

ALAN G. MERTEN
532 CAYUGA HEIGHTS ROAD
ITHACA, NEW YORK 14850

January 31, 1996

Mr. Lawrence Czarda
Administrative Offices
George Mason University
Fairfax, Virginia 22030

Dear Mr. Czarda:

I am pleased to be a candidate for the presidency of George Mason University.

GMU has quickly evolved to become a prominent regional university with national distinction. As an observer of the evolution of GMU, I believe that, among other things, success has been based on the following: 1) an attitude that while planning is important, action is more important; 2) excellence comes from being selective, not from being comprehensive; 3) the Washington, D.C. area is a market to be exploited for students, faculty, and institutional partnerships; and 4) building an image requires more than being good, it requires telling the story to important constituents.

GMU will continue to prosper if these fundamentals remain and are enhanced. Private support will become much more important; "friend raising," partnerships, and fund raising will become the business of much of the GMU community. Sophisticated information technologies and systems will not only support teaching, research, and outreach, they will become an integral component of these activities, and could distinguish GMU from its competitors. Finally, the community will need to develop a culture that both generates more innovative ideas than it can handle, *and* will need the ability to make, accept, and follow through on tough decisions.

I love the breadth and diversity of higher education. My degrees are in mathematics and computer science; I have held appointments in engineering and business. My wife has a degree in nursing, and my children have degrees in French, economics, and political science. I have been fortunate to spend a combined total of twenty-five years at one of the best public universities in the world (Michigan), one of the best regional universities in the United States (Florida), and one of the best private universities in the world (Cornell). In addition to serving as a faculty member, I have held numerous leadership positions at the department, school/college, and university levels.

As a faculty member in 1981, I was asked to help with a capital campaign. Little did I know that I would be involved in capital campaigns for the next fifteen years. Most recently, I led a \$50 million campaign that raised \$30 million for a building, and \$20 million for faculty and student support. Raising money is exciting, but developing long term relationships for the university is even more rewarding.

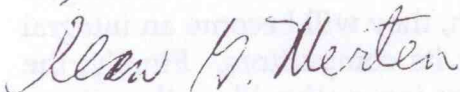
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I am very familiar with the Washington, D.C./Northern Virginia area. I lived in the area for three years in the 1960s, and for three months in 1994. I visit the area frequently, and have strong personal relationships with organizations, business leaders, and government leaders. Because of the nature of this area, GMU's role and opportunities are a unique blend of those facing urban, regional, and national universities.

I believe that leadership, in general, and academic leadership, in particular, is a "contact sport." I have enclosed my resume, which outlines my activities and, by inclusion, the organizations and activities important to me. I have also enclosed four short papers which indicate what I believe is most important for universities. First, universities will have to become more efficient before they can become more effective. We will have to reinvent ourselves. Second, learning will become more important than teaching, and future curricula will be very different from what we see today. Third, technological fluency, at some level, will be a necessary condition for success. Finally, most importantly, dealing with diversity and differences will be both difficult and necessary. I greet each new MBA class at the Johnson School by telling them that the *second* most important thing they will learn at Cornell is accounting, finance, etc. The *most* important thing they will learn is how to live and work with people who are different from them.

I look forward to discussing these matters and the future of GMU with you and your colleagues.

Sincerely,



Alan G. Merten

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