

Subject: Fwd: Superintendent Wins
Date: Saturday, April 12, 2025 at 12:52:25 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Matthew Park
To: Tyree, Matthew R, 'Matt'
CC: BOVSecretary

Good afternoon Mr. Tyree,

I sent this email to the generic BOV email address yesterday evening and likely should have included you.

Can you please be sure this is read by the members of the BOV.

Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,
Matthew Park, MD
Class of 2004

Begin forwarded message:

From: Matthew Park [REDACTED]
Date: April 11, 2025 at 22:20:03 EDT
To: VMI-BOV@vmi.edu, jadams@mcguirewoods.com
Cc: vmi-superintendent@vmi.edu, perrycw@vmi.edu
Subject: Superintendent Wins

Greetings,

My name is Matthew Crowe Park, Class of 2004 - Institute Scholar, biology major, REG S2 CPT, attended the University of Pennsylvania for medical school after graduation, and have anonymously (as the Bible says do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing - though I felt it germane to mention here) routinely donated large amounts to VMI.

I write plainly in this letter because that is what VMI taught me to do.

I have, until now, been proud of VMI's recent leadership decisions being consistent with what VMI stands for - character, honor, service, dedication, commitment - the members of the BOV know these traits and should be led by them in their governance decisions.

Superintendent Wins unequivocally embodies each of these principles in ways that make VMI alumni proud - and is creating a better VMI for current and future cadets.

The ten members of the BOV who voted not to renew his contract do not embody those values. You ten members violated the ideals of VMI you should instead hold dear. Your recent vote is a great tragedy for the Institute and sets a terrible example for cadets and is embarrassing to me and the great majority of alumni I know, a lot of whom are very significant VMI benefactors.

Rather than continue to move forward, you cling to grave errors of the past.

Instead of continuing to support the great progress led by Superintendent Wins, your embarrassing recent 10-6 vote was craven.

I do not use that word lightly. And those ten members are not worthy of being representatives of VMI.

It has been right and just seeing VMI become proactive in addressing problematic, historic issues that were left unaddressed for too long.

I realized soon after I graduated that if changes were not made, especially in regard to racism, I would never want my children to matriculate. That realization was heartbreaking but it was the correct decision at the time.

Then Superintendent Wins began to change my mind.

My wife Laura and I have five children - four of whom are adopted. Three of those children are black.

Under the noble leadership of Superintendent Wins - and attending an alumni outreach dinner event led him - I ultimately changed my mind. With Superintendent Wins at the helm, I would now love for some of my children to attend VMI, knowing that progress with racism was being made, together with a lot of progress in other critical areas that needed improvement.

I recall being forced to salute the statue of Stonewall Jackson each time I left barracks as a rat, even though I knew how wrong and ignorant it was. In talking with my black brother rats, especially after graduation, they shared the humiliation, anger, and disgust they felt with that practice.

I share that specific story because it's emblematic of so many areas of VMI's culture and history that some wish to worship rather than critically analyze.

Superintendent Wins is leading VMI into a better future - we would all do far better to act like him, emulating George Marshall and not Stonewall Jackson.

Why would we honor a man who led the fight to prolong slavery? And the reverential worship VMI tried to instill in cadets about its so called cherished role

fighting for the South in the Civil War.

We should study it and recognize it - but not honor it.

I have no faith that the ten craven members of the BOV will suddenly become worthy of their duty in the next months - but it won't stop me from praying that there will somehow be a way for Superintendent Wins to continue to lead our VMI.

VMI is far luckier to have Superintendent Wins than he is to have VMI.

Sincerely,
Matthew Park '04



Redactions made in accordance with Va. Code § 2.2-3705.1.(10.) - Personal contact information.