

Subject: Update on Coeducation at Deep Springs

March 6, 2012

Dear Alumni and Friends,

It is almost 6 months since we decided to accept women as students, and there is much to report. As directed by the board, David Neidorf has assembled a Coed Transition Committee. They have gathered at the college and also meet regularly on the phone. As directed by the board, Chris Campbell, our General Counsel, has filed the legal documents to allow coeducation. Our first hearing is scheduled for early March.

I'll share more on each of these topics, but first, let me apologize for the infrequent updates. Several people have told me they wish we were sharing more about our progress, and I agree. Starting now, we plan to send a Coed Report every two to four weeks. Nothing fancy, just a brief description of what has been going on, much like the Community News.

The transition committee consists of students, alumni and friends, and also experts with experience in transitions from single to mixed sex, and experience with coeducation in small, remote environments. There are four sub-committees focused on: (1) Recruiting and admissions; (2) Institutional issues like policies, changes to faculty and staff, or changes to the facilities; (3) Student life, including relationships within the SB, possible changes to the dormitory, and any other SB related issues; and (4) Health and safety. Members have come to the college individually, they have met as a group at Deep Springs, they regularly talk by email and phone, and they will be meeting again in the valley at the end of March. The point is, we are moving forward. (For more details, see David Neidorf's email from December 5th.)

As part of the transition, we must petition the court to determine whether we may legally go coed. We did the legal filings earlier this month in Inyo County, which has jurisdiction over Deep Springs. They took longer than I expected, largely because of Jim Withrow's bequest, which references the restrictions in Nunn's original deed of trust. His bequest may be subject to California law, since Deep Springs is there, but Withrow lived in New York, which has different laws. In the end, we presented two different arguments for the two different states, and the Judge will determine which applies. Complicated. We will make sure that electronic copies of the filings are available to anyone who is interested. (Details to follow, in the first Coeducation Report.) Despite our infrequent communication so far, our goal is to be open and transparent. You can view updates and news on the transition by visiting our website:
www.deepsprings.edu/news%20and%20events/coeducation.

Our initial hearing is scheduled for March 9th. This is the kind with a judge but no jury. With no objections, the Judge could decide on the spot. However, we've heard from some people who may file objections. If so, the Judge will schedule another hearing to give them a reasonable time to respond to our arguments. It will still be the same Judge making the decision, but with more time for input. We'll keep you up to date with the periodic Coed Report. If possible, we'll make any additional filings available electronically.

I am proud of how the community pulled together during our decision making process. While we didn't always agree, we were mostly respectful of each other. I want that to continue as we begin the legal phase of the process! Here is something I believe: we are all doing what we think is best for Deep Springs. We may disagree on what that is, but our ultimate goal is the same: to take care of an institution we believe in. So let's keep things cordial as we work with the court to determine what we are allowed to do.

A final thought on this process. While we were still *making* the decision, I tried to keep the tone neutral and evenhanded. Now I believe that it is appropriate for us to push clearly forward in implementing the decision. There is a legal process we must follow, but our goal is to make a successful transition to a coeducational Deep Springs.

Respectfully,
Dave Hitz DS'80
Chairman, Trustees of Deep Springs