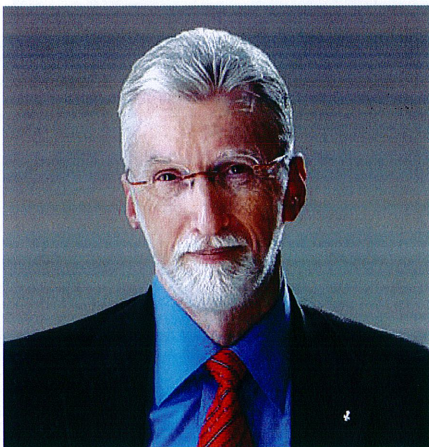




BUILDING A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE AND VIRTUE

By Dr. Bill Thierfelder



In its 137 year history, Belmont Abbey College has never been better known or enjoyed a more illustrious reputation for excellence and virtue than it does at the present time. World renowned speakers such as Robert George, Elizabeth Lev and Cardinal Schönborn have come to our campus this year through the efforts of our faculty and friends.

The Abbey was recently featured on ABC's Extreme Makeover Home Edition with a viewing audience estimated at over ten million people. The College was also mentioned in *Our Sunday Visitor's, Catholics of 2012*. Our Motorsport Management program has been in the national news and recently finished second among leading colleges and universities in the NASCAR Kinetics: Marketing in Motion National Competition. In addition, Becki Gray posted a wonderful commentary on the John Locke Foundation's blog, *The Locker Room*, about Belmont Abbey College that I thought you would appreciate reading.

The Locker Room

THE JOHN LOCKE FOUNDATION'S STATEWIDE ISSUES BLOG

Three things I love about Belmont Abbey College

POSTED ON DECEMBER 7, 2012 AT 1:05 PM, BY BECKI GRAY

Aside from a breathtakingly beautiful campus, here are three things Belmont Abbey College has done recently that should be a model for colleges across the country:

1. They offer a curriculum heavy on classical liberalism and fundamental disciplines, including *two semesters of rhetoric, two of classic texts in political philosophy, two in Western civilization, two in literary classics, a semester on the U.S. Constitution, and First-Year Symposium (a one-semester introduction to college life in a Catholic and Benedictine community; the school has an abbey on campus).*
2. They just reduced their tuition by 33%—a reduction by nearly \$10,000/year. BAC president Dr. William Thierfelder said of the "tuition reset" that it "is a strategic move toward providing an outstanding private college education at an affordable price," in light of the unsustainable rise in the cost of higher education, which has been more than quadruple the rate of inflation in the past 25 years.
3. They are standing up for their right to religious freedom. Belmont Abbey College's lawsuit was the first to be filed after the Department of Health and Human Services issued in 2011 what's known simply as the "HHS mandate." The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia is expediting the Benedictine liberal arts college's case, scheduling it to be heard Dec. 14.



As you may know by now, the U.S. Court of Appeals ruled in favor of Belmont Abbey College. Although a final resolution regarding our first amendment rights as they pertain to the HHS mandate has not been determined, the Court's ruling was a major victory for the Abbey.

And that's not all! This fall we opened the school year with the largest traditional enrollment in the history of the College. The caliber and performance of our students and faculty has never been stronger. The new core curriculum, as well as our programs in the sciences, humanities, Honors Institute, Thomas More Scholars, Hintemeyer Catholic Leadership, Theater - The Abbey Players, and many more, are exceptional. We recently opened a beautiful new Dining Hall, Fitness Facility, and Student Center. Construction is also proceeding on schedule to open two new residence halls for the fall of 2013.

All of this good news would not have been possible without all of your love and support. I am eternally grateful for your help and willingness to continue building a culture of excellence and virtue at the Abbey. Our next major step is to build an endowment that will guarantee Belmont Abbey College in perpetuity. I look forward to working with you to ensure that an Abbey education will always be available to generations to come.

God Bless,
Bill