance fundraising” and “we are also focused on promoting Meredith’s 125 year anniversary,” said Kristi Eaves-McLennan, Executive Director of Marketing.

According to Dunton, an external group was brought in to conduct qualitative and quantitative research about the awareness and perceptions of Meredith. A creative firm then interviewed current students, alumnae, faculty, staff and parents to

see what image of the college needed to be presented.

The campaign was created as a multi-year strategy, and is currently in the beginning stages. “In a couple of years we will redo the research and see if we’ve gone ahead,” said Dunton. The biggest challenge for creating more awareness of the college is not having enough budget to reach all the desired audiences.

The phrase “Going Strong” is considered the brand platform. “It has come across as very authentic. We’ve had a great response from alums, students, and parents” and “Going Strong has helped the college and will continue to do so,” said Dunton. The different teams making up the Marketing Department, including the writing and design teams, regularly make small changes to the creative outlet depending on the feedback they

receive, but Going Strong is here to stay.

Big picture advertising such as billboards have been most effective for increasing awareness and perception. For recruitment, digital marketing and email has been most successful. “This year will see an increase in digital marketing and ad targeting, but a decrease in television ads,” said Dunton.

The Going Strong campaign has increased “what our peer institutions think of us, which effects rankings, and the value we bring to the community.” By improving the perception of Meredith “we are showing our strength, and hopefully strengthening the community around us,” said Dunton. “It has also helped raise the visibility of wings, the College’s program for adult students,” said Eaves-McLennan.

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For example, the class of 2019 is one of the largest freshman classes in Meredith history. “I definitely think that the campaign has helped Meredith stand out and has helped young women, and in the case of the grad program, some young women and men, take note of us differently than they might have a few years ago.” Also, the graduate and post-baccalaureate programs had a 40% increase in enrollment this year.

“As we enter the third year of the branding campaign, Going Strong still had a great deal of life in it and will be used as long as it remains effective and rings true with the College’s audiences,” said Eaves-McLennan.

“I think that so far Going Strong has been a successful campaign that we look forward to continuing for the next few years to see what more we can do with it” said Dunton.