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ABSTRACT

The articles in this collection analyze the roles, opinions, and views of the spouse of the community college president. After an introductory overview, the following essays are presented: (1) "Opening the Debate," by George B. Vaughan, which discusses conflicting perceptions of the spouse's role; (2) "The Spouse's Role in Perspective," by Roberta H. Ostar, which considers the interpretations of the spouse's role at four-year and two-year colleges; (3) "The Impact of the Women's Movement on the Spouse's Role," by Muriel Kay Heimer, which focuses on the relationship of the male spouse to the presidency; (4) "A Trustee's Perspective on the Spouse's Role," by Sheila Korhammer, which discusses what trustees and spouses can and do expect from each other; (5) "The Career Spouse: Playing the Daily Double," by Peggy A. Vaughan, which looks at ways of successfully juggling multiple career and family roles; (6) "I Don't Have a Bouffant," by Bonnie P. McCabe, which offers the experiences of a presidential spouse in promoting the college to internal and external constituents; (7) "The Male Spouse," by Colin S. Shaw; (8) "The Spouse as a Volunteer," by Pat Goodpaster, which discusses the rewards of the role of community volunteer; (9) "A Moving Experience," by Ginger Crawford, in which the joys and frustrations of relocating are considered; (10) "The Presidential Team: President and Spouse," by Carol Parker Thompson; and (11) "Observations and Recommendations," by George B. Vaughan. (LAL)

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THE

by  
George B. Vaughan  
and Associates

PRESIDENTIAL  
*Team*

PERSPECTIVES ON THE  
ROLE OF THE SPOUSE

JC 870 192

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# The Presidential Team: Perspectives on the Role of the Spouse of a Community College President

By George B. Vaughan  
and Associates

American Association of  
Community and Junior Colleges

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**Dedicated**  
to Ruth Kintzer  
in appreciation for  
her pioneering work  
on the role  
of the spouse of the  
community college president

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# Foreword

Endeavoring to describe the contemporary role of a community college presidential partner/spouse is akin to snapping a picture. Because so little attention has been given to this subject in community college literature some practical assessment of this role is long overdue.

What happens to marital bliss after a particularly acrimonious meeting between the Chief Executive Office and the Board of Trustees? Do college Boards of Trustees know what they expect from the presidential spouse, and if they do, are clear signals given about those expectations? How does the spouse view his or her role in the life of the college? Can a spouse who subscribes to an elitist view of higher education be comfortable in and around an open door community college? Have the key executive officers of community, technical, and junior colleges failed to achieve their full potential because they have not given appropriate attention to the role of their partner/spouse? These questions and many more are addressed in this thought-provoking book published by the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges and edited by George B. Vaughan, president of Virginia Piedmont Community College.

Some significant changes have taken place among the spouses of the community college leaders over the past 20 years. It is estimated that two out of three of the current presidential spouses work outside of home. Twenty years ago only one out of four of the spouses were so engaged.

Today there are 104 female community, technical, and junior college chief executive officers. Twenty years ago that figure was less than 30. As a consequence there is an increasing number of male spouses involved in the current community college scene. The modern women's movement has had an influence upon the role expectations of the spouse. The impact of multiple role expectations of the presidential spouse deserves some attention in the contemporary community college literature.

Certainly, each individual partner/spouse will handle his or her role differently. This will range from a total indifference to the college and presidential responsibilities to total involvement. Regardless of the role played, where does the presidential spouse turn for counsel, advice, and knowledge? Many presidential spouses do not consider themselves a part of the feminist women's movement. Other spouses wholeheartedly support and participate in the women's movement and are impatient with their colleagues who do not share their views. There seems to be a persistent tension between these points of view as related to the role of the community college presidential spouse. Added to this tension are an increasing number of male spouses who often represent another set of interests and relationships in the presidential spouse partnership.

This book represents an initial effort to analyze the oft conflicting views, opinions, and winds that flow around the heads of the community college presidential spouse. Whether young or old, male or female, black or white, the presidential spouses all have one thing in common: an intimate relationship with an individual who happens to be the leader of a very important and unique American collegiate enterprise. Is that enterprise better or worse because of the contributions or non-contributions of the presidential spouse? Or is the spouse irrelevant to the work of the college president?

The contributors to this publication are to be commended for taking on the analysis of these tough issues. They have provided a refreshing and insightful look at the modern community, technical, and junior college presidential spouse. Special thanks must be extended to editors Peggy and George Vaughan, who fulfill the presidential and spouse roles in such exemplary fashion.

This book is not a theoretical treatise, but rather a practical and down-to-earth examination of a neglected role in the contemporary community college movement. Best of all, this analysis has been conducted by individuals who can show the bruises but share the joy of being a partner in an important collegiate enterprise.

Beverly Parnell

*Partner/Spouse of Dale Parnell,  
President of  
the American Association of  
Community and Junior Colleges*

# Preface

As one of the first publications to discuss the complexities surrounding the community college as seen through the eyes and experiences of the spouse, this book is devoted to providing an understanding of an important but heretofore neglected subject, the role of the spouse of the community college president. The spouse of a community college president contributes so much to the chemistry that makes up most presidencies that it is difficult, if not impossible, to understand the complexities of the presidency without some understanding of the spouse's role. While an understanding of the presidency is important and can be enhanced through a better understanding of the spouse's role, there are other reasons for seeking a better understanding of the role the spouse plays in the total scheme of things.

The majority of the spouses work either part-time or full-time outside the home. Also, most spouses are females, and most assume many of the duties of home and hearth as well as those associated with being the spouse of a college president. The result is often a tension that places many spouses in the role of "superwoman," a role that is difficult if not impossible to maintain. This aspect of the spouse's role must be understood, appreciated, and dealt with if spouses, presidents, and trustees are to comprehend the complexities associated with the delicate balance that often separates successful and satisfied presidential families from those that do not understand or even recognize the tensions inherent in the spouse's role.

While much of the literature on leadership discusses the great sacrifices, devotions, and skills of the leader of the enterprise, few books have been devoted to the people who are married to those leaders. Indeed, even today in spite of the many changes that have taken place in the role of women in society, the spouse's role is often thought of in terms of the "behind every good man is a good woman" syndrome. This type of thinking is not only grossly outdated

(one wonders how the male spouse reacts to this type of thinking) but grossly unfair. As this volume clearly demonstrates, spouses are intelligent and sensitive individuals who have their own lives, their own careers, and their own ways of influencing not only their own destinies but also the lives of those with whom they come into contact, including their own spouse. While the influence the community college itself has had on the lives of spouses varies from college to college and from individual to individual, two things are clear: the spouses who have contributed to this volume understand, believe in, and are devoted to the community college philosophy and mission; and, these spouses, as well as hundreds of spouses across the nation, have played and will continue to play, a major role in the success of community colleges.

On behalf of our profession, it is my pleasure to thank those who have contributed to this volume. As presidents, spouses, trustees, scholars, and others interested in the community college read the chapters, I hope they too will take a moment to reflect on the role of the spouse and to acknowledge the debt we all owe to those spouses who have brought some light to bear on this important subject. I hope that this volume is a first important step toward bringing the spouse of the president into the mainstream of the debate on the role the community college plays in American society.

### **An Overview**

Chapter one presents some of the conflicting views on the role of the presidential spouse. George Vaughan contends that the spouse of the community college president has much in common with spouses of other leaders, including the spouse of the President of the United States. The chapter also discusses perceptions of the spouse's role and gives examples of personal values clashing with the spouse's role.

Chapter two places the role of the spouse of the community college president into the broader context of the role of the presidential spouse as that role is interpreted at four-year colleges and universities. Roberta Ostar brings her vast knowledge—knowledge gained through years of studying the spouses of the presidents of members of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities—to bear on the role of the spouse in general, thereby providing a broad base for interpreting the role of the spouse of the community college president.

Chapter three examines the impact of the women's movement on the role of the spouse, both male and female. Muriel Kay Heimer, one of the relatively few female community college presidents in the nation, brings her own experiences and those of her spouse to bear on the relationship of the spouse to the presidency. The result is an interpretation that meshes the women's movement with the community college movement, both of which peaked at the same time.

A trustee's perspective of the role of the spouse is presented in chapter four. What do trustees expect of the spouse? What should they expect? What can the spouse expect from trustees? Sheila Korhammer, a trustee and a na-

tional leader in the Association of Community College Trustees, provides answers to these questions and much more. This chapter is absolutely "required reading" for all trustees as well as for others who wish to understand the spouse-trustee relationship.

Chapter five discusses the "daily double" faced by the career spouse. Rejecting the role of "superwoman" as untenable, Peggy Vaughan examines how the career spouse can successfully juggle the roles of wife, teacher, mother, and spouse. The result is an understanding of the spouse's role that should be invaluable to those spouses who have committed themselves to playing not only the "daily double" but succeeding in each aspect of the various roles associated with their lives.

Chapter six provides a penetrating analysis of the role one spouse has carved out for herself. Relinquishing her own role as teacher, Bonnie P. McCabe does not work in a paid position. Instead, she devotes her time, energy, and numerous talents to promoting the college with both internal and external constituents. Indeed, this spouse has not only created an important role for herself with community and college leaders but with students as well.

Chapter seven is by a male spouse whose wife is in her second presidency. Arguing that role definition, whether one is a male or female spouse, is the key to success not only for the spouse but for the president as well, Colin Shaw shares his own insights as a male spouse who has not only adjusted to the role but who has recently moved to a new location because his wife assumed a new position. He contends that male spouses of female community college presidents are a phenomena in the forefront of a wave of significant change in community college leadership and in society in general.

Chapter eight describes the spouse as a volunteer. Playing the role of volunteer for 24 years, Pat Goodpaster shares the rewards of her role. She has no regrets about the role she chose for herself and, in fact, recommends it to others. Her chapter is inspiring and relevant to the role many spouses have chosen for themselves. In essence, the author views the total community and not just the campus as her field of work. Her work, she believes, enhances the role of the college in her community and the welfare of the community itself.

Chapter nine shares a "moving experience" with the reader. Having just moved to a new city, Ginger Crawford discusses the joys and frustrations associated with moving, including the problems faced when one has to tell the children that a move is being considered. Those spouses and presidents who are contemplating relocation will find comfort in the moving experience of one presidential family.

Chapter ten says in a scholarly way that the other chapters have implied: the most successful relationship is when the spouse and president function as a team. Carol Parker Thompson, a Ph.D. and spouse of a male president, discusses how she brings her own discipline to bear on the president-spouse relationship. The result of viewing the presidency as a team consisting of the president and spouse is that the capacity for leadership of both members of the team is increased. This chapter may well describe the wave of the future as more and

more women who are married to community college presidents not only enter the workforce but enter it as academically well prepared as their husbands.

In chapter eleven, George Vaughan provides a brief summary statement and makes recommendations regarding the role of the spouse of the community college president. This chapter, rather than ending the volume, is intended to open the discussion for the next step in examining the role the spouse plays in understanding and carrying out the leadership function inherent in the community college presidency.

# Opening the Debate

by George B. Vaughan

Recently I completed a study of the presidents of public two-year colleges that was published under the title of *The Community College Presidency*. One chapter in the volume examines the role of the spouse of the community college president and in a separate section, Peggy Vaughan, a “presidential spouse” for the past 15 years, offers her observations on what it is like “being there.” The reaction to this chapter among spouses, presidents, and trustees convinced me that there was a need for further research and observations on the role of the spouse of the community college president. One of the conclusions I reached in *The Community College Presidency* was that the community college presidency cannot be fully understood or appreciated without a better understanding of the role the spouse plays in the total scheme of things. Another conclusion was that the spouse determines, in part, the effectiveness of the president.

Much of the chapter on the role of the spouse was based on surveys of spouses and presidents and on personal interviews with spouses, presidents, faculty members, and trustees. For the most part, I resisted the temptation to inject my own opinions. Since completing the book on the presidency, I have continued to study the research on the role of the spouse of college presidents (all of which pertains to spouses of presidents of four-year institutions) and to talk with community college presidents and spouses about the spouse’s role. In some respects, this current chapter is a continuation of the discussion I began in the previous volume.

Those who have not read *The Community College Presidency* might find it useful to read it in conjunction with this volume. Indeed, the previous book might serve as a useful introduction to the spouse's role and as a preface to this volume. As was the case with the previous study, I make no attempt to evaluate the differences in the spouse's role when the spouse is male (the chapter by Shaw in this volume and other sections of other chapters discuss the spouse's role from the perspective of the male spouse); to the contrary, my perspective is to view the spouse's role as if the spouse is female, which of course the great majority are.

### Mixed Signals

As the other half of the team the spouse has a strategic role to play. Americans . . . won't see her in the private role . . . that of presidential confidant and sounding board, someone to whom (the president) will turn with observations about his meetings . . . ; or with questions about the character and motives of the people involved . . . . What they will see is . . . a carefully thought-out public role, one designed to provide what one insider calls a "warm, fuzzy" side of the administrations's image. . . . Her biggest contribution . . . will be to reinforce some of the president's positions, . . . encouraging him to be up for it, watching his moods, his health, his diet, his hours of sleep—things of that nature so that he is in good shape (*Washington Post*).

Many spouses of community colleges presidents will identify with the above comments about the role of the presidential spouse. Those who do are in select company, for the observations were made about Nancy Reagan's role at the Geneva Summit during November of 1985 (*Washington Post*), November 18, 1985, pp. B-1, and B-9). Mrs. Reagan, perhaps even to a greater degree than Lady Bird Johnson and Rosalynn Carter, has elevated the spouse's role to heights not seen since the ascendancy of Eleanor Roosevelt. Nancy Reagan speaks on the issues of the day regularly, often, and forcefully. She has her causes, including serving as a leader in the war on drugs. On the other hand, she often reverts to the traditional "warm, fuzzy" role (the ever-loving wife) identified by the Post writer without breaking stride, thus giving off mixed signals, which makes describing her role as the spouse of the most powerful and influential leader in the world difficult.

In many ways the role assumed by Mrs. Reagan and those of the more assertive first ladies, is similar to the role assumed by the more assertive spouses of community college presidents. That is, the role of the community college's "first lady" is similar in many respects to the role of the nation's first lady. For example, many presidential spouses have their causes and crusades and can readily identify with the human rights crusades for Mrs. Roosevelt, the volunteer projects of Mrs. Johnson, the assertiveness of Mrs. Carter, and the dualism of Mrs. Reagan. These presidential spouses, like the first ladies of the land, use their position as a forum for promoting their own causes, causes that may or may not have a direct relationship to the college but that are very important to the spouse as an individual. In some cases, these spouses may reject working



outside the home in order to devote more time and energy to their favorite cause. In other cases, promoting the college becomes their cause. Just as Mrs. Johnson was able to prevent her "Keep America Beautiful" project from being sucked into the quicksand of Southeast Asia, which finally engulfed President Johnson, some community college presidential spouses are able to raise their causes to a level well above the daily machinations on most college campuses. The identity and effectiveness of these spouses is almost always enhanced by their husband's position.

Presidential spouses, both at the national and campus level, make a conscious effort to define the limits of their role. Hugh Sidey writes in the October 6, 1986 issue of *Time* regarding the role Mrs. Reagan has charted for herself: "As First Lady, she could have eased up, turning away into antiques or gardening. To her critics, she is the most infuriating, contradictory and perplexing person in this Administration. Yet she could emerge as one of the most notable First Ladies in history" (p.22). Sidey's comments on Mrs. Reagan provide insight into the complexity of the presidential spouse's role, not only at the national level but at the campus level as well.

Just as not all first ladies of the land want to carry the flag or influence national policy, nor do spouses of community college presidents want to break out of or even reshape the mold associated with the more traditional homemaker-hostess-spouse. Many spouses are, as one spouse noted, as liberated as they want to be; they are perfectly content to turn "away into antiques or gardening." They do not want a career (or even a job) outside the home; they do not have a cause; nor do they want to be "the power behind the throne." They want to be good wives, good mothers, and good "first ladies" as defined by their own value system and circumstances. (This is not to imply in any way that the more politically and socially active spouses, whether married to the president of the United States or the president of a community college, are any less effective or less devoted to their roles as mothers and wives than are those spouses who are less involved in causes outside the college and home. To identify the more traditional spouses with the more traditional roles is simply one way of saying that some spouses are content with more traditional roles.)

Almost two-thirds of the spouses of current community college presidents work outside the home, and 43 percent of them work full time (Vaughan 1986, p. 144). These spouses have what at times may be the dubious honor of juggling their roles as presidential spouse, career women, wife, and mother. These spouses may find that their career leaves little time for college-related activities; this cause may well be their own career; and what time is left after working at a full-time position is quickly absorbed by home activities. Since this group is so large, the implications for the presidential spouse's role are great. (Of course, many of these spouses have a "job" and not a career and therefore continue to perform many of the tasks associated with the traditional homemaker-hostess-spouse role.) Their identity with the college often depends upon how much time and energy they devote to their own careers. For example, a career woman with a position equal to or nearly equal to the presi-

dency will likely establish her identity through her profession; a spouse who holds a job with little prestige or opportunity for personal involvement or time in the limelight will likely continue to identify closely with her husband's position as president and will gain prestige from that identity.

Some spouses of community college presidents simply want to pursue their own lives independently of the college. They just happen to be married to a community college president and have little or no interest in the affairs of the college as those affairs relate directly to them. These spouses make a clear distinction between being a wife and being a presidential spouse. They may or may not have careers of their own; they simply reject for their own reasons any role associated with the college that would place demands on them and that would suggest (and in some cases demand) that they act a certain way. They expect nothing special to come from being married to a college president, and in turn they give nothing because of their husband's position. These spouses are in a very small minority for, by definition, being married to a college president demands a certain commitment to the husband's career and therefore a certain involvement with and loyalty to the college.

The gist of the argument as presented here is that once someone assumes the college presidency (even a rejection of the presidential spouse's role does not allow one to ignore the presidency), the spouse feels the impact of the appointment. Indeed, the impact of the presidency is often just as great, and in some cases greater, on the spouse as on the president. At least the person assuming a presidency, even for the first time, has some idea of what to expect; rarely does the spouse of the president know what to expect, although many four-year colleges and universities have a clearer vision of what is expected of the spouse than do community colleges. Approximately 16 percent of the community colleges furnish houses for their presidents (Vaughan 1986, pp.8, 52), whereas 72 percent of the presidents who are members of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) live in homes furnished by the college (Ostar 1986, p.103), and the percentage of college-furnished homes is certainly higher for presidents of research universities. College-furnished homes bring certain expectations to the spouse's role that are often not present when a home is not provided by the college, a situation that might be an advantage or a disadvantage.

The president has instant name recognition, prestige, and a built-in cadre of supporters (and detractors); rarely does the spouse have any of these. The president, while bringing his own style to the position, has years of institutional tradition on which to build; the spouse may, on the other hand, find that the traditions associated with the spouse's role depend largely upon the role assumed by the former spouse and may be in stark contrast to her own lifestyle, values, and wishes. While the spouse's role differs in degree rather than kind, it is nevertheless the differences in degree that make the spouse's role so challenging, so frustrating, and, one hopes, so interesting and rewarding. Adding to the complexity of the spouse's role are the mixed signals she receives from the college, from the college board, from society, and, in some cases, from her hus-

band regarding not only her role as the president's spouse, but as a wife, as a mother in many cases, and more and more as someone who works outside the home.

### Searching for an Identity

The struggle for identity among presidential spouses was clearly illustrated this past summer in Vail, Colorado, at the annual meeting of the Presidents Academy of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC). The participants in the workshop included 51 presidents (all male) and approximately 32 spouses. In recent years, it has been the tradition for the spouses to present a short skit during the closing banquet. The grand finale of this past summer's presentation was a song sung by the spouses to the tune of "In the Good Old Summertime." The words of the song are as follows:

Colleg Presidents wives must be  
Multifaceted—yes sireee!  
Wives and mothers, chauffeurs too  
Often serving tea. . .  
One moment we're spouse, the next we're mom,  
And later we ask "Who am I?"  
But through all the stresses and emotional strain  
We continue to stand by our guy . . .

We entertain with flair  
Even though the budget's not there . . .  
We're sounding boards for hubby's cares  
And sometimes it takes half the night. . .  
And when we think all is going well  
He say, "It's time for a change.  
Just pack the bags, and sell the house,  
And please, don't look strange at me!"

There are meetings here and there,  
And we're often left alone  
With homes to manage and things to do  
Like answering the confounded phone!  
But when he returns  
We're glad we're there  
To welcome him home, cause you see  
We're CEO wives and we're mighty proud  
To be the best we can be!

Beth Hasemeyer  
North Platte, Nebraska  
(Used with permission of the author)

Several spouses sang the song with gusto; others appeared to be good sports and joined in; a few spouses not only did not join in the singing but found this diversion less than enjoyable (a number of jokes were told by some

of the presidents that were interpreted by some women as less than flattering) and, in fact somewhat demeaning to them as women and, one would assume, in conflict with how they view the spouse's role.

I came away from the conference feeling as if I had witnessed a mini-version of a civil rights movement, with certain spouses being viewed by their more liberal associates as insensitive to the changing role of women in relationship to their role as spouses. Many of those placed by their colleagues in the role of clinging to the status quo seemed unaware that anyone would or could find fault with their involvement in the evening's activities. Indeed, most of them will likely be surprised to find out that not all of the women at the conference identified with or appreciated the evening's activities. (Some male presidents also expressed displeasure with the evening's activities, even though in two instances their spouses were not present. A female president who only attended the evening banquet was incensed over the evening's activities, as was her spouse.) It is important to note that most spouses and presidents occupied the middle ground and took the evening's activities in stride, enjoying some activities more than others.

The Vail incident illustrates the complexities of the search for identity on the part of a number of presidential spouses. Are the more secure and contented of today's spouses those who continue to "stand by their guy?" Or, are they those spouses who reject the whole notion of women spouses providing entertainment for 51 male presidents, the ones who best understand the spouse's role? Or is the truth somewhere in between the two extremes? Of course, the answer lies deep within the 1,000 or so women who are married to male community college presidents. As more and more attention is focused on the role of the spouse, one can expect increased tension among spouses, presidents, and trustees regarding the spouse's role. One result will be that some polarization will take place—just as it did, and in some cases continues to do, with the women's movement, the black movement, and other aspects of the civil rights movements of the past two decades—until some consensus is reached.

### **Other Perspectives**

A day after a meeting with a group of spouses in which I shared some of my findings on the role of the spouse, including pointing out that many spouses would like more money for entertainment, travel funds, and some other "basics," I was approached by the husband of one of the spouses who had been in the group. His response to my workshop with the spouses: "George, you had better watch it. You are going around getting all of these women upset. They come home after hearing of all of these benefits other spouses are getting and press the hell out of us."

The point made by the president, while offered somewhat in jest, serves to illustrate another "danger" of critically evaluating the spouse's role. Again, the civil rights analogy seems appropriate. Once you see others of your group

riding in the front of the bus, you will never again be content to ride in the back again. (This analogy is in *no way* used to imply that the seriousness of the two situations is the same. While evaluating the role of the spouse is important within its context, it is certainly not of the magnitude of the issues emanating from the bus illustration.) Or, to put it into the context of the spouse's role, once the spouses start talking among themselves and the "have nots" hear that some spouses have relatively large budgets for entertainment while they have none, that the board of trustees agrees to pay the cost of the spouse to two professional meetings of her choice (as is the case with the spouse of the president of a small, rural college in the Midwest), while they have no travel funds, there is likely to be trouble in paradise in the homes and perhaps on the campuses of these presidents and trustees who have chosen to ignore the role of the spouse.

The trustee's perspective on the role of the spouse is mixed ranging from benign neglect of the spouse in involving her actively in many aspects of college life. Most spouses, however, are neither neglected by the board nor actively involved; they are just "there" to fill certain ceremonial roles (serving as hostess is ultimately ceremonial, although those spouses who do their own cooking, cleaning, etc. may question this assertion) and to carve out their own roles, or, in some cases no role, as they deem appropriate.

Trustees have mixed views on the importance of the spouse's interview. It varies from college to college, even in states with strong state systems of community colleges that have tightly drawn regulations and procedures for selecting presidents. (Incidentally, any mention of the spouse is missing from the procedures of at least one statewide system.) For example, in filling its presidential vacancy, the board at one community college in this same state system not only invited the spouse of the candidate to be interviewed, but a member of the board gave her a tour of the area, including showing her potential homes and schools, and the board had a reception and dinner during the evening that was as much for her benefit as for the presidential candidate's.

At the other extreme is the college in the same strong state system that recently filled its presidential vacancy. In this case, there was no opportunity for the spouse to meet with board members, no reception in the evening, and no acknowledgment that the spouse even existed other than the offer of a secretary to *try* to arrange a tour of the area, should the candidate care to *bring* his spouse along.

The spouse who was interviewed approached her role with confidence and a feeling of being an important part of the presidential partnership; the spouse who had the offer to be "brought along" and who did not go since she had already spent three days touring the area on her own, is approaching (as of this writing, she has not yet assumed the presidential spouse's role) her role with a degree of uncertainty that might not have existed had the board interviewed her.

The above examples illustrate the complexities surrounding the role of the spouse, even at the interview stage. One is tempted to conclude that the board that gave attention to the spouse during the interview wants the spouse

involved in the activities of the college and sees her as an important part of the presidential team, while the other board does not view the spouse's role as important. Herein lies the danger. It is a mistake for the spouse who is ignored in the presidential selection process to assume that nothing is expected of her as the spouse of the president. It is also a mistake for the spouse who received the "royal treatment" to assume that the board members will appreciate, understand, and support her role. In fact, a conversation with members of the board that gave the reception revealed that little thought had been given to the spouse's role during the three years since the interview. The conclusion here is that there may be little or no relationship between the actions of the spouse once her husband becomes president. The board may take it for granted that the spouse will act in a certain way, will fill a certain role, and will by some strange process know what is expected of her.

### **When Values Clash**

The spouse's role is often in conflict with personal and professional values. Two rather diverse examples illustrate these conflicts. During a spouse's seminar this past year, the discussion turned to whether or not alcohol should be served at college-related functions—specifically, should the spouse serve alcohol in her home at receptions for trustees. I assumed the discussion would last at most a couple of minutes, since the use of alcohol is so widespread in American society. My assumption probably would have been correct had the discussion taken place in those sections of the country where the words "reception" and "cocktails" are synonymous. This discussion, however, took place among a group of spouses from a section of the country where the use of alcohol is not only not taken for granted but is specifically prohibited by one of the major religions of the area; it took place in an area where the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (the Mormon church) is a dominant force. The general conclusion among the spouses (Mormons and non-Mormons) after 30 minutes or so of discussion was that if one did not endorse the use of alcohol, one should not be expected to serve it in one's home. One spouse, a Mormon, was far from being at ease with the discussion and its conclusion, for the board at the college where her husband is president is split between Mormons and non-Mormons. As a result, she always feels ill at ease because she cannot satisfy the non-Mormon members of the board, who prefer that cocktails be served, while maintaining her own values. (If she relinquished and served alcohol, she would likely encounter hostility from the Mormons on the board as well as suffer from having violated her own values. *Catch-22* is alive and well in this situation.) She believes, should her husband leave the presidency of that college, some board members would not want another Mormon as president simply because of the clash in values.

In another instance where values clashed, a spouse who is a public school teacher from a highly unionized section of the nation found herself in an awkward position because of her membership in a union. It seems as if the same union that represents the teachers of her school also represents the faculty at the



community college where her husband is president. She was immediately suspect among her colleagues since her husband represented the management side of the debate. Was she ready and willing to “sell out” her colleagues and join her husband on management’s side of the negotiating table? Although from a practical point of view the fact that her husband was a “symbol of management” and by definition “the enemy” had no impact on the outcome of the bargaining agreement at her school, the spouse nevertheless felt tremendous pressure from how others viewed her dual role of presidential spouse and career educator. While her professional allegiance remained with the union that represented her professional interests and while she continued to fill the spouses role—including entertaining the ultimate symbol of management, members of the governing board—her values clashed to such an extent that she briefly questioned the desirability of maintaining her career while filling the role of presidential spouse.

Certainly there are many examples where spouses are faced with clashes in values. In the final analysis, the spouse must decide where her compromise line lies and, if she is asked to cross it and is unwilling to do so, determine if she can effectively perform the role that is expected of her as the spouse of the president at that particular college. Unfortunately, too few spouses know the rules of the game prior to finding themselves in the heat of the contest; therefore, when values clash, a crisis occurs that can have a major impact in the home and on the college.

### **Symbols of Satisfaction and Respect**

Based on my previous research and on recent conversations with spouses, a number of issues that most community college presidential spouses believe are important to the satisfaction and respect associated with their roles emerged. The great majority of the spouses agreed that their role would be enhanced if they had adequate funds for entertainment, funds for travel to professional meetings, some recognition of their role by the governing board, and some idea of what is expected of them when they assume the role of presidential spouse.

In discussing sources of stress on the presidential spouse, Roberta Ostar reports that the spouses of presidents who are members of the AASCU also ranked a lack of identification associated with their role and a lack of appreciation of their role by the governing board as major concerns when the spouse’s role was discussed in a public forum. She notes, however, that on a confidential survey of AASCU spouses, those responding to the survey identified a lack of time and the effects of a campus crisis on the health of the president as the major causes of stress. Her conclusion is that the apparent contradiction results from the spouse’s unwillingness to acknowledge family stresses in public and therefore turn to the “safer” grounds of role identification and appreciation (Ostar 1986, p.112).

Assuming Ostar is correct in her analysis of the AASCU spouses (although I fail to see any reason for spouses’ timidity in publicly discussing a lack

of time and yet being willing to air their feelings on the more personal issue of lack of appreciation), she might well have reached different conclusions had she studied the spouses of the community college presidents. A lack of time is certainly a factor in the life of many community college presidential spouses, especially when one considers the number who work outside the home. Pressure on the president, regardless of the source (I discovered that "bad press" regarding the college, and especially the president, results in near paranoia on the spouse's part), also creates stress on the spouse of the community college president. However, at this stage in the development of the community college and the spouse's part in that development, the most important issues related to the spouse's role center around the more basic concerns such as creating an identity and obtaining satisfaction from the role.

In creating respect for the spouse's position, funds for entertainment and travel are important symbols; they say that the spouse's role is important. The same is true of recognition of the importance of the spouse's role by the governing board. Indeed, if no other argument could be made (and there are many) for interviewing the spouse as a part of the presidential selection process other than the fact that she is interviewed, this act alone sends her a message that she is important; in turn, this message alone would justify the interview. As one writer observes regarding the spouse's interview: "Search committees are well advised to invite the spouse to campus for the interview. While some have been skittish that such an invitation will be misconstrued as a sexist assumption that the wife is the unpaid team member, it is, rather, a courtesy to the candidate and the spouse and an acknowledgement that family members are profoundly affected by the presidential role" (Green 1986, p. 62). In attempting to understand and define the spouse's role, it is important to recognize that there are certain basic needs associated with the role and that these needs must be met before the president-spouse team can reach its full potential. Until that time it is unlikely that the community college will reach its full potential, for without the best possible leadership at the top, no organization can achieve its potential. In the case of most community colleges, "leadership at the top" consists of a president and spouse who understand, appreciate, and are committed to the institution's mission and to the roles they play in achieving that mission.

### Conclusion

The major conclusion reached here regarding the role of the spouse of the community college president is that the spouse's role will increasingly become a subject of debate in the foreseeable future. While it is unlikely that a consensus will or should be reached on the role of the spouse, it is likely that as the spouse's role is analyzed, some consensus will be reached on the purpose of the spouse's interview, on funds of entertainment and travel, and on the board-spouse relationship. As spouses, presidents, trustees, and scholars continue to evaluate the spouse's role, presidents and trustees should (and in some in-



stances, will be forced to) evaluate their own role in relationship to the spouse's role and evaluate the spouse's role in the presidency and the college's mission. The results of these evaluations, while creating tensions at times, should result in more effective presidents and spouses and ultimately more effective colleges.

# The Spouse's Role in Perspective

by Roberta H. Ostar

A college's second most visible public relations officer, a finder of funding sources for endowed chairs and donations of property and funds to the institution, a part of the university's living logo—thus has the college president's spouse been characterized and praised.

Who are these spouses, and how did they come to this position of public prominence? By marriage and by happenstance, most would say. Unlike the politician's wife who, when her husband declares for office, has a pretty good idea of her impending public role, the college president's spouse, pleased at her husband's appointment to head an institution of higher learning, probably feeling a part of the higher education scene with past experience as a professor's or dean's wife, may be astounded at what lies ahead for her. While representing the institution along with the president is an honor most spouses are pleased to accept, spouses usually are surprised to find, particularly in communities where the institution may be the "biggest show in town," that their choice of hairdresser, clothes (and where they are purchased), and even the foods they eat are matters of avid public interest.

The "Princess Di syndrome" catches most president's spouses unaware, but the similarity of the lives of the college president and spouse to our country's president and first lady is remarkable. Since we are without benefit of separate ceremonial persons heading our institutions in this country—as Great Britain has in its monarch and prime minister—presidential couples serve both functions and find that public interest in their symbolic "heads-of-state" roles is very much a part of their lives.

Even the advent of the male spouse does not lessen the feeling that the spouse of the president is an important part of the public picture. Since colleges and universities in this country were traditionally headed by a male president with a spouse who volunteered her time to furthering of the institution, even presidential spouses with their own careers report that they still fulfill most of the obligations assumed for the role of spouse of the president.

While the public is aware, then, of the ceremonial role of the president's spouse, they lack an equal awareness of the time and hard work that go along with the public recognition. The public also lacks knowledge of the many achievements for the institution accomplished by the president's spouse.

### Yesterday and Today

Historically, as David Riesman writes in "The President's Spouse: The University's Added Dimension," our first colleges were religiously sponsored institutions, headed generally by ministers (1980). The spouse of the president was a minister's wife and as such carried on the traditional helping role to her spouse—a total time and, of course, unpaid commitment to this role.

Referring to Riesman's quote from Alexis de Toqueville in the same paper, one should note, however, that while these ladies willingly gave of themselves to assist their husbands, they were not subservient in this role. De Toqueville described the women in America of that time (1831) as independent, essential partners to their husbands, visible to the public, and active in such volunteer movements as the fight against "demon rum," for prison reform, and, of course, a little time thereafter, for the right of women to vote in public elections (Riesman 1980).

Today, the women's involvement, in terms of the growing number of female presidents and male spouses, of single presidents with no spouse to take on the volunteer role, and of president's spouses with their own careers, has made it possible for each person to fashion a pattern for her life as a presidential spouse that meets her own, the president's, and the university community's needs. (One really does say and think "her." The numbers of male spouses are so small that their own particular approach to the role of presidential spouse is best described in its own section.)

In making her choice, however, the president's spouse has little to guide her. The dearth of literature on this subject and the lack of easy communication with peers make fashioning a sensible life pattern as spouse of the president difficult to do.

### Research and Literature

Substantive programs for spouses as part of the annual meetings of associations of higher education are of real assistance, the spouses say, and are growing in numbers and depth. The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) has offered such a program to the spouses of presidents since 1974. The National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) initiated similar programming after Joan Clodius became its presidential spouse in 1979, and the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC), under the guidance of its presidential spouse, Beverly Parnell, offers stimulating and renewing programs at AACJC meetings.

Research and literature show similar development. In 1977 Marguerite Corbally, spouse of the president of the University of Illinois, initiated the first research on the spouses of college and university presidents, covering both public and private institutions. Her report and interpretive commentary, published in *The Partners: Sharing the Life of A College President*, was a first in the field and is of value today with its overall picture of the president's spouse and its insightful comments (Corbally 1977).

Surveys of college president's spouses of the 370 AASCU institutions were conducted in 1981, 1983, and 1986. The last survey is reported in *The Partnership Model: A Family Perspective on College Presidency*, which includes not only the report of the 1986 survey, but also essays on male spouses, on children of presidents, and on single presidents who cope without the volunteer spouse (Ostar 1986). *The President's Spouse: Volunteer or Volunteered*, published in 1984 by NASULGC, reports their presidential spouse survey and includes chapters on a variety of aspects of the presidential spouses' lives, each written by a different NASULGC president's spouse (Clodius and Magrath 1984).

In previous literature on the college presidency, the president's spouse was generally not mentioned. In today's literature one is likely to find substantive sections or even an entire chapter devoted to the spouse's role as part of any volume on the presidency. One such publication is *Presidents Make a Difference: Strengthening Leadership in Colleges and Universities*, a report of the Commission on Strengthening Presidential Leadership sponsored by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB), directed by Clark Kerr (1984). Here presidents' spouses were included in the interviewing that formed the basis for the book—including 13 male spouses. Also, note that Marguerite Corbally was named to serve on the commission by AGB. Other publications include *The Many Lives of Academic Presidents: Time, Place and Character*, Clark Kerr and Marian Gade (AGB), which devotes one section to "Looking for the Ideal in Presidents and Spouses" (1986), and, of course, *The Community College Presidency*, by George Vaughan (American Council on Education/Macmillan), with its chapter on the spouse from both the perspective of President Vaughan and of Peggy Vaughan (1986).

One may assume that as this body of literature continues to grow, so will the awareness and depth of attention given to the description of contributions and the options in carrying out the role of the president's spouse. Thus today's presidential spouse is more amply supported and informed by programs and personal contact with peers at association meetings and through the current literature on the presidency.

Comparing the responses of the urban presidential spouses to those of the medium or smaller communities is enlightening. While urban spouses compete with a plethora of other organizations and may struggle to give the college staff, faculty, or students a sense of community, spouses from less populated areas struggle to distance themselves somewhat from the college, trying to install a modicum of privacy in the face of an overwhelming sense of

community. Whether one is an urban spouse in a condo or a suburban spouse in a grand, university-owned historical house, space for entertaining, type of entertaining, and resources are equally pressing problems.

### **Woman's Work**

One wonders if the root of problems regarding entertaining could be traced to the fact that the college presidential spouses are so overwhelmingly female and their tasks for the college fit so closely into the traditional "woman's work" of cooking, cleaning, and caring. The obligations of the president's spouse mirror almost exactly what any woman would do for her own family: maintain a clean, comfortable, friendly house; provide good food and drink; and welcome guests graciously in her home.

Only, in the case of the president's spouse, home may be a twelve-room affair including large entertaining rooms; food and drink may be for 100 or more; and the guests the spouse is graciously welcoming may have been there for this annual event for years. Nevertheless, because of the traditional scene of "woman's work," the many guests at the functions may be seen by campus and community alike as personal friends of the president and spouse; as in: there they go again, they're always having dinners and parties, aren't they? Really living it up, and in the college-provided house, too.

One president's spouse almost broke up a meeting with her salient comment at a spouses' program. In reporting on such occurrences, the speaker made the comment that those are college guests. No one has three or four thousand personal friends. Her comment was: "and certainly not a college president!"

### **The President's Spouse as Volunteer**

Presidential spouses with their own careers, the growing number of male presidential spouses, and the growing number of single college presidents have made it easier to identify the contribution of the volunteer presidential spouse and thus somewhat easier to achieve support and recognition for all spouses. However, because of the relative isolation of each institution, it becomes the job of the spouse, or president and spouse, to make known these contributions to the enhancement of the institution brought about by the volunteer spouse. In traditionally identifying certain activities as "woman's work," there is a tradition which even the most "liberated" presidential spouse finds herself reluctant to break: the self-effacing contribution of oneself in volunteering. The difficulty in the presidential spouse's volunteering is that no one formally asks her to volunteer her time for the college and she belongs to no identifiable group of volunteers (perhaps she could be listed in the members of the Booster Club!). A great deal of the lack of support and appreciation for the contributions of the volunteer spouse can be traced to the total ignorance on the part of both the campus community and the larger college community of the time and effort devoted to the college by the president's spouse.

Certain actions can be taken by the president and spouse to improve this condition. Several institutions, either by their own enlightened sense or at the request of the president, have appointed a governing board committee to work with the spouse on maintenance and furnishings for the president's home. This provides support for the items necessary for official entertaining, and prevents as well the houses from falling into disrepair because of the reluctance of the presidential family to seem always to be asking for something to be done.

A growing number of spouses prepare a schedule of the college activities they organize and supervise which the president presents to the governing board at the start of the school year. Boards' reactions to this kind of reporting has invariably been positive and helpful. They simply had not paid attention to the extent of time and involvement of the presidential spouse. Boards have been known to insist on a lighter schedule for the spouse in some cases.

The spouse would do well to heed the advice of Grace Fulkerson, spouse of the president of Alamosa State College in Colorado, who, at a program for new spouses, urged them to also "do something for yourself." Mrs. Fulkerson reports that not only does her time lifting weights at the gym contribute to her physical fitness and sense of well-being, but the community's reaction to the sight of the wife of the president jogging along in her sweats on her way to the gym has been unflinching positive. It makes her more human, more a part of the community, while the actual activity gives her a sense of personal separateness—of "doing something for herself."

### Compensation for the Job of Presidential Spouse

One of the newest topics for discussion in terms of the volunteer spouse is that of compensation for the "job." Both NASULGC and AASCU surveys query their spouses on this subject. While 80 percent of NASULGC and 63 percent of AASCU spouses did not feel that compensation was desirable for the duties of presidential spouse, the fact that in both organizations between one-fifth and one-third did feel a need for compensation is worthy of note. Comments on these questions by the spouses reveal the source of their answers. Most predominately, spouses feel that while many of their duties are "mandates," pay for these duties would remove whatever degree of flexibility they now have in responding to them. One presidential spouse wrote that

Of course much of my college volunteer work is done evenings and weekends. To be paid for this work, even as a part-time position, would make a big impression on the tax-paying public. An essential big part of my own physical fitness program involves tennis and our court parallels the road. I can just hear people driving by, observing the president's wife at play, and muttering: that's what we're paying her for?

If the spouse is paid, who should pay? Spouses who favored pay for their duties were divided between having the cost come out of the college budget and having such compensation come from the college's foundation. As a job

that currently is not even identified as a volunteer position, with the lack of visibility of its duties, the unconventional hours, and the mixture of work and enjoyment that the work includes, compensation for the work of the presidential spouse may be an idea whose time has not come.

The discussion of such compensation, however, may bring more support services both in financial and personnel services for the presidential spouses as their contributions are more readily recognized. Other avenues of compensation for the spouse are also being explored. A retirement account and insurance for the spouse are two of the other means of compensation that are beginning to be explored.

### Male Presidential Spouses

Spouses who are nontraditional—the spouse with her own career, the male spouse, and also the group of unmarried college presidents—must address the obligations usually taken care of by the traditional, female spouse of the president. At AASCU institutions, the male spouse and president usually live on or near the campus, often in the traditional college-owned house. Expectations of the male spouse mirror those of a female presidential spouse in that he is expected to be supportive of the college, to conduct himself respectably in the community, and to be on hand to help host at least the important college social functions that occur in the home. These are expectations that have always also held for female presidential spouses.

However, the idea that the male presidential spouse should select, buy, write, and send the invitations; plan and perhaps prepare the menu; or arrange the flowers would seem ridiculous to boards of trustees. Yet, expecting that the president's wife carry on these activities may cause little concern by even the most friendly, supportive board.

The very real contribution of the male spouse may be his willingness to move when the opportunity to become president arises for his wife. However, most professional couples made the decision to accommodate to each other's professional advancement early in their marriage. What they may not have foreseen, however, is how completely the role of college president dominates family life.

Recreation time, selection of a house appropriate for the obligatory entertaining (if one is not provided), the necessity of the absence of the president at some family celebrations, all come doubly home to the female college president who still fills the traditional roles of wife and mother in addition to the job of college CEO. Not just a one time pronouncement of support for his wife, but constant and ongoing support actions are needed on the part of the male spouse.

Joel Siegel, spouse of the president of Kennesaw College, Georgia, both a professor and a law student, illustrates:

I remember one day I had to get up at 5:30 a.m. to leave the house by 6:30 to get through traffic and teach. Then I had my own law



classes, which are not finished until 9 at night. So finally, about 9:30 or 10 I was smiling to myself, looking forward to putting on my little pajamas with the feet in them and having a glass of warm milk and going to bed. And I walk into my house and I have to break into an immediate—sincere—smile, because, my heavens, it's the Chinese delegation. "Hello, how are you!"

Professor Siegel goes on to say, "In our busy lives in our busy world, unexpected events often turn out to be wonderful and satisfying events, for they afford us the opportunity to meet important and interesting people (Ostar 1986). Professor Siegel's sense of humor, good nature, and genuine interest in the college events are illustrated here; all are qualities that the successful male presidential spouse really needs.

Another male spouse, contributor to *The Partnership Model*, Dan Preska, spouse of the president of Mankato State College in Minnesota and a consulting engineer, makes the point that college presidential spouses, male or female, face similar situations, and responsibilities must be shared.

The nature of the specific responsibilities assumed may vary due to each individual's strengths and interests. Flexibility and ability to adapt to new situations (often on very short notice) is common to both and may well characterize best the general role of the university president's spouse. (Ostar 1986, p. 51)

### Single Presidents

In the case of the single president, male or female, it becomes quickly clear to the president, staff, and board that a person must be assigned to fulfill the traditional spouse functions. The president's time, should he or she be willing to attempt these obligations solo, simply will not stretch to encompass them.

Judith A. Sturnick, president of the University of Maine at Farmington, writes in her essay "Partnership in the Presidency, Past, Present and Future":

In fact, as college and university presidencies are now constructed and as the campus expectations for the president are expressed (formally in position descriptions, informally in taken-for-granted anticipations), the job can rarely be accomplished by a lone individual. It is essential to have one or more reliable back-up persons willing to work strange hours, to have endless patience in handling the infinite details of scheduling events at the president's house and keeping the calendar straight. (Ostar 1986, 57)

President Sturnick took several actions to cover the job of the volunteer spouse on her campus: she hired a housekeeper, she invites faculty or townspeople to co-host events with her, and she utilizes her college-provided home to its full potential as the setting for college hospitality for town and gown and for fund raising. Her community was astounded and delighted, she reports, that this single, female president "from away," as the Mainers say, could offer the col-



lege community this warm, hospitable environment that her president's home now provides.

Because of the nature of the role, many spouses—employed, male, or volunteer—do not step back to assess it as they would a paid position. Lack of organization of goals, resources, expectations, and pitfalls can result in a hodgepodge of efforts and disorganized attempts to request support services. President Sturnick's approach was to identify the problem (lack of a traditional spouse), identify the necessary and desirable achievements of the traditional spouse's efforts, and find other means to accomplish these achievements. Such an approach might be more satisfactory for all presidential spouses since it would identify their contributions and help them identify possible support resources.

### **Presidential Spouse with Her Own Career**

Two-thirds of community college presidential spouses are employed outside the home (Vaughan 1986, p. 144). One-third of the AASCU and NASULGC presidents' spouses are also employed (Ostar 1986, p. 100). What does this mean for their role as presidential spouse?

Generally spouses report that governing boards today are more apt to offer support services to the spouse with her own career. It seems easier to recognize the demands upon the time of the employed spouse and the need for assistance to her in her role of presidential spouse than is the case with spouses who are not employed outside the home. However, in the past, boards have often stated that the presidential spouse was not to work in order to keep her time free for her obligations as the president's spouse. Credit the women's movement with the removal of that as a norm. However, as late as 1983 a survey showed one spouse being "forbidden" to work by the governing board, so it is quite likely that if all colleges were queried, a few might still be found which insist upon having a volunteer spouse available.

Several other aspects of the "career spouse" are interesting. AASCU surveys demonstrate that these spouses were generally the older spouses, those whose children had grown and gone. And these women had begun their paid employment after serving as the volunteer spouse. In fact, some had turned skills acquired in their volunteer experience into paying jobs.

Statistics for the number of employed spouses of AASCU presidents are unavailable for the years prior to the AASCU survey in 1981. However, since 1981 the percentage of these spouses has remained constant at about 30 percent for presidential spouses at these institutions. It would be most interesting to know whether the size of that group had remained constant for an appreciable time before 1981. It had, of course, been assumed at the time of the first survey that the number of employed spouses would rise dramatically over the coming years. The fact that the group remains largely the same size does not lend itself to easy interpretation without prior statistics. Is this basically the number of spouses who wish to have their own gainful employment? Did the

downturn of the economy in the 1980s keep the number from increasing? Perhaps statistics from subsequent surveys will solve this mystery.

One thing that did change over the course of the three surveys was the nature of employment of the presidential spouses. At the time of the first survey almost all the spouses were engaged in some form of education, social service, or other traditional fields for women. By 1986, however, positions held included scientific jobs, some management and business, and entrepreneurial positions. Considerable freeing up of the choices of profession has taken place.

### **The Search Process and the Presidential Spouse**

The degree of involvement of the spouse in the process of the search for a president is a matter of considerable debate. The spouse's part in the presidential search has ranged from always being invited to the campus with the presidential candidate to be "looked over" by the search committee or governing board and possibly asked pointedly if she enjoyed entertaining or even if she drank, to not being shown the campus at all in some of the more recent extreme cases of boards feeling that since the spouse is not being hired, no contact should be made. With more awareness of the choices that a president's spouse should have in responding to the role, a more sensible approach to the spouse's part in the search process is evolving to the benefit of both institution and spouse. One member of a board of trustees described it thus:

Governing boards are charged with the successful running of their institution. A change of presidents whether through retirement or replacement is disruptive to the institution; therefore, a board must attempt to make a durable choice for president. I insist on meeting the spouse with the candidate. I have no requirements for this spouse. I look rather for a peaceful relationship. The position of the presidency is a stressful one, one I do not feel can be borne without adequate emotional support. Whether the spouse works, volunteers, or whatever is not the point. But the relationship between president and spouse should appear to be mutually supportive and that it is so, is of importance to the search committee and the board. (AASCU Annual Meeting, 1981, unpublished)

From the point of view of the spouse, initial contact with the search committee and the governing board generally results in later positive support. Although the interview is hardly a time to issue a long list of demands of essentials for support services, still this initial contact serves to identify the role of the spouse. Both candidates and spouses have used this occasion to ask about expectations of the presidential spouse. Some boards, of course, assure the candidate and spouse that the spouse is free to be herself, that there are no expectations. Further discreet conversation, however, can usually elicit several assumptions which can then be discussed from the point of view of that particular spouse. Spouses who were involved in these initial contacts report that

support services for fulfilling the obligations of the presidential spouse were able to be achieved at that time.

The American Council on Education's publication, *Deciding Who Shall Lead*, a primer for search committees, has a section entitled "Special Focus on the Social Responsibilities of the President." The title of the section makes the most important point, which, in the willingness of the presidential spouse to serve, has been almost totally overlooked and misunderstood. The social obligations are those of the institution and the president; they are neither the privilege nor the responsibility of the presidential spouse. A part of this section, "Consider the Options," offers five distinct ways of meeting these obligations—the paid staff person, the spouse, other family members, a volunteer just as other organizations use volunteers, or a combination of these. "If the spouse volunteers, recognition by the board and community of the job performed, and clear signals to college employees about their responsibilities to the spouse are essential," the publication says (ACE 1986). The most significant fact is that such a topic received full attention in this publication on the search for a college president.

### In Retrospect

College president's spouses—who are they? Women and men dedicated to the cause of higher education, providing the essential emotional support within the presidential family to enable the college CEO to do the job effectively, producing in many ways through their own efforts financial and public relations support to the college itself, and most would not choose to do anything else. Consider these comments from presidential spouses responding to a request to describe the assets of their role:

- Work with young people who will be the center of our future;
- Access to interesting intellectual networks;
- Contact with youth and the opportunity to have an impact on their life;
- Association with a valuable and time-honored institution.

The primary advantage, wrote one spouse, is the satisfaction that we feel as we observe young people obtaining an education and working toward their career goals.

The role of the college presidential spouse? Let this presidential spouse who responded to the 1986 AASCU Spouses' Survey make the definitive statement: "The assets far outweigh the liabilities and I find life in the role exciting and rewarding. In fact that's why it is difficult for me to identify hours spent . . . because our role is our life."

# The Impact of the Women's Movement on the Spouse's Role

by Muriel Kay Heimer

The impact of the modern women's movement has created dramatic and sweeping changes on women's roles in society, including economic, psychological, sociological, and political changes. A careful review of the laws, federal and state, relating to equity of the sexes aptly illustrates these role changes. The thesis of this chapter is that the role of spouse of a college president has been influenced and changed significantly by the modern women's movement.

A secondary and related aspect of this thesis is that since the development and expansion of the community college movement paralleled the *Feminine Mystique* years of the modern women's movement (Friedan 1963), community college spouses were more affected at the outset than were the university and the four-year college spouses. The university and four-year college presidential spouses had centuries of tradition, often affluent foundations, and community precedence for the spouse's role, a background that was lacking in the new, expanding years of the community college. The university spouse has additional financial and personal resources when compared to the community college spouse; but the university spouse's role is also in transition with finances, with secretarial assistance, and with entertainment expectations, as well as with personal identity for the spouse. The author of this chapter, experienced as a faculty member and college administrator, is currently one of the few female presidents in the United States. She is also a president with a male spouse. This

chapter will focus primarily on the community college spouse and secondarily on the four-year college and university spouse.

### Women's Self-Concept

The women's movement provided insight into the self-concept of women and how the effect of high or low self-esteem can determine a woman's goals, ambitions, and achievements just as it can for a male. An individual who applies for a community college presidency, male or female, must be prepared to risk rejection. Any individual who aspires to seek and maintain the presidency must have emotional resiliency which is based directly on a strong self-concept. No "Cinderella Syndrome" would be appropriate here. "Cinderella" waiting for her prince is analogous to a presidential candidate waiting to be asked, rather than actively seeking. "Cinderellas" rarely are invited to be presidents or chief executive officers. An article by Benton, "Women Administrators for the 1980's: A New Breed," mentions that in the 1979 study of women administrators, one characteristic stressed by the women administrators interviewed was the development of a positive self-concept and confidence in one's administrative ability (1980). Benton reported that all the women who were part of the study indicated that motivation and determination to succeed were significant factors in their selection for a top administrative position. This particular "self-concept" strategy is not new in the literature. Betty Friedan expounded on the loss of self-esteem that women suffered by living most of their lives through other individuals (1963). In other words, Friedan believes that identity by or through association lowers self-esteem. This need for a strong self-concept and strong identity was clearly discussed by Nadelson in "Adjustment: New Approaches to Women's Mental Health" (1974). Between 1974 and 1978, there were numerous studies of reentry women returning to college and of the relationship of their success to enhanced self-concept. All of the new women presidents of community colleges and several presidents of four-year colleges and universities who were interviewed exhibited strong self-esteem and strong self-concept.

In relating self-concept theories from the women's movement to the relationship of the spouse, women presidents who maintain that they have a satisfactory relationship with a spouse or significant other indicate that the spouse or other individual is not threatened by their achievements and has a good self-concept. In reading *The Community College President* (Vaughn 1986), the chapter by Peggy Vaughan was impressive as she candidly explained her relationship with her husband in his presidential roles; and one reading her chapter senses a strong sense of self-identity which illuminates her writing. Often spouses of male college presidents are regarded as unpaid labor by a college, taken at times for the maid, secretary, and not "seen" as a living breathing person in her own right. Almost without exception, regardless of whether or not the spouse works outside the home, a strong sense of self assists

both partners to withstand the stresses placed on the relationship by the pressures of the presidential role.

### **Women's Expanding Roles**

The second impact of the women's movement was to destroy forever the myth that a woman is and will be what society tells her is her "acceptable" role. This breakdown of social stereotypes also has affected the traditional role of the male in a positive way. It is "OK" for a man to be a nurse, and it is "OK" for a woman to be a president, as well as a teacher or a cattle dealer. It is "OK" to win and to be an achiever. It is "OK" to be a great football player and yet cry if your pet dies. Many women in the fifties and sixties struggled over who they were in relation to their families, to their dreams, to themselves.

Spouses of male presidents are breaking through the socialization roles that formerly placed them in the shadows of their husbands. This thesis is not saying that because of changes in the socialization of women every female spouse of a president must work outside the home or inside the home. The key to socialization change is the *option of choice*. The particular career or the role the spouse of the president plays in the college should be one of choice. The trend is toward a role that spouses create in terms of their own identity and goals, freely chosen. If a college or board's demands are different from what a president or spouse expects, compromise, separation, or refusal of the position must result if the relationship of the spouses is to continue to be healthy and if the college is to be served according to its expectations. Recent psychological literature on the passages individuals make through the stages of adult development indicates that we might want different roles at different times in our lives (Sheehy 1976). The new definition of societal socialization brings to the spouse of a president, male or female, a new freedom to choose and to negotiate his or her own destiny.

### **Women's Networks**

The interesting and humanistic contribution of the women's movement to expanding networking, first for emotional support and then for carefully planned occupational advancement, paralleled and then overlapped the traditional, male occupational network. New dimensions to traditional organizations that emphasize this networking are evident in the Leaders for the 80's Project sponsored by the League for Innovation and the American Association of Women in Community and Junior Colleges, the National Identification Program (NIP) network of the American Council of Education (ACE), the presidential search activities of the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), planned activities involving spouses at the national meetings of major education associations, and the new activities of the prestigious President's Academy held at Vail each summer. Professional activities at the President's Academy encourage the presidents to interact professionally to assist

them in improving and strengthening their leadership skills. Recreation and some of the sessions of the Academy involve spouses. Spouses, male and female, are an indispensable aspect of a successful networking system. This aspect of the influence of the women's movement on the spouse-president network has often been overlooked.

Most successful men and women who assume a presidency have had mentors as confidants and role models. The increasing numbers of women in positions of power in every phase of life in the United States, from business owner to governor to college president, will have its effect on the future generations of men and women.

### Women's Self-Actualization

The women's movement forced psychology as a discipline to rethink the theories regarding the self-actualization of women, as well as men in their individual paths through the various identifiable stages of adult development. Women, because of their societal socialization, have often diffused ambition and the lifelong journey that an individual must take with oneself in order to pass successfully, even if painfully, from one state of development to another. New studies indicate that women are becoming more sensitive, as are men, to their own feelings and personal goals. The women's movement has emphasized this factor to the benefit of both sexes (Sheehy 1976). Recent examples with which the author is familiar indicate a strong reluctance on the part of individuals (men and women candidates) to take just *any* presidency in order to become a president. Spouse career opportunities, location of the proposed presidency in relation to other family members, quality of life, and expectations of that particular appointment are all important factors in deciding whether to seek or accept a presidency. These considerations indicate that candidates are in touch with the stages of adult life and maintain priorities that they have negotiated with their respective spouses.

Sheehy, in *Pathfinders* indicates that there are three criteria for those individuals who are on the path toward *self-actualization* and continued adult development —first, an individual has completed a passage from one life stage to another and emerged stronger; second, the individual shows concern for his or her intimates; and third, the individual has a commitment of purpose beyond his or her own immediate advancement or pleasure (Sheehy 1981, 46).

In *Pathfinders* Sheehy quotes Henry David Thoreau:

I learned at least this by my experiments. That if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. He will put something behind and will pass an invisible boundary. (1981, 55)

Sheehy states in *Passages*:

Everyone has difficulty with the steps of inner growth even when



the outer obstacles appear easily surmountable. What's more, the prizes of our society are reserved for outer, not inner, achievements. Scant are the trophies given for reconciling all the forces that compete to direct our development, although working toward such a reconciliation hour by demanding hour, day by triumphant day, year by exacting year is what underlies all growth of the personality . . . yet the older we grow, the more we become aware of the commonality of our lives, as well as our essential aloneness as navigators through the human journey. (1981, 23)

Two examples of resolved and unresolved conflicts in the quest toward self-actualization by presidential candidates and their spouses illustrate some of the dilemmas of the presidential pursuit. Both examples involve women presidential candidates. The first woman candidate, in apparent agreement with her retiring executive husband on her next career move, accepted a chancellorship at a four-year graduate university. Both president and spouse moved to this new location where he began his retirement while she was thrust into the busy, exciting cauldron of fund raising and intense community contacts. Very soon the relationship, which had been considered a good relationship by both, began to founder. He was bored, he would not seek counseling with her, and he steadfastly insisted that she leave her office at 5:00 p.m. and be at home for companionship and a hot meal to be served at a time specified by him. After a tumultuous six months, the marriage ended in divorce. These two individuals were in different passages in their lives. Two years later, the woman chancellor met and married an outstanding and well-known journalist, who had a strong self-concept, was very proud of his wife's accomplishments, and gave optimum support to her in her profession, as she did in his.

The second example involves a talented provost of a midwestern community college who aspired to be a president. Eventually she attained an interview at three community colleges, each located in a different part of the country. Family discussions were held, and presidential aspirant and spouse traveled to each area in order to see which location offered the maximum quality of life for both of them. A location was mutually agreed upon, and that particular presidency was accepted. Both the new president and her spouse appear to be excited and pleased with the choice. The latter two individuals had come to terms with their own stages of adult development and with their own mutual goals.

### **Androgyny**

The women's movement also gave a new dimension to the concept of androgyny as it refers to the similarities, overlaps, and commonalities in social behavior for males and females. For the brevity of this essay, this analysis will be limited to two factors, benefit of emotional support, and quality of life. This thesis referring to androgyny maintains that the women's movement impacts the college presidency by giving choices and options to both sexes, president and spouse.



In studies on the presidency and in parallel studies on sound human relationships, the value of a supportive spouse or significant other is unquestioned. By the fact of society's prior socialization of females, this emotional support is expected as a certainty from female spouses of male presidents. Times are changing, however. Current research indicates that the new women college presidents of the 1980s are more likely to have children, to be married, and to place a high value on their family life (Bird 1984).

Apparently, since support (other than economic) has not been viewed as part of a husband's role responsibilities, women administrators married to men who assume a nurturant role in their lives feel especially fortunate and often mention it as a contribution to their success, both at home and on the job. (Bird 1984, 27)

The following statement of a former male colleague married to an ambitious, talented, career-oriented woman as cited by Nadelson and Eisenbery in their study was used by Natasha Josefowitz in her landmark work *Paths to Power*:

We have had—and continue to have—a quite extraordinary experience in marriage, not one we were perceptive enough to seek when we fell in love not even one we welcomed fully when its depth first became manifest, but one with unique meaning for our own growth: The experience of living with a complete woman. We had been socialized to expect less and settle for the creature comforts that come with the acceptance. Along the way, we may have shown some lack of grace in surrendering the customary conveniences; yet in return we have been granted a love the richer and fuller for having its roots in mutual respect and growing maturity. That, we acknowledge, we owe to our wives. Had it not been for their capacity to insist on respect for their integrity, it is doubtful we would have achieved what we now enjoy. Of course it was not unilateral; we claim our due for what we have fashioned together; but we know it would not have happened without what they brought us; gentle courage, soft strength, selfless individuality. Our wives, our “successful professional women” are our lovers, our friends, and our comrades in loves and lives of high adventure. We consider ourselves the most fortunate of men. (1980, 134)

Industry is also feeling the impact of the dual professional couple in that over 300,000 business executives will be requested to move each year, and current trends indicate that over half will object because of family and dual professional reasons. Just a decade ago the refusal rate was barely ten percent. The trend of the increasing number of dual career families will also have an impact on decisionmaking on the part of many college presidential candidates, both male and female (Josefowitz 1980).

One phenomena of the dual career family is that of commuter marriage. A number of current college presidents are in such a situation. Few like it, but

the creative and innovative ways in which they keep the quality of their relationship intact is noteworthy. However, almost all involved in such arrangements complain about the bouts of loneliness, the tremendous energy it takes to keep two households going while maintaining even the most stable marriage trouble free. This thesis does not maintain for a moment that the women's movement invented commuter marriages. Men have had commuter marriages for years in many professions, especially that of sales. However, the increase of dual careers, resulting in highly paid couples, has increased the number of such arrangements in industry and in education. As cited by Buscaglia, David Viscott in *Risking* said:

The effect of the women's movement has brought more insight on the values of relationship and the values of nurturing that a good and meaningful relationship needs to survive. A relationship is viewed as a living, changing situation. A rewarding and supportive relationship for both president and spouse benefits from the identical attention that an artist must lavish on his or her art. (1977, 193)

In Kauffman's study of the university presidency, he succinctly describes the loneliness of the presidential chair and the undisputed value of the support of a loving spouse or significant other. Kauffman states, "Presidents, while gregarious in politically effective ways, are often lonely people" (1980, 89). Kauffman also issues a warning that the profession of education and educational institutions must evaluate the emotional price that presidents pay—both male and female.

As the role of president becomes more and more temporary and lacking in security, we in higher education will need to discover incentives to attract the quality of leadership so greatly needed. Increasingly, disincentives are complicating our choices. People committed to humane values and human growth must be the leaders of our educational enterprise. If people with such commitments are driven away from such posts, we will be in danger of making true the charges that we are running factories, not schools. (1980, 92)

Kauffman's observations support the stand that the extended dimensions of androgynous concepts of support and value of quality of life emphasized by the women's movement for both sexes will reinforce the compassion and humanity that not only brings to education the finest leaders, but in so doing also offers choices and opportunities to both male and female

### **Women's Professional Status**

The percentage of women who hold top management positions is less than 15 percent for all full-time employed women. This figure excludes many women who own and operate their own businesses. In the community college system in the United States, even though the number of women presidents has increased by over 300 percent in the last five years, there are approximately 66

women who hold the title of president. Approximately 50 report directly to their own board of trustees and not through a chancellor. This number of women presidents is still a small percentage compared to the 1,100 or more other community colleges who have a male chief executive officer. Future directions are positive for women and minorities in search for the presidency in community colleges, especially since there are a significant number of retirements predicted for the 1980s and a significant number of highly qualified and experienced women and minorities ready to bid for the top positions.

John Naisbett in his book *Megatrends* (1982) points to the new projected definition of the family. For instance, by 1990 husband-wife households with only one working spouse will account for only 14 percent of all households. These working wives will contribute about 40 percent of the family income as compared to only 25 percent presently. Women will increase in the professions, have children at later ages because of their careers, and start new businesses at a phenomenal rate (five times the increase noted for new male-owned businesses).

As women continue to exercise personal options, choices for men will increase as well. Some men will have the freedom to become full-time fathers, students, part-time workers, or to share a job with their partner. But one thing is clear: The traditional nuclear family (which has always depended on the wife subordinating too many of her individual interests to those of her husband and children) seems unlikely to return any time soon. (Naisbett 1982, 235-6)

The women's movement has had an impact on the office of the college president by dramatically increasing the number of women presidents as well as in the definitive changes taking place in the expectations of the role of spouse, particularly the female spouse. Kauffman quotes these words from a female spouse, as used in the 1977 Corbally study:

I suspect that most of us (presidents' wives) resent many times being an unpaid adjunct of our husbands, often ignored as to ability and intelligence no matter what his job. I do wish I could stay around long enough to see what women's lib makes of our problems in another generation or so. (1980, 128)

In conclusion, some of the questions raised by Vaughan in his 1986 study of the *Community College Presidency* will be used for the basis of the following predictions and recommendations:

1. In regard to the generalized profile of the presidents' spouse, it is projected that spouses in the future will have higher educational attainments than spouses in the past.
2. There will be an increasing number of spouses who work outside the

home, and the dual professional career families will assume increasing importance.

3. There will be more married women presidents with children in the coming decade. There will also be additional numbers of single presidents, male and female.

4. Fewer changes in the presidential spouses' role will occur in very traditional, church-related colleges where the "dual package of male president and spouse" will continue to be the norm for the immediate future.

5. The entertaining role of the presidential spouse will be altered. The entertaining and ceremonial functions of the presidency are there whether the spouse's role changes or not. How that entertaining is performed has and is changing.

6. The role of the spouse, male or female, will continue to be significant to the college and to the image of the president. Single presidents successfully overcome this particular factor in a variety of innovative ways that fit the special needs of that college, community, and board of trustees.

7. The spouse of a president will be as much of a confidant as in previous years. To have the emotional support of a confidant is not necessarily to request advice or to encourage the spouse to make presidential decisions, but the support provided by a caring spouse.

8. Most of the spouses, male and female, will continue to feel that there are rewards for them as the spouse of a president. Many spouses will continue to arrange their schedules so that some travel may be shared.

9. The influence of the women's movement has caused many men and women applicants for presidential positions to deprecate the board of trustees' interviewing the spouse or even meeting the spouse before a presidential appointment is made. This omission of spouse interview, formal or informal, is not a wise decision. Boards of trustees, regardless of expectations of spouse, should meet the spouse during the presidential selection process.

10. The women's movement by enhancing the freedom and choices of both men and women has been beneficial for spouses and presidents. As stated by Vaughan, it is agreed that, ". . . just as community colleges do not exist in a vacuum, neither do the spouses of presidents. One major influence on the role of the spouse has been the changing role of women in society" (1986, 165). For any man or woman in our society to say that the women's movement has had absolutely no effect on their lives is insular. No one lives in a vacuum. Some presidential spouses' lives may follow the same pattern they did in the past, but the women's movement has already changed the very fabric of the workforce, family structure, economic units, and political life.

11. Indications are that the college presidency, although more political and more transient than ever, is alive and well. The presidency has and

will continue to benefit from the influence of the women's movement by not only releasing spouses from roles that may be constricting but also by attracting to the presidency only the most excellent and "aware" men and women—presidents *and* spouses.

The full impact of the women's movement on the role of the spouse of the community college president is yet to be determined. However, one certainty remains: the spouse's role will never be the same because of that movement.

# A Trustee's Perspective on the Spouse's Role

by Sheila Korhammer

**T**here is no Miss Manners for community college president's spouses, no one to guide them through their perceptions of self and the perceptions of others with respect to role expectations. In the grey area which surrounds the role that the spouse is supposed to play, the relationship between the spouse and the board of trustees is probably the most misunderstood. Board members' perceptions of the role range the full gamut from the "two for one salary" theory to expecting absolutely nothing at all from the spouse. And in this nondefinition of role lies the dilemma.

This chapter deals primarily with female spouses for two reasons: (1) most community college presidents' spouses *are* women, and (2) since trustees confer no or minimal role expectations on male spouses, the onus for performance is on women spouses. The male spouse is permitted to lead his independent life with impunity and without interruption of his calendar. Therefore, much of what is being written about governing board expectations does not apply to the male spouse. From a trustee's viewpoint, the male spouse is admired and respected for whatever support he gives his wife, the college president. But he has the privilege of not being expected to perform most of the duties expected of the female spouse. Is this reasonable? No, but it is reality in many, if not most, cases.

Public figures, particularly men, include their spouses in efforts to gain and sustain public trust. The higher the public office, the more the family portrait is enlarged to include other family members. When it comes to the president of the United States, the fish bowl even includes the family dog. In all but a very few instances, the community college president is very much a public figure. Beyond the institution, the president interacts with community organizations, business and industry, and legislative bodies. Many assume leadership roles on community boards.

Trustees often assume that the spouse will be at the college president's side in support of his efforts on behalf of the college. (The masculine pronoun is used because this assumption is not generally made when the president is a woman.) In most cases, however, this belief is not communicated to the spouse. If the spouse has the same expectation as the governing board, then there should be no problem in that particular relationship. Unfortunately this laissez-faire attitude perpetuates the concept that communication is not necessary. The very first time a board in this situation hires a president whose wife considers her time her own there will be problems.

This leads to an important question. When should communication with the spouse take place, before the president is hired, or after? Common sense dictates that a board with specific expectations regarding the spouse's role should communicate these expectations before the contract is signed. If the board is going to let the spouse set the parameters for her involvement, the timing is not so critical. Communication is still essential and should take place early in the new president's tenure. The spouse must be informed of what is expected in a manner that permits questioning on both sides. The ideal time to take care of this critical building block in a successful presidential search is during the interview of the finalists. Whether the spouse is interviewed formally in a structured setting or informally in a social setting, communication serves as preventive medicine in the future well-being of the institution. If a social setting is used for the interview, a portion of the time should be set aside for at least one board member to communicate the board's expectations and to ask and respond to questions. The greater the expectations of the board, the more structured the interview should be, especially if negotiating is going to be necessary.

The real issue, though, is whether trustees should have any expectations with respect to the role of the spouse at all. The world of education has not always kept abreast of the real world, as the phrase "ivory tower" denotes. The role of women in general has been changing rapidly, fostered by both the women's movement and greatly increased numbers of women in the workforce. Since most community college spouses are women, these social factors should be considered in defining the presidential spouse's role.

Part of the problem is that few boards have ever formally assessed their expectations regarding the role of their president's spouse. These expectations should be examined to determine how realistic they are in terms of today's sociology. This especially should be done by any board currently involved in a presidential search. Boards with sitting presidents may find this exercise useful also.

In one case, a wife of a sitting president had played the traditional spouse's role for five years, as gracious hostess and member of the boards of community organizations, when she was offered a position in the profession she had practiced prior to her husband assuming a college presidency. She very much wanted to return to work, but both she and her husband were apprehensive about the board's reaction. In the end she did go back to work, with minimal consternation on the part of the board. The activities of the spouse on be-



half of the college were not eliminated but were significantly curtailed. One trustee (female) mourned the fact that the wife could no longer travel with the president to the educational meetings attended by administrators and trustees. She felt the wife and husband as a team made her attendance at such meetings more comfortable and productive. The wife has now been working for four years, and her college involvement is limited to serving as hostess at occasional social functions for staff, board, and community. While the board is now very comfortable with the arrangement, a self-examination of the appropriateness of the expectations of the president's spouse and communication of its conclusions might have spared this couple a great deal of stress.

Although the concept of a spouse's interview is controversial, Vaughan states in *The Community College Presidency*, that interviewing the wife has the backing of most spouses, presidents, and trustees (1986, 159). Vaughan's survey indicated that 30 percent of the respondents to the spouse's survey had actually been interviewed. The Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) presidential search service, which is fast becoming the most effective, successful, community college search service in the country, highly recommends that there be communication between the board of trustees and the spouses of the final candidates. While not specifying a need for a formal interview, ACCT search team members (each team is comprised of a trustee and a president) recommend bringing in the spouses at the time the finalists are invited to campus for their interviews; ACCT further recommends that this should be done at the expenses of the hiring college. An opportunity should be made for the spouse to get to know the area and the college that will play such an important part in her future.

Staff, advisory committee members, or interested community leaders can describe the area, explain school systems, and identify social and job opportunities. Interviewing the spouse is one part of the process, selling the spouse on the area is another. Boards concerned with a spouse's involvement on the college's behalf should also pay attention to the picture they paint of the community she might be joining as well as determining the level of her participation on behalf of the college. In an interview by George Vaughan for his study, one spouse remarked, "I think the governing board should interview the spouse and I think the spouse should interview the board. I think there should be some very clear discussion on what the expectations of the spouse are and what the board proposes to do in terms of support, financial included" (1980, 159-160).

Her final comment opens up another area in the definition of the spouse's role. If the board's expectations of the spouse's involvement are high, what resources is the board willing to offer to support the efforts of the spouse. Many, if not most boards have not even considered this aspect of the presidency. The president, whose wife went back to work, had a hospitality budget, but his wife's travel to professional meetings was not covered by the board. After a few years salary negotiations resulted in a travel allowance for the wife, but within a couple of years, she went back to work and could not travel as freely. Did her husband actually receive a cut in salary?



In another area, just how much are the spouse's efforts on behalf of the college taken for granted? Many trustees, after reading Vaughan's chapter on the president's spouse in *The Community College Presidency* would line up and call themselves guilty. When the spouse of the president performs admirably at a college function or a home function on behalf of the college, a thank you is generally freely given by the individual board members in attendance. But seldom is there genuine official appreciation expressed by the board for the efforts expended by the spouse, especially for those functions not attended by board members. This is not to say that thank you notes from the board should be sent after each event, but rather once or twice a year a sincere recognition of the spouse's efforts should be made. The chair of the board should also try to keep abreast of the spouse's efforts in community participation. While some of these activities (possibly even all) may be individually motivated, often participation is a result of trying to enhance the image of the college. It is not unusual for the spouse to discuss with the president which organizations would bring the most prestige to the college. This is not to say that the spouse becomes involved only for image, but to suggest that in dividing up a limited focus of energy, some spouses look to college needs for guidance. These efforts also need to be recognized.

Perhaps the most significant area, and the most invisible area where a spouse serves the governing board, is in coping with the stress and burnout that almost automatically goes with a college presidency. A community college president faces many challenges from divergent constituencies. Prioritizing the roles that must be played can turn into a tightrope act, and if it is acted without the benefit of a safety net, the stress can be enormous. According to William Wenrich:

Many of the difficulties associated with the presidency have to do with opposing demands. The president simultaneously seeks to serve and attend to the needs and interests of students, faculty, other administrators, trustees, business/industrial groups, and the community at large. The position is enshrouded with ambiguity, which serves as defense mechanism against the many and varied groups and individuals who seek something from the institution. (1980, 37-40)

Another view, somewhat more jaded, comes from former Swarthmore President, John Nason who observes:

The president is expected to be an educator, to have been at some time a scholar, to have judgement about finance, to know something of construction, maintenance and labor policy, to speak virtually continuously in words that charm but never offend, to take bold positions with which no one will disagree, to consult everyone and follow all proffered advice, and do everything through committees, but with great speed and without error. (1980, 13)

While presidents generally mask the symptoms of stress in their role as presidents of the institution, playing the role of the "in control" leader in front of the management team, the family usually knows when there are "troubles in River City" as professor Harold Hill would proclaim. As some spouses declared, a normally insignificant complaint becomes a monumental war issue. As one wife put it he "begins to nitpick." A newspaper left on the breakfast table can become "a really big event" (Vaughan 1986, 135). All interviewed spouses felt that stress invoked short temper in their husbands.

While any complication in running a college can create stress, generally the board-president relationship holds the most potential. According to Vaughan, "One presidential spouse who has been in the role 13 years and who is a former school board member, goes to the very heart of the matter in discussing stress on the presidency: 'having to deal with board members who don't know their role, don't know what a board of trustee's role is. That's the hardest part. They don't realize, don't recognize that they are policy makers and not administrators.' While she feels that her husband handles the stress extremely well, this spouse nevertheless believes that the board-president relationship always holds the potential for creating extreme pressure." The widespread acceptance of this feeling should truly give governing boards pause for reflection. "Can I be counted among the guilty?" Vaughan goes on to say that, "There is nothing new here except that the spouse rather than the president is making the observation" (1980, 134).

So what the president takes home to the spouse is the magnified combination of the original stress coupled with the stress of masking his frustration in front of his staff. While this problem may not be so different from that encountered by the families of CEOs in business, it does not diminish the strain placed on the family relationships of the community college president. The spouse is left to cope with what the president brings home.

Governing boards of community colleges deal with budgets which must balance and stand up under public scrutiny. In fact, it is the very public nature of the job that can create some of the stress. One president remarked on how hard it was on him and his family to see his salary on the front page of the newspaper each year. He went on to say it was particularly hard on his children who were in their early teens. The educational efforts of the boards of trustees and presidents also must bear the close scrutiny of taxpayers and in many instances sponsoring governing bodies. Many trustees do not give full consideration to the fact that the president's spouse is also drawn into the fishbowl.

Whether or not it should, a board's assessment of the spouse can affect a presidential candidate's chances. In one case one of the top three candidates was dropped after the board met his wife. She was described by one of the board members as too quiet and frumpy looking, not projecting the dynamic image the board was looking for in its president's spouse. In fact, it was the dynamite wife of one of the other two candidates that gave him the edge in getting the job. On the other hand, experience can change a trustee's mind. One woman board member declared during a presidential search that her college's

current search was her third. She went on to say that during her first search, the board wanted a spouse who did not work, the second time they wanted a spouse who was a career woman, and since neither time did it work the way the board wanted, this, the third time, she herself could care less what the spouse did.

It should not be a surprise that the impression the spouse of the candidate makes might play a role in the selection process. The higher an executive rises in the business world, the more image comes into play. If social responsibilities are included, then the image the wife projects is going to be a consideration. A board, in hiring its college president, is hiring the institution's chief executive officer. The board, in envisioning the roles of the president and spouse will tend to picture them as a social team out in the community. In so doing, boards could be reflecting Roberta Ostar's observation in *Myths and Realities* that "a competent, active, dedicated-to-the-university spouse cannot compensate for an inadequate president, but an unhappy, recalcitrant, disruptive spouse who leaves a trail of bad feelings and dislike in university and community groups can rapidly ruin a competent president's effectiveness!" (1983, 27). While everyone is usually on their best behavior during the interview and true colors are not likely to show, some trustees feel that one can get a sense of attitude by seeing the candidate and spouse interact.

Most presidential candidates realize that a board's appraisal of the spouse could possibly affect the success of their candidacies. Some even refer to the wife's role in their letters of application. In a recent search with which I am familiar one president wrote, "Both my wife and I work as a team within our community. We are involved in many civic activities including volunteer organizations such as The United Way, Helpline, American Diabetes Association, as well as in church and other social organizations. The purpose of these activities is both to serve the organizations of which we are a part, but also by example to create visibility of the college by our association." Another states, "Most assuredly, my own work with community colleges and my work in quasi-community colleges, as well as my wife's long career in community colleges, make me most anxious to become meaningfully involved in the kind of institution best designed to expand educational opportunities for all people." This type of communication anticipates the interest boards may have in the spouse's role. Since such inclusions are not unusual, it points to the fact that many male candidates expect the board to care about the wife's role on behalf of the college.

Are governing boards which have set expectations for the spouse's involvement in the community being reasonable? Should spouses of presidents assume that community responsibilities that enhance the image of the college go with the territory? Some feel that in cases where a president has no wife or the president is a woman whose spouse does not have the same traditional responsibilities assigned to him, college resources should be available to get the job done. These same accommodations can be made for a president arriving with a wife, so argue those who support the right of the wife to be her own per-

son. While this author supports the notion that no demands should be placed on the spouse of a president that the spouse does not fully endorse, she also feels that efforts should be made by the spouse (whether the spouse is male or female) to cultivate the good will of the community. Having access to the right ears can help make things happen. Having the reasonable attention of community leaders is important. To act as if it were otherwise can be counterproductive.

It would seem that the final decision comes down to the governing board and its most serious charge, that of setting priorities. If hiring a president who has a wife who can and will fulfill significant community and college responsibilities is a top priority, then an interview with the candidates' spouses is an absolute must. If the potential president and his qualifications are the top priority with no major expectations on the part of the spouse, then the meeting with his spouse is a plus, and perhaps even essential, but should not greatly influence the board's choice of president. The college board has to assess whether or not activities of the spouse are going to have a major impact on the college. If the consensus is that an active spouse's role is essential for viability of the institution, then she has to be told this, and this should be settled before the new president is hired. In the final analysis, it is determining what matters most to the college. If the problem is image, the governing board might decide that an important issue in filling the presidency is how the spouse will enhance the college image in the community. In any case the board should hire the most qualified, effective leader, but most importantly, give the president every resource to get the job done. The board should commend the president for every success he or she achieves, back him or her when it does not go so well, and finally, convey gratitude to the spouse, be it wife or husband, who provides the healing support.

# The Career Spouse: Playing the Daily Double

by Peggy A. Vaughan

Unless a woman makes a conscious choice to live her life first and foremost as a professional with any thought of family or home secondary, if at all, then I submit that that woman will have many days, perhaps years, of conflicting choices, of frustrations, indeed often of feelings of unfulfilled expectations. While one could point to notable exceptions who appear to have found the magic formula for a seemingly effortless transition from successful woman of the world to supermother-wife, most of us who attempt to combine the two worlds do not always find the race going to the one who runs the swiftest, and certainly we do not always find the path smooth and clear of obstacles. Those detours and swerves we all too often find along the way are not because of the mythological golden apples glinting in the grass.

There is a whole world of women out there who choose, out of necessity or otherwise, to live the "daily double" of racing the clock both in the marketplace and in the home. The woman who occupies a position equivalent to that of her husband or perhaps even superior in terms of salary and responsibility will certainly find herself in a more demanding situation than those of us who tread the safer waters of the small streams and inlets of lesser degrees of professional involvement in the marketplaces of the world. Whatever the degree of involvement in the world of work, however, every working woman who leaves the workplace every day to come home to another set of family commitments has more potential for conflicts, for frustrations, and for burn-out, but certainly for more satisfactions.

This present chapter is from the relatively "safe" environment of the spouse who experiences the average pressures and responsibilities of the daily

double of work and family. Thus it is from the perspective of a spouse who, although having her own profession to attend to, is not of the same professional level of her spouse, a community college president. However, being the spouse of a community college president may add another layer of responsibility to the daily double and thus, depending upon one's individual perspective, increase the potential for stress or satisfaction—or perhaps some of both. My own experiences as the spouse of a community college president have generally fallen somewhere between these two polarities.

An interesting statistic at the outset is that, according to a recent survey, two thirds of the spouses of community college presidents either work full- or part-time outside the home. This leads to speculation on whether community college spouses work outside the home because the spouse's role itself is not challenging enough or whether to increase the household income. My own perception is that any full-time spouse's role, be it that of a community college president or of a president of the United States, could not possibly provide enough "payoff" versus practicing one's own career and following one's own interests. Indeed, why should anyone give her all to the spouse's role? (The use of *her* here is advised; would anyone expect a male spouse to devote all of his time and energy to the spouse's role? I think not.) For instance, a career has not meant that I have had to sacrifice the volunteer role perhaps expected of me. A career has insured that I can legitimately *avoid* the volunteer role. I am just as convinced that some spouses enjoy and perhaps thrive on this role. Thank God, many of you are saying (I am too!), for them.

My own instinct tells me too that in this world of ours my future is taking shape in and through my present. Husbands—even community college presidents—have a nasty habit of dying and leaving us widows, often for many years when one considers that men often tend to marry women younger than themselves and that women, on the average, live longer than men. Another consideration is that the "empty nest" has an inexorable way of arriving all too soon. Personally nearing this point myself, I know this too shall pass and leave in its wake an opportunity to devote more time to myself, to my interests, and to my profession. Time that has been spent in circumscribed rounds for others now becomes more one's own to command. A potential loneliness can become a golden exploration of self. However, a renewed interest in self and one's career at the end of this phase of family responsibilities may also result in less attention or less interest in the spouse's role. Think about the "empty nest" without some resources or career of one's own to fall back upon. A career can be an insurance policy in many respects. One hears all too many horror stories about the wife who, after the proverbial sacrifice upon the altar of her husband's education or start in the professional world, finds herself left behind by the husband, sometimes both literally as well as figuratively. A career can be a powerful preventive action to begin with. It is difficult for one who has kept moving forward to be left behind, at least for long.

What problems do female spouses who have their own professions encounter? In being the working spouse of a community college president, I per-

sonally have encountered difficulty in establishing myself as a professional in my own right, with my own image. There are many reasons for this situation, I think. First and foremost is that my own position (high school English and Humanities teacher) carries far less prestige and salary than that of my husband. Thus, it becomes a necessary fact of existence, it seems, that I be introduced as the wife of the college president rather than as an educator in my own right. Even the most well-meaning friend, in introducing me to someone, will seek to “legitimize” me by quickly adding that my husband is a college president. Establishing one’s own identity becomes a real challenge and must obviously be done in one’s own world and on one’s own turf.

Does one, then, accept this second best (or maybe second-hand!) status and plod ahead? Well, there is a revenge of sorts to be had. For example, I refuse to wear a name tag at a conference that simply identifies me by my husband’s name. (Yes, these conferences not only exist, they seem to abound.) I either discard it completely (thus admitting the anonymity to which I have been relegated) or else mark through the original and add my own name but leave the original legible enough to make my point, which is particularly gratifying if I encounter the conference sponsors themselves. (Small victories are necessary if one is to win the war!) Recently I attended with my husband a national conference for community college personnel. Each attendee wore badges, which included titles, colleges, and such. Spouses had no titles, of course, and were given a red ribbon (not blue, mind you, but red—did I say second best?) with *spouse* written prominently on it. (I should add that I was quite pleased when I attended my first annual meeting of AACJC and found that the name tag not only used my first name but included the name of *our* college.) During the conference at one of the receptions a woman approached a small group of us who were involved in talk. In introducing herself to the circle, and noting my badge without any accompanying title (I did not have the red ribbon flying), she noted, “Oh, and you’re just a spouse.” My less than kind reply to her was, “No, but I trust you are.” Let me hasten to clarify what points about women I felt the two of us were making in that brief interchange. I felt sure then and still do that her question to me grew out of a generally pervasive attitude about women and particularly housewives who are perceived as having no lives, let alone identities, apart from their husbands. The woman’s observation to me, I am convinced, grew out of that perception. While I do not share that perception, my response to her intended to place her in her own category. My own experience has been that some of the most vital and self-fulfilled women I have ever known have been “just spouses.” Unfortunately, we women are indeed sometimes our own worst enemies in propagating myths about ourselves. Of course, we do have centuries of tradition to fall back upon for this attitude. In Biblical times, Deborah and the apocryphal Judith were singled out in amazed wonder because of their nontraditional accomplishments—accomplishments accepted as matter-of-fact in men. I can still recall vividly an incident from my high school days which has become somewhat of an epiphany for me. While passing the time one day with a group of fellow seniors—both male and



female—one of the young men bewailed the fact that in our particular class the girls were brighter than the boys and consequently always stayed at the head of the class and would graduate as such. Even as he made the comment, I remember thinking immediately that none of that really mattered because the males would be the leaders and movers once we left school. I was not bitter about this knowledge; I think it was more of a sad acceptance which even in the late 1950s was more fact than frustration. To borrow the words of a prominent woman today, so it goes.

Be that as it may, the day-to-day world keeps moving, and we adjust to the lives we live, whether by choice or by chance. So how does the career spouse of a community college president meet both the opportunities and obligations of her own position and the expectations of her in her role as spouse? Pick and choose carefully, my own experience tells me. Assess your own needs and those of the college, and then assess your strengths and limitations. As I have written elsewhere, the needs of a new, rural community college placed demands upon me and therefore necessarily limited my professional undertakings. However, that was some years ago, and whether I would be willing to expend the same amount of time and energy upon college and community commitments that I once did is now moot. The fact of the matter is that I see our present college as generally cosmopolitan and self-sufficient in terms of any needs that a spouse might feel she should cater to. Therefore, I see this as a real opportunity not only in terms of being able to have the time to cater to my own life and profession but also in being able to enjoy what I feel are the real fringe benefits of being the spouse of a community college president without being weighed down by the burden of feeling of always being on call for the college community. For example, I do not feel obligated to entertain the faculty and staff throughout the year. Community college budgets are limited. While we do have some resources for catering faculty and staff receptions, we have no other support for these functions. And, as we all know, food is only one aspect of entertaining. However, I very much enjoy giving a welcoming reception for the faculty and staff at the start of the new school year. This reception allows me to meet new faculty as well as to spend time with those I already know. I do not think they either expect or desire that I provide similar services throughout the year. For me to do so would perhaps place as great a burden upon them as upon me. They have their work; I mine.

I think a similar premise holds for the members of the college board. A yearly reception and buffet dinner in our home provides the opportunity for me to talk with the members of the board on a personal basis and with their spouses as well. This is particularly important since I often encounter the board members separately or in groups at other social functions. Thus, I have a base already built for these further interchanges.

Do I feel obligated to attend special community functions such as Chamber of Commerce dinners? I do indeed. More than an obligation, I feel that these are fringe benefits that go along with whatever role I may perceive I have. Functions such as these require no prior effort on my part, only my pre-



sence. Again, I have the opportunity to mix with friends, local leaders, and acquaintances, and enjoy good food and conversation at a minimum of effort on my part. The same principle works for our college functions. Graduation, drama department productions, faculty get-togethers again provide opportunities for me to mingle with the faculty and staff with a minimum expenditure of effort and yet a maximum potential for social encounters with members of the college community.

At the risk of being considered Machiavellian, I see many opportunities to parley seemingly routine affairs into high yield situations both to enhance my role and perhaps even that of the college itself. The Virginia Community College System's annual meeting is a case in point. The meeting takes place every November and is well attended by presidents, college board members, members of the State Board for Community Colleges, and spouses of all these groups. Meetings, intimate receptions, dinners, and shopping provide many opportunities for me to interact with each of these groups to some extent. I see this function as a "low energy, high yield" situation. I definitely feel I play a public relations role for our college in affairs such as this. Again, lest I sound too Machiavellian, let me confess immediately that perhaps no one who attends these functions for whatever reasons, enjoys them any more than I. I attend them primarily for that reason although, of course, I do feel an obligation to do so.

Not only do I feel that I play a public relations role for the college through functions such as the one just referred to, but I also feel that I make contacts through my own career that work to the advantage of the college through working with counselors, teachers, students, and parents. Might not my career then be a more decided advantage to the college than would be another coffee, tea, or the like? For example, because of various aspects of my work or accomplishments, from time to time I have received press coverage which has, in my mind at least, served our college well.

With all of these fringe benefits which I see as available to presidential spouses, are there hazards associated with the role for that same working spouse? Obviously. First and foremost perhaps is the fear of moving and starting over. If the president moves voluntarily, then more than likely he is moving because of a more desirable college, location, or perhaps salary. In other words, he is moving closer to the top. In my profession when I follow along behind him, chances are that I will be moving closer to the bottom. For most assuredly I will have to start all over again in a new school. It is not likely that a new school system would give any new teacher the proverbial cream of the crop of students or the freedom to experiment with and design new programs. So whereas the president in his new position would have built-in prestige and ready-made "close" professional colleagues, the process of cultivating these must begin all over for me. I speak from experience; I have gone through the process three times. In a new situation another potential hazard looms on the horizon. The working spouse must also fit into the new spouse's role, which may come with a set of expectations entirely different from the ones left be-

hind. I have been fortunate in that my first role as a community college presidential spouse was with a new college, and the demands were so many and varied that moving to an established college in itself brought a measure of relaxation. However, were I now to be called upon to follow in the footsteps of someone like a Bonnie McCabe of Miami-Dade Community College who speaks of her massive cooking and entertaining role elsewhere in this volume, I would decidedly be weighed in the balances and found wanting. (I am notorious among my friends for my lack of culinary skills; although they *do* admire my pristine collection of cookbooks.) A hazard indeed.

Another potential area of conflict for the working spouse and for the president may lie within the constraints of time itself. For example, just finding time to talk about my own work without “usurping” the time my husband wishes to use in discussing college issues can be a problem. Accordingly, I think the tendency may often exist for the president to assume that his role—and therefore the spouse’s responsibility in that role—takes precedence over the spouse’s obligations in her own work. I have not found that situation to be a particular problem in my own experience although I have definitely encountered it. To illustrate, for years I have gone with friends to New York every spring to see Broadway shows since I also teach drama. While in the past my husband has encouraged these trips, they have interfered with my attending the annual meeting of AACJC. It is now his feeling that I should reserve that time for his convention. Having done just that this past April, I must admit that I think it is another function that should fall under the “low energy, high yield” fringe benefits umbrella. However, I am just as convinced that I will again feel the call to do my “thing” since the two necessarily seem to overlap.

In a similar vein, my husband would, I think, were one of my school functions to fall on the same date as that of something as important as the college graduation, insist that I accompany him. Again, while he makes a determined effort to attend functions connected with my work, he understandably seems to feel that my attendance at college and community functions with him is more important than his accompanying me to functions connected with my work. I say “understandably” because I generally agree with him for those reasons which I have spoken to earlier—notably a public relations aspect—and I do not think that principle necessarily works in the reverse, given the nature of our respective positions. Compromise seems to me the most feasible method of dealing with conflicts of this nature. Earlier my travels to Greece and Italy with a group of Humanities students resulted in my missing a major conference that my husband had counted on my attending with him. This past summer, then, I withdrew from a similar tour in order to attend conferences with him. Consequently, I feel the coming summer is “mine.”

There are, of course, other conflicts and disadvantages for the working spouse. For example, my husband expects me to read and edit all of his speeches and writings even though I may have 75 compositions of my own to grade and the last thing I want is to look at another paper, no matter whose. But I do not have that luxury, for I must make the time somewhere. Tasks of

this nature for one's own profession as well as for one's husband's can leave precious little time for self, not to mention being both physically and mentally draining. Not surprisingly, then, I often have the feeling that there are many facets of my life that I never have time to attend to sufficiently, if at all. Things such as those long walks that not only help one's mental well-being but prove necessary for one's health are sometimes pushed way down on the priority list, health or no health.

Family itself can lead one to feelings of guilt because of perceived neglect. Obviously, there is only so much time one has left in the day after work, time which must be apportioned out precious. So many things go by the board. Sometimes even the most insignificant things one never has time for can cause frustration: those flower arrangements, those *Southern Living* recipes waiting to be tried, those friends waiting to be invited for the weekend. Occasionally, if we organize our time especially well, we can squeeze in these little extras. Unfortunately, I find myself with less and less time for these things at the present stage of my career. I do not particularly like that situation, and I am making a conscious effort to balance my life more equally among all my roles. However, I can only close by reiterating the sentiment I expressed earlier—given the choices, the “daily double” is the most appealing payoff for me.

# I Don't Have a Bouffant

by Bonnie P. McCabe

As a panelist at the 1986 annual meeting of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC), I was delighted with the chance to introduce my “charming and gracious” husband. The only words that received a more enthusiastic reaction at our spouse workshop were suggestions that our (the wives’) travel and conference expenses be assumed by our institutions. We are accustomed to being presented a nameless but “charming and gracious” appurtenances, and paying for our own plane ticket, registrations, meals, and even the difference between the singles and double hotel rates.

Our session began early that Monday morning, and I started my presentation by recounting my day exactly one week earlier. When I was stirring the morning’s second pot of fudge, at 8:30 a.m., Mrs. Walker, who comes on Mondays to help with cleaning, had just called to say she had the flu. Seventy-five to one hundred people were expected for a reception at 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, so this was not good news. Sunday, I had prepared turkey salad using a 22-pound fresh turkey purchased at a poultry farm 45 expressway minutes away and baked on Saturday. Pound cakes had been made and frozen. Pineapple had been pickled and refrigerated. Buttercream candies had been formed, dipped in chocolate, and stored. My kitchen reflected all this activity.

Before that day was over I had made 15 pounds of fudge (different sized hearts, a hen on a basket, and a turkey were the shapes chosen from my antique mold collection), baked five pounds of black walnut cookies, spiced four gallons of apple cider, gone to the delicatessen for the cheeses, brought home (I hoped!) the last load of groceries, and done some cleaning of the house and

patio. Much of Tuesday was reserved for personal commitments, including a class. Wednesday would be a wild whirl, so it was essential that all jobs listed for Monday be completed that day.

When our guests arrived at that reception (honoring the visiting actress, Uta Hagen), 16 cups of just-finished-roasting giant cashew nuts were warm and waiting. With the turkey salad, pineapple pickles, and assorted cheeses and crackers there were marinated raw vegetables, smoked sausages, and dried beef. The dessert table featured large, fresh strawberries with the cakes, cookies, and candies. Kim and Elena, students, had been scheduled to serve the chilled cider, sodas, wine, and coffee. They stayed after the reception to help with some of the putting away, but most of the cleanup would be waiting for me Thursday morning.

We have receptions often. In this period of uncertain funding and support, we place a heavy emphasis on involving the community with the college, and on building positive feelings among college faculty, staff, and administration. Receptions have celebrated staff engagements, weddings, and the 25th anniversary of a vice-president and his wife. We use them to share college visitors and our own personnel and students with community friends and representatives, and to applaud the achievements of different college groups and campuses. Ours is such a large institution (approximately 2,400 full-time and 1,500 part-time employees) that our home sometimes has the first face-to-face contact for Miami-Dade Community College (M-DCC) colleagues who have only communicated by phone or memo. Receptions have helped maintain good working relationships with the community college coordinators from Florida's state and private universities and colleges, and with legislative and other state and local groups. They have provided informal gatherings for our faculty senate and honored Miami-Dade's alumni association, foundation, and board of trustees. Our special guests have included Alex Haley, John Ciardi, Jonathan Miller, John Hope Franklin, Michael Tilson Thomas, Richard Valeriani, and John Knowles.

We have "received" thousands. A combined line of our guests to date would reach past our South Campus and make a good start toward our downtown Wolfson Campus. Numbers vary from small, about 50, to well over 1000. One week we had three receptions in a five-day period, and all were large groups! The host has been absent so often, sometimes on last-minute notice, that I have considered stuffing one of his suits to stand as a proxy at the front door.

Not all our entertaining taxes our home's capacity. A vice president with his family may be invited for dinner. Lunch may be scheduled to observe Secretaries' Day or another holiday. Visitors to the college are frequent guests. I remember preparing breakfast for Alex Haley at 6:00 a.m., then dropping him off at the airport (with leftover sausage and cornbread tucked in a carry-on bag) for his return to Los Angeles. Someone from the college or the community who could not be fitted into the Miami-Dade schedule may come at day's end or on weekends and stay for a meal. During the summer session the college

has a four-day week (closing Fridays permits a substantial saving of air-conditioning costs), and it is not unusual for working meetings to be scheduled at the college residence on this day. Usually this includes lunch or dinner, always coffee breaks.

For many years we have continued the tradition of Sugar Plums, our Christmas day open house. Guests, about two-thirds from the college and one-third from our community are invited to attend with husbands, wives, children, and other relatives and friends on that special day. The mailing list for this, my favorite celebration, had grown to 130 families last year. At least one family group filled a van, and three generations were not unusual.

When we entertain, I usually assume the responsibility for the invitations and final guest list, and always for the food and other arrangements. There is no compensation for my car expenses, although more than one-half of my mileage is college-related. The college foundation reimburses me for the documented expenses of ingredients and supplies. I am very cost-efficient. As a "from-scratch" cook, my meat loaves and chili start with a piece of beef I grind. My sausage balls are mixed with "homemade" sausage from whole pork loins and the seasonings I learned to use as a child. Vegetables, I peel, string, and shuck. Nuts (pecans, black walnuts, and cashews) are ordered in bulk and frozen in measured amounts. Roasting is timed to the first arrivals. This adds a welcoming fragrant smell, and also covers any lingering traces of onions used in earlier preparations.

I grew up on a farm, and still cook as my mother and grandmother did. As a little girl I saw the preparations for family reunions and harvesting crews. I still remember the bustling kitchens with piled platters, filled bowls, and the array (and aroma) of pies and cakes. So large numbers do not intimidate me. My country foods find hearty appetites in this sophisticated city. (I could not resist billing a dinner featuring chili and mostly chocolate desserts as Miami spice and chocolate vice). One friend still teases me about my overheard insistent correction that the food being complimented by a guest was meat loaf and not pate. A collection of old American glass, especially the compotes and trays, includes a rainbow of color choices to complement the food and flowers. Antique stoneware crocks are used to serve some beverages. They are especially good in retaining cold temperatures. Freezing some of the actual drink prepared, to use instead of ice, facilitates chilling without diluting. Using plastic containers of interesting shapes for this, and adding slices of fruit or flowers, can add a special floating touch.

A friend with the college often loans me his lushly blooming orchids to enhance our food tables and home. When I buy flowers, I usually choose potted plants, or select a mixture of stems from the locker of a friendly florist, and use different, sometimes unusual, containers to gain maximum results. Because of aesthetic preference, and cost awareness, I never purchase professional arrangements; sometimes I use folk art or my own art as a centerpiece.

I have learned which desserts freeze well, and feel very insecure without a constant generous supply of these cakes, cookies, and candies. Casseroles, chili,

combread, and other "emergency meals" are always in the freezer. Some basics are always stocked in the pantry and our two refrigerators.

Napkins, plastic cups, glasses, and plates are purchased in quantity from commercial suppliers. An important find was 24-inch-wide plastic wrap, which lets me prepare and easily package oversized food trays and large fudge sculptures. I use restaurant-size pots, pans, and mixing bowls. To illustrate the storage problems presented, my largest frying pan can hold nine pounds of chopped beef being browned for chili.

I take or send food to many college and community locations (and occasionally out of town) for many different functions. Included are lunches, holiday celebrations, retirements, receptions, recognition awards and special achievements. Always, this means fudge; often, cakes, cookies, or more substantial food. I have provided for 600 people at a reception for Edward Albee, and filled two giant-sized, heavy-duty shopping bags with black walnut cookies for one campus-wide picnic (students included), baked with our air conditioning broken. I have been a sponsor of the Wild Turkeys, a service club on our South Campus that is wildly successful in blood drives and other commendable activities including CPR and disaster-rescue-training workshops. My support has included making fudge for all donors and workers.

Two campuses have a Performing and Visual Arts Center (PAVAC) program. This program, in conjunction with the public school system, brings talented young students to Miami-Dade for intense instruction and training each afternoon; mornings are spent at their home high schools. They usually sweep the competition at state and regional levels, and win national honors. Our George Gilpin, as an example, was one of only 20 high school students in the country named as a presidential scholar in the arts last year. Through supplying fudge and making more conventional contacts, I know many of these young people by name, and always find them a joy. The success of PAVAC is the basis for the developing New World School of the Arts, a project to which I continue to be committed.

Rennie Perez was last year's national president of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) while a student at our North Campus. When I first met him, he was one of the stars of a successful Brain Bowl team which had been awarded my congratulatory fudge trophy. When asked what I could do to help with his presidential campaign, he suggested fudge for the Florida convention just before the national meeting when the election would be held. He thought fudge for the 300 to 400 at that state-level meeting would help to promote his candidacy. I made and delivered the fudge; he and others insisted it did indeed help. (I am now an honorary member of PTK.)

Our Silver Ball was the night following the PTK state convention, and made a giant cake comprised of 70 silver foil-wrapped slabs of fudge, weighing over 100 pounds. It was served to the 700 people celebrating the 25th anniversary of Miami-Dade. This was in November of 1984, the year I recorded making more than 1,000 pounds of fudge for college functions. I sometimes tape my fingers while stirring to prevent blisters; our house often smells like the



chocolate factory it is.

Graduation is always a demanding time, especially when spaced over a weekend to make it possible for the president to attend all events. One record year I went with him to four campus ceremonies, two dinners for guest speakers, and I took food to a district awards group of 200. (And I still remember how tired my feet were!)

Holiday periods are always frantic. My Christmas shopping must be done early, before the beginning of a busy December. We usually have a lunch at our home for the district group, and the different campus parties are constant. Finding time for Sugar Plums preparation is a real challenge, especially since this is also peak time for friends and the community to schedule social events. Our 25th wedding anniversary was barely noted this past December. I did make a silver heart for the top of our Christmas tree instead of the usual star. And we did indulge ourselves with a long-desired folk-art purchase in the brief lull before New Year's events accelerated.

I usually shop for and wrap the Christmas gifts for college colleagues and employees. I choose and purchase most other gifts as well, including those for birthdays, weddings, and new babies. My husband likes to recognize special efforts and projects with the presentation of an inscribed appropriate book. These selections are most often mine.

There are always overwhelming choices and conflicts for our calendars during the college year. Each of our four major campuses and five outreach centers are active. We have four art galleries and one museum, with frequent openings of new shows. There are presentations by our outstanding music and drama departments. Our fashion departments stage wonderful productions, and there are constant athletic contests to cheer.

Special campus events of 1985 included preparing paella for 5,000 people on our Wolfson Campus. (Paella is a local favorite Spanish food and for this occasion it was cooked in 12-foot-wide pans.) The International Book Fair, in its second year last November, brought many authors including Garrison Keillor, Bob Greene, Tracy Kidder, Calvin Trillin, Elizabeth Spencer, Leo Smith, Chaim Potok, Allen Ginsberg, Jerry Kesinski, and Gwendolyn Brooks to Miami-Dade. More than 50,000 people attended this literary festival at our downtown campus. I do have a good seat at all college events, and frequently sit at head tables around town. During matches I have discussed Eudora Welty with Governor Winter of Mississippi, chocolate and cooking with Nora Ephron, and my astronomy student nephew with Carl Sagan.

Pad and pencil is a must for even my smallest evening bag so I can jot down names, addresses, and phone numbers. I am proud of the good records I maintain, and often get requests from the college for information. I read local newspapers and other publications, noting items that require attention. I also share the sting of the unkind, and sometimes unfair, headlines.

Our telephone number is listed, so there are frequent calls. Taking messages for my husband is constant, but there are many college-related inquiries or discussions directed to me. (A longer cord for the kitchen phone was an es-



stantial need discovered soon after moving in. The original did not stretch to the stove, and calls always came at a critical stage of cooking.)

My husband is out of town often. There are trips to Tallahassee (where he will likely carry my fudge), and sometimes to Washington on college business dealing with the state and national legislatures.

National organizations also require travel. Currently he serves on the boards of the Council for Financial Aid to Education, The President's Advisory Board of the Association of Governing Boards, The College Board, the Southern Regional Education Board, the American Council on Education, and The League For Innovation in the Community Colleges. When I accompany him to these meetings, I am impressed with some of the programs planned for wives, and would go more often if travel expenses were not a consideration. Often I am the only community college wife there, and, it has not escaped my notice that I am also the only wife paying my own expenses. Some wives of university presidents attend with their social secretaries! These university spouses discuss caterers, party decorators, college coordinators, housekeepers who supervise staffs, and, of course, social secretaries.

The Miami-Dade College Residence now has a fraction of a staff. In November of 1984 my frustration and exhaustion resulted in a detailed written account presented to my husband to accompany a demand for some help with the housework. Probably it should have also gone to the board.

A cleaning helper now comes one day each week except on holidays and during vacations. The college grounds department continues to send someone to cut the grass since we live in a college-owned house. I take care of the indoor and patio plants, requiring several hours weekly. I call college maintenance for problems with our chronically leaking roof and faltering air conditioning and plumbing. These employees are skilled and cooperative, but scheduling times for needed attention can be difficult.

I was enrolled in a class before my husband became president, usually in the art department. This year, for the first time since becoming "first lady," I am taking classes, despite my time constraints. Few of my classmates know that I have any special connection with the college. I stand in the registration lines and park in the student lots.

I make many of my clothes, especially the head table black tie wardrobe. (Some university wives have made cases for clothing allowances!) My dress is casual whenever I have that option. My nails are not manicured, and I go to the hairdresser only for occasional cuts. An extroverted student assistant in my husband's office once demanded of him, "Is that woman with long hair really your wife? I thought she'd have a bouffant!"

Within the college we are often referred to as "Dr. McCabe and Bonnie." I rather like that. I was told that a recent trivia game on campus included a two part question: What is the name of the president's wife and what is she famous for? I have been among the first to learn of engagements and pregnancies, and have received several jubilant calls from hospitals announcing the arrival of new babies. The different faculty senate presidents have been and re-

main people I enjoy, even during times of salary negotiations. We have exchanged books, video cassettes, recipes, limes, and fresh brown eggs. Often I have lunch or attend a play or art opening with faculty or staff friends. I really do not feel my husband's position has interfered with or restricted these relationships, except in diminishing my available time. I have heard other wives offer words of caution about socializing with their husband's colleagues and employees, but I see these contacts as positive.

I have also heard wives of multicampus presidents or chancellors express the opinion that their entertaining efforts might be resented by the campus heads and spouses. In our situation two of our campus vice presidents are men not currently married, and one is a woman, making three without supportive wives. The wife of the fourth is employed full-time, in a responsible role, on her husband's campus. Of the five district vice presidents, only one does college-related entertaining at home with any frequency. Each of our campus vice presidents is responsible for many events on his or her campus ranging from simple to spectacular. Some events limited to college personnel; many involve the community. There are also college functions scheduled off campus. I attend many of these feeling totally carefree since I am not responsible for anything unless it is to hand over the fudge, cakes, cookies I might have brought. But entertaining at home is personal and to many, more significant and special. My involvement seems necessary, or at least desirable; like Topsy, it "just grew."

When my husband was in his first role at our college (the Dade County Junior College) as assistant to the president, he was given the assignment of preliminary planning for the second campus. He understood that a more experienced (and older) vice president would be hired. Meanwhile our small apartment was the setting for many small group discussions and interviews of staff and faculty for that evolving position.

We had just moved into our first home when, despite his handicaps, he was chosen to head that campus. Classes the first year were held in improvised and sometimes ingenious locations—a nursery school, a music shop, and a movie theater, as well as in a cooperating high school—while the permanent facility was constructed. Offices were in a portable building, many with desks very close together. So our new home, in the neighborhood, was convenient. I would come home from teaching to find our yard filled with cars and serious sessions going on inside. I purchased a coffee urn with a 36-cup capacity (still in service), and began keeping cookies in the freezer. Evening gatherings were frequent; many included husbands and wives. Student groups were invited. My serious involvement had begun.

When Bob became executive vice president for the then three-campus Miami-Dade, we moved to a new house we had built with a deliberately larger living room and a better-equipped kitchen. Invitation lists were expanded to cover the total college operation and the community. One early group ate chili, then sat spellbound as Alex Haley talked about his book, *Roots*, which would soon be released. The outcome was Miami-Dade's development of a complete course package to coordinate with the *Roots* telecast. Over 500 colleges and

universities purchased these materials. After more than a decade as executive vice president, my husband was selected as president in 1980. We moved into the official college residence and my involvement with the college intensified.

I know "what's happening" with the college. I understand the frustrations of less than adequate funding and the happy excitement as enrollment figures exceed projection. When the study of our students' latest CLAST (College Level Academic Skills Test) scores is released, I can read it with comprehension. Sometimes I am more aware of issues within a department, or a campus, than anyone, including my husband, realizes. Were I less a participant, I am sure my tolerance of the demands the college makes on my husband and me would be affected.

Much in our life gets pushed forward to next week, next month, and next year "when we'll have more time." There are weeks so filled that a night when we don't have to do anything is a gift. Noncollege personal friends are treasured; we appreciate their understanding when we abruptly change or cancel planned times together.

My community activities are carefully chosen. I am supportive of the Theatre Arts League, which has given scholarships to our drama students for more than 20 years. I have served on the board of our historical association (and one year made and donated 60 fudge turkeys to our Harvest Fair held the weekend before Thanksgiving). The beginning planning session for an ambitious countywide environmental project was held in our home; and I continued my participation through the successful completion and presentation of the book, *The Dade County Environmental Story*, at a reception at our downtown campus. As a founding member, I am working with a group currently organizing a folk art museum for this area. I have donated fudge to cancer society fundraising functions and my soft-sculpture hearts to Heart Association raffle lunches. I have participated in Artists' Days in elementary schools, savoring the children's reaction to my work and their wonderfully phrased and illustrated thank-you letters. Interaction with our public library system is enjoyed. Currently 42 of my chocolate molds are on exhibit in one of the major branch libraries.

Years ago I started writing a cookbook, an annotated collection of family "heirloom" recipes that have never been committed to print or precise measurement, with my own derivations and originals. Before giving my recipe for peanut butter cookies, I will describe the growing and harvesting of the peanuts, and the steps by which they were parched (roasted) and hand processed before being ground into peanut butter. When I was a child, an older relative at our family table would refuse the seconds pressed upon her with: "No thank you, I've had a gracious plenty." *A Gracious Plenty* will be my title. With the planned special section on cooking for crowds, the temptation is to subtitle: *A Charming and Gracious Plenty*. My stack of recipe cards is inches thick and well tested. Sometimes I despair of ever completing this cherished project.

I have some ability and strong interest in art. I would like more opportunity for the study and collection of American folk art. With my own work, my

file of planned soft sculptures and collages could occupy me full-time for at least a few years. Ideas come freely, sometimes as I stand stirring in the kitchen, and other times while not listening to one-too-many-droning speakers.

It is difficult to be productively creative when weary. I'm more prone to spend a few hours "off" with my feet higher than my head and a book propped open on my stomach. I have been a voracious reader for as many years as I can remember. Some nights, especially when I am just too tired to sleep, I find salvation with my books. There are weeks when I have spent many more hours on this first lady "job" (for which I was never hired) than I ever did as a salaried teacher or librarian. I know the things I do are important to my husband and to the college. I also know that few are aware of my contributions.

Over the years almost every aspect of Miami-Dade has been studied, reported on, and often (especially during our prime winter months) visited. Until George Vaughan included me in his survey and interviewed me for the chapter on spouses in *The Community College Presidency*, no one had ever indicated any interest in my role (Vaughan 1986). When the adviser for one of our campus student newspapers asked me to write a guest column, his suggested title was "The Life of a College President."

People express surprise that I no longer teach. I am often asked, "What do you do?" Sometimes this question comes from a guest at a large reception in our home, for which everything from the invitations through the preparation and presentation of the food and drink and the final spot removal from the carpet has been and will be my work.

I have never had a discussion with our board of trustees, either collectively or individually, about any expectation they may have of me, or of their awareness of what I am doing. Of the current seven members of the board, only two have attended more than one event at our home, and two have not yet accepted an invitation. I admire their business and professional success, and their commitment to our community and to Miami-Dade. The hours and hours they spend with the operation and advocacy of our college are subtracted from personal and family time, and I am truly appreciative of their support. I wish they were more aware of and more responsive to my involvement.

The advent of the community college did not introduce the concept of "getting two for the price of one." In recent years I have come to a tardy but full appreciation of my hometown's ministers' wives. They graced all church functions, were often involved with families in congregations, and responded to town needs. Military wives have long been enlisted in promoting their husbands' advances in rank. Many large corporations still have expectations of the CEO's wife. And, of course, most wives of college and university presidents have very visible roles.

For the feminists who would, if possible, pounce upon me at this point, I stress that I am writing from my personal perspective. I know there are women who are ministers, admirals and generals, presidents of large businesses and agencies, presidents of colleges and universities, and yes, even presidents of community colleges. I also realize that if all my efforts and energies were pro-

claimed as my own, and if I were given the level of support I am now providing, I could possibly be a published author or recognized artist, probably launch a successful catering concern (Carolina Cookin'?), and positively become a candy mogul.

Compensation is a reality for a few college and university wives, and I have heard it discussed with emotion and contention by others, including wives of community college presidents. I do not expect or want a salary, but I think it tacky that I paid my own expenses to the Orlando meeting of AACJC.

The college's yearly budget is now just over \$100 million; but I can understand that it may not be legally possible or politically prudent to use taxpayers' money to pay my travel expenses. I have sat through enough meetings of our college foundation (sometimes taking the dessert) to cite expenditures that demonstrate more flexibility in spending. I could have attended several national meetings, for example, with an amount equal to that used to purchase balloons for a campus event.

In these days of user-friendly skies of dueling airlines' fares, the actual plane ticket cost is less important. Having my expenses paid occasionally would be a gesture of appreciation and recognition of my worth to the institution which I have given thousands of hours, hours enjoyed and hours endured.

In 1985 a study by the University of Texas named Miami-Dade Community College as the best community college in our nation. My husband, of whom I am very proud, is frequently recognized as a leader. I know that I have helped.

I need this soapbox. A legion of charming and gracious voices should be heard. Is anyone listening?

# The Male Spouse

by Colin S. Shaw

**M**ale spouses of female community college presidents may be the exception that proves the rule or the anomaly that shifts the paradigm. My own experience as the spouse of a female president in two very different contexts suggests to me that male spouses do not at all fit the traditional image (if one ever really existed) of the presidential spouse. Male spouses are confronted with ambiguous expectations regarding their performance in their roles as presidential spouses and may have great flexibility as they negotiate their roles. Male spouses face a continually evolving role and most likely must adapt to some nontraditional tasks within an intricate role as both a marriage partner and a presidential spouse.

Women community college presidents are rare; the men they are married to are somewhat rarer. But occasional variety can be quite instructive since an unexpected phenomenon (in this case, the male spouse) tests conventional wisdom. By understanding a male spouse's role as it relates to a presidency filled by a woman and how that role evolves, a better understanding of the spouse's role in general may be developed. Besides, male spouses are becoming less rare, and perhaps a description of a male spouse's role will provide some direct, as well as comparative, insight.

When I first became a presidential spouse (at age 40, suddenly and unexpectedly), I noticed little change in role. My wife and I both had worked for a number of years in a large multicollge system, which had had several women presidents over a period of years. What is perhaps instructive about this situation is that presidential roles in multicollge systems are more precisely and

narrowly defined than in other settings, so the spouse's role, as it related to work, is more precise and narrow. Further, the fact that there were other women presidents meant that there were prior examples: what role bargaining there was to be done had already been explored by others.

I presently find myself as a spouse of a woman president (the same one, I might quickly add!) but in a new context. My wife presides over a large, single-college institution that recently saw the retirement of its first, only, and male president. While it is too early to tell what precisely will be the result of role bargaining, I am in a position to note that this particular context is quite different from the previous one.

Both institutions are about the same age, are located in downtown sites, and provide comprehensive services to a diverse student body. But the former college is smaller and part of a multicollge system, and the present college has a single campus. Further, the urban area served by the multicollge district has a population of nearly two million people while the college with which I find myself presently associated serves a population base of approximately one-half million.

But what does this have to do with the role of a presidential spouse? Organizations evolve the means to deal with the environment within which they operate; they are shaped by it and, in turn (though to a smaller degree), have an impact on it. The means that a college chooses in dealing with its environment can be described ultimately as roles that members of the college community perform.

In the former case, a larger multicollge organization, presidents of colleges have less important roles as public figures because there is a district organization with a chancellor and vice-chancellors who function more prominently in the public eye. In addition, there are specialists, such as a legislative liaison, within the organization whose role it is to deal with selected publics. It could be argued that such specialization is a necessary response to the sheer size and complexity. Whether or not this is actually the case matters little. It is part of an organizational reality that results in a less expansive role for a college president and, in turn, directly affects the role of a presidential spouse.

In the present situation, the president performs the main boundary-spanning function as a result of choices that this organization has made to deal with this environment. This case contains a number of other differences, loosely described as a community problem-solving style, that impinge on the presidential role. It is not simply a matter of the president being a bigger frog in a smaller pond; the whole ecology of the pond is different!

Lest I dive too deeply into the frog-pond/president community analogy (others have done that more resonantly than I could ever hope to), I will quickly make my point. The size, complexity, and problem-solving style of the community is part of a context that has a direct impact on the role of the president and hence on a presidential spouse.

The extent to which the difference in context will have an impact on my role as the male spouse of a woman president is personally quite interesting. I



strongly suspect that the evolution of my role will depend much less on the historical precedent set by the former president's spouse and much more on an intricate set of developing expectations, which sift through various aspects of some potential role against the backdrop of my prior actual role.

Potential roles are defined by what needs to be done; what functions need to be performed. There is a lengthy (sometimes interminable) list of things that might be done, could be done, or should be done. They range from taking out the garbage, cooking the evening meal, or feeding the dog to planning strategy for a legislative budget session. The answers to questions about who does what, when, where, how much, with what degree of accountability, and with what amount of continuing responsibility defines actual roles. Roles are an amalgam of tasks to be performed, attitudes to be maintained, functions to be fulfilled, and responsibilities to be carried out. In a sense, roles are more or less permanent individual solutions formulated to perform needed social functions.

I sometimes suspect, though, that community college presidents are among those toward the less permanent end of the role-stability spectrum. Being the personification of an organization that is "most things to most people" in a time of rapid change creates a situation in which individual solutions are fleeting, and potential roles are global. There is a growing gap between what might be done and what could or should be done.

Some things that might be done arise from the explicit expectations of others, some arise from our (sometimes erroneous) perception of expectations of others, and some arise simply from our own perceptions. Sometimes the expectations and perceptions come from dimly remembered early socialization and sometimes from pressing current situations.

I subscribe to a point of view that explains role definition as the result of role bargaining—a complex and iterative process that ultimately brings into agreement expectations, perception of expectations, and behavior in role performance. While some behavior patterns may be innate (and hence not subject to negotiation) and even gender related, the vast balance of behaviors related to presidential spouse role performance are superficial and subject to negotiation.

The statement that such behaviors are superficial does not mean that they are unimportant nor that negotiation and resolution is simple. On the contrary, traditional priorities of work and marital roles form an interdependent system that is difficult to alter.

Perceptions of the general public and various constituencies about the role of the president and the president's spouse certainly have an impact on the male spouse's role. But male spouses have an opportunity for greater negotiation in a developing role, I suspect, than do women spouses. Since at the outset the various constituencies acknowledge that a woman president brings a new perspective, the expectations about role performance for both the president and spouse are somehow different; specific relationships are expected to develop, rather than simply be a continuation of former ones. While expectations about specific aspects of role performance are uncertain and hence provide an



opportunity for negotiation (which a male spouse fearful of faculty teas might view as a blessing), the downside of the situation is that uncertainties about expectations and the perceptions of expectations take a considerable amount of time and effort to resolve. Stress levels tend to be higher until expectations, perceptions, and role behavior are in agreement; the opportunity for role negotiation is not without its drawbacks.

At the same time that a woman president is affording herself of the opportunity for role negotiation with the world external to the marital relationship, there is a reciprocal negotiation, often unacknowledged, going on within the marital relationship. Most often indirectly, but sometimes directly, the expectations of constituencies about the president's role performance have an impact on the spouse's role. Male spouses have a great opportunity for role negotiation than do female spouses because female presidents. There are other factors, though, that contribute more strongly to a male spouse's role than constituency uncertainty about a female president's role. The fact that male spouses tend to be professionals is important as is the fact (ironically for male spouses) that changing societal expectations about women's roles have a reflection in changed expectations for men.

Since male spouses of female community college presidents are likely to be professionals themselves, there are several consequences pertinent to the process of role negotiation and development. The first is simply historical in nature. Male professionals married to female professionals have, by necessity, already done a good bit of role negotiation. They are familiar with the process, the *quid pro quo*, the acceptance of nontraditional solutions to life's simple problems, and the resolution of their own fears about changes in traditional gender-related roles. While change is always uncomfortable somehow, male professionals married to female professionals are accustomed to it.

Second, male professionals tend to be more knowledgeable about and attuned to so-called women's issues than male nonprofessional, at least. Intellectually and philosophically, male professionals are more accepting of the consequences resulting from being married to a female professional.

Finally, male professionals tend to be in a strong position in role negotiation, in part simply because they are male and in part because, as professionals they represent a roughly equal economic force in the marital relationship.

Economic contribution, despite avowals of the great value of contributions that are difficult to measure in monetary units, is a major factor in role negotiation. Economic dependence weakens the negotiation stance. Professionals contribute a significant amount to the economic well-being of the family and are accorded a certain status simply because of it. Professionals who are male, in a society that is male dominated and in which there are strong expectations about what constitutes male behavior, are strongly motivated to negotiate roles that approximate the norm. At the same time, women are well aware of what constitutes expected male behavior.

Women presidents make significant economic contributions and are strongly motivated to negotiate roles that free them of onerous tasks in order to

obtain the time and energy to perform the role of a president. This state of affairs produces a tough situation for negotiation. Negotiation, fortunately, is a search for mutually beneficial solutions and not a war.

The women's movement has changed to a great degree the expectations of many concerning what constitutes a "proper" role for female spouses of male presidents. What might constitute a "proper" role for a male spouse of a female president is somehow related. Since roles for female presidents and roles for female spouses of male presidents are less rigid by virtue of societal changes described as the women's movement, it seems reasonable that the resulting loosening in role definition would extend as well to the male spouses of female presidents. I speculate that this line of reasoning could be extended to male presidents as well; the women's movement of which the ultimate effects are only now dimly perceived, will lessen role rigidity for all of us.

When my wife and I were first married, we were both new graduate students returning to college after several years of teaching in a community college. While I suppose I had been involved in role negotiation since I was an infant, it was during this graduate school experience that I consciously engaged in role negotiation to a significant degree. Since both my wife and I were taking precisely the same course work, it was clear what work was involved in going to school and what was involved in maintaining home and family. Since my wife and I had equivalent status on a number of fronts and enjoyed the tolerant and liberal ambience of graduate student life, the negotiations were straightforward and unconstrained by disparate perceptions of workload, economic contribution, and generally unfettered by our perceptions of "societal expectations." I cooked, she cleaned, and together we did the grocery shopping and laundry.

I mention this experience because it set a pattern, often recreated, though with variation, for continuing role negotiation. I mention it, too, because it illustrates that role negotiation is an ecological process and is strongly affected by the context in which it occurs. In the idyllic graduate student context, role negotiation, while not completely painless, was as simple as it could be.

Later, the context changed, and the negotiations were more difficult; new jobs and accouterments changed the balance in roles that my wife and I sought. Each time we have acknowledged that the roles are out-of-kilter, we have purposefully (and successfully) renegotiated. Sometimes the solution is to hire someone else to perform the task. At other times we have agreed that it is simply not that important. At still other times we simply drop one task and replace it with something new. The lesson in this is that role negotiation, conscientiously applied, can result in a changing but mutually satisfactory partnership.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, my role as president's spouse is still developing. All the foregoing should illustrate that I believe that being the president's spouse is merely one aspect, albeit an important one, of being a spouse. Nevertheless I will try to point out some of the ways that I perform the functions of a spouse of a president.

*Maintaining home, home, and family.* We recently moved to a new city, and the process of establishing a new residence is a time-consuming and stressful. As everyone knows, there is a myriad of mundane tasks to be accomplished—opening accounts, finding vendors, suppliers and help for hire, and generally establishing the routine family commerce. Further, involved in every move is the loss of a support system, friends, and contacts built over years. In order to help accomplish a successful transition, I have taken a leave-of-absence from my professional position and have reduced my activities to some writing and consulting for a two-month period while I tend to the “start-up effort.” The decision to take some time out for myself was not arrived at easily, but the economic loss paled in comparison to the potential family costs in what could be foreseen as a particularly stressful time.

*Social events and functions.* I participate in the events of a busy social calendar (and it is particularly busy for a new president) and look upon them as potentially rewarding to myself, even though I am fully aware that I am attending as the spouse of the president. It is refreshing to meet people who are slightly and briefly disconcerted when introduced to a male spouse. It is my observation that even urbane and polished cosmopolites do not know quite how to handle persons whose roles do not fit the stereotypes; generally glib in social settings, they falter just a little. I simply act myself and try to put them at ease through the confident exercise of time-honored social graces.

It is perhaps in the social arena that male spouses are prone to experience trepidation. It is a complicated fear and one that is not completely groundless. Upon meeting new people, and particularly those of some status and reputation—those with whom your spouse’s successful presidency to some degree depends—questions will arise: What sort of man do they think I am? Will they perceive me as somehow less than what I ought to be? One can build a perfect negative fantasy based on negative answers to questions such as these. And, in fact, those questions do exist. The answers, however, depend on the male spouse. While I have experienced some resentment as a result of dealing with this phenomenon, I have grown to realize that those persons meeting me are more anxious than I. You cannot deal with the legacy of male roles in western culture in a five-minute cocktail conversation, but you can reassure yourself and those who would befriend you that your world, and theirs, is not bizarre.

*Moral Support.* Everybody needs a sympathetic ear and presidents are no exception. It could go without saying, but I will say it anyway, that the public and organizational responsibilities are often heavy. Issues and tasks confronting a president are generally complicated. The work is emotionally and physically draining. And women presidents are as susceptible to the rigors of the position as are the men who occupy the positions. I am not the only person who provides succor, of course; presidents being who they are have all manner of advice givers and supporters. But a spouse, being a partner and confidante, often gives some special support. While this special support is not always directly related to the role as a presidential spouse, sometimes it is. I try to listen actively about a work-related problem and from time-to-time ask questions

that are generally value-neutral. (Since my profession entails planning and research, those kinds of questions come easily to me.) Seeking some intellectual, analytical understanding to what is, in effect, an emotional, visceral problem usually has some soothing effect.

Sometimes, however, the rational approach is not what is needed. And here is where a male spouse, I believe, may fall short. I suspect that many men are generally lacking in the ability to provide, at the outset, simple empathy and understanding. It is not that men really lack the ability, it is just that many of us do not see problems from all facets; most of us are not practiced in any other way than the strong, rational, and linear.

*Quasi-formal.* There is a part of the male spouse's role, I think, that relates to that ambiguous "two for the price of one" phenomenon. Perhaps it is simply a perception resulting from my own socialization in higher education, but I suspect that this is also the perception of others who have been subject to the same socialization. At the very least, there is the question about my quasi-formal role as a presidential spouse. I was not the object of the time-honored "spousal visit" during the presidential selection process; I never had my social graces or commitment evaluated. I have not been the happy recipient of invitations to brunches, teas, or charity benefits. But I have been (I think) subtly assessed as a presidential partner and as a potential asset to the college community and the community-at-large.

My value as a potential asset to the community accrues both from my role as a presidential spouse and as a professional in my own right. And this duality suggests a possible conflict. Is my own professional career diminished to the same extent that emphasis is placed on the spouse's role? Or does some mutual and reciprocal benefit accumulate so that my career is enhanced to the extent that my spouse's career is enhanced as well? I am not a believer in unsubstantiated synergy; simply saying that the whole is greater than the parts does not make it so. On balance, though, I think that my own career has been enhanced.

On the one hand my career has been negatively affected in that the timing of career moves has been difficult. Particular opportunities do not exist forever and once missed are gone. Taking one opportunity means that others are foregone. While it is impossible to know the consequences of the road not taken, my sense is that I have experienced delays.

On the other hand, I am sure my professional competence has been accelerated. My spouse and I have different views of the same world and consequently learn from each other. Happily for myself, I place a higher value on mastery than promotion and hence view my career as having been successful in some part as a consequence of being a presidential spouse.

Not only do I sense a heightened professional competence by virtue of being a presidential spouse, but I feel more generally competent in dealing with the inevitable fears and foibles of the human condition. While this might have come about by simply growing older—or my observations might be poignant rationalization—I think I have been involved in a new order of thing.

Male spouses of female community college presidents are a phenomena in the forefront of a wave of significant change in community college leadership as well as part of a change across our society in general. Negotiating roles in a new and changing context means an evolution and proliferation of roles that vary greatly depending on the particular context and the unique history that particular individuals bring to that context. For male spouses, role negotiation in such an environment brings uncertainty and opportunity.

# The Spouse as a Volunteer

by Pat Goodpaster

When my husband accepted the presidency of a community college 25 years ago, little did I dream we would retire there. However, in retrospect, we do not regret that we have remained in one location for a quarter of a century. The challenges for both of us have been fulfilling, and the rewards of living in one community for many years are innumerable. Had we moved several times, my role as a volunteer spouse could not have evolved as it is today. Much of what I have been able to accomplish has come about because I know the community, its people, and many of its needs. Another very important factor in my being content to do volunteer work is the encouragement my husband has provided. He makes me feel that what I do is important, that I don't have to earn a paycheck to be a worthwhile person, and that my efforts contribute to the goals and objectives of the college. Through this work I get to know and appreciate people from a variety of backgrounds, interests, and a wide range of ages, which would be impossible were I employed in a full-time job. I did have full-time employment for several years, yet, I can say that the volunteer work has been as satisfying and rewarding as the paid positions.

By concentrating on my role in the community rather than on campus, it certainly is not my intention to imply that my duties as a spouse have been neglected within the college community. Without an entertainment budget, I have had the faculty and staff in my home for small luncheons, dinners, and buffet parties. On several occasions, the college's advisory board members have been invited to our home along with the faculty, legislators, and local citizens;

also included have been visits to faculty and staff from the campus of the University of Kentucky and other universities. In addition, I have always enjoyed planning luncheons, receptions, and dinners for special groups held on campus, making floral arrangements from my garden, preparing menus, and overseeing all details as if they were being held in my own home.

I have attended many college-related activities and social functions not because they were required or expected but because I was interested and wanted to be supportive. These activities have been very rewarding, and I truly feel that I am a partner with my husband by getting to know many of his acquaintances and becoming familiar with many aspects of education. I have learned a great deal by attending the annual meetings of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC). I have always participated in activities planned for spouses, as well as many of the other scheduled programs. Attendance at these meetings has made me aware of the scope of education, its challenges and problems, and, in the process, has helped me become a more understanding and effective spouse.

My volunteer role has developed without any sense of pressure from the college's board of trustees. Had I not been free to decide, my perception of volunteerism would have been different; my creativity would have been suppressed and my enthusiasm dampened. It has been important to me to have the freedom to choose my role in the community, provided that role does not create conflict for the president or the college. I needed a fulfilling life and felt that I would accomplish this by using much of my volunteer energy in the community instead of only on the college campus. I was aware that anything I did could have an impact on the image of the college. So, I have tried to be complementary, striving to extend into the community some of the goals established by the colleges. I feel that this has been done because of the gracious and appreciative response of the local people to my contributions. They are pleased that I take pride in the community and that I am willing to work with them for its betterment.

What advice would I give a spouse who is considering volunteerism? I will share with you why and how I chose to become involved in particular areas, and the rewards I have enjoyed as a fringe benefit.

### **Making the Choice**

It is easy to get overinvolved in meaningless activities. The criteria used for my choices of volunteer service were service to the community, helpfulness to people, educational value to be received, and personal enrichment. Service to the community included working for a tennis program, building a tennis center, and preserving a beautiful and historic theater. Helping individuals has been done in many ways: by encouraging people to try something new in the way of service, by developing their own education, by discovering a latent talent, or by trying a new hobby. All of this has been possible through volunteer services. With reference to the educational value, I feel that many areas of ser-



vice have given me opportunities not generally found in organized courses. Personal enrichment has taken place through the many wonderful contacts with other people and the new ideas presented. I have been privileged to serve on several boards with dedicated, able, and knowledgeable persons who have taught me much. With these guidelines, my areas of service have been easy to select.

One of the first boards I enjoyed and benefited from was the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). I have served a total of 15 years on that board, with short intervals between terms, and am presently serving again. I have served so many years because the positions have been varied and there is regular turnover of board members, which makes the work a constant challenge. But, most importantly, the purposes and accomplishments of this organization fit my philosophy of service. It is comprised of over 500 active women and children of all ages, backgrounds, and needs. Over the years, my responsibilities have included serving on the executive board in various positions, helping with the development of personnel policies, planning and hosting social events to demonstrate to the community what we were doing, and originating and chairing a volunteer awards program, now in its fourth year, to recognize some of the unsung heroes of the area (as well as some of the community leaders) for special contributions. My latter role included working with the news media and civic and business leaders in providing publicity. It was also my responsibility to choose the manner of recognition and to make the presentations. At the first awards luncheon one of the recipients in particular received spontaneous applause for the 20 years she had given of her time daily to cook for senior citizens. She was overwhelmed with this unexpected award.

Earlier I mentioned the building of a \$1 million tennis center. This came about during my tenure as the YWCA health and education chair, when another board member saw the need for such a facility and I was able to bring the project to fruition.

So many worthwhile programs have been offered through the YWCA that it is difficult to single out a few. However, some of our most popular have been:

- The preschool drop-off center, with a trained worker in charge, who makes the time both enjoyable and educational;
- Free tutoring in math and reading twice a week for children of low-income families;
- Encore, a postmastectomy rehabilitation program emphasizing group discussion and support;
- 55 & Holding, free exercise classes which are structured to meet the special needs of older adults;
- Children's Activity Program, a program for children living in local low-income developments, grades 1 through 6, which emphasizes recreational and personal development activities;
- The free summer day-camp program for children in local low-income housing areas;



- The latch-key program, for children who return from school to an empty home. This program includes a hot-line number to the YWCA which is monitored by trained volunteers.
- Carrier Alert, an assistance program for the elderly, handicapped, or those living alone. This program was arranged through the postal service and serves as an alarm system if the mail is not picked up on a daily basis.
- A public affairs group, which meets monthly during school hours, and, as the name suggests, discusses topics of public interest. Guest speakers are invited, including city and school officials, representatives of the health department, legislators, and others.

These last three programs could be developed in almost any community through the leadership of one individual.

The above avenues of service with the YWCA illustrate why it is a privilege and a challenge to serve with this organization. Many times the college and the YWCA have combined efforts to provide programs, which was important to my involvement. Also, several college faculty and staff have served as board members, with one serving presently. In addition, the YWCA, at the suggestion of another board member, gave a reception at the college for new students and parents.

Another organization that has occupied much of my time over the past several years is the Paramount Woman's Association (PWA). I was first attracted to this association because of its leadership quality. The organizing individuals were very talented and had the financial freedom to spend their time however they chose. I knew that they were not interested in frivolous matters; thus, I joined the group of some 250 women. I became engrossed in their primary goal—to renovate a beautiful theater, the Paramount. It is now one of the showplaces of the community. Its murals were restored to their original beauty; the 1,350 seats were refurbished in leather and velvet; new sound and lighting systems were installed, with a stage extension to accommodate an orchestra; modern and tastefully decorated restrooms were provided; and a new marquee was erected through the efforts of a local industry.

This restoration was so impressive that our Paramount Woman's Board, representing the Association, was honored with a special State Preservation Award given by our governor at the governor's mansion. This theater is now used for entertainment ranging from the Atlanta Symphony to performers such as Dinah Shore, ballet, children's theater, and local dramatic and musical productions. Visiting artists praise our theater, making us feel that our efforts have been worthwhile.

In conjunction with the above, the youth education committee of the PWA sees that the theater is filled with children from area schools for workshops provided by members of many of the performing groups. These workshops, which involve working with school officials and parents, have been enthusiastically received. The hard work and planning are all worthwhile when, following a performance, the children emerge from the theater with beaming

faces. For many, this is the first time they have been in the theater, and it is the only way they would be able to attend. Another educational function that takes place at the theater is an annual choral festival, involving approximately 250 students from 12 area high schools with a noted conductor. This activity also is coordinated and managed by the PWA.

One of the highlights of my tenure on the board took place during my very first year. To celebrate the Paramount's 50th anniversary, I planned and arranged a luncheon and style show for the 250 members. Wanting to do something special, I contacted one of our faculty members at the college who was the curator of the Appalachian Collection. This Collection is made up of 2,200 garments, dating back to the turn of the century, contributed by local citizens. We used the movie themes of the past 50 years, complete with appropriate posters and music, and asked board members to model the costumes. This created much enthusiasm from the community, for it displayed clothes donated by relatives of many persons in the audience. The show brought back many memories of the good times shared in the theater, it caused the community to appreciate what we were doing to preserve the theater, and it demonstrated cooperation between the college and the general citizenry in working together for the common good of the community.

These activities represent only a portion of the offerings provided by the theater; much more information could be shared to illustrate the importance of the Paramount Theater in our community.

One of my most humbling experiences as a volunteer has been serving for the past ten years on the board of the Gertrude Ramey Home. This home, which has been in operation for 44 years, was established through the concerns and efforts of Ms. Gertrude Ramey, when she first saw young children playing and sleeping on the streets because their parents were in jail. She took them into her small apartment one by one until the number reached ten and she was unable to handle any more. At that point, the editor of a local newspaper took the lead in founding the home to be under her direction, along with a board of 24 persons. This board has always received strong leadership from family members of the editor, as well as doctors, lawyers, accountants, finance officers, business executives, social workers, engineers, teachers, housewives, and others. However, the motivating force behind the home is Gertrude. Her uncanny way of "mothering" has made the children feel her love and they respond in miraculous ways, overcoming the many scars inflicted on them over the years. Indeed, Gertrude has been "mother" to over 4,000 children during these 44 years and has been recognized for her selfless, untiring life by several presidents of the United States. She and some of the children have been to the White House at the invitation of President and Mrs. Eisenhower, followed by similar invitations from Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. This was recounted in the August 1968 issue of the *Reader's Digest*, and is entitled "Gertrude Ramey and Her 3,000 Children." The home operates on an annual budget of approximately \$100,000 with funds coming primarily from local contributions. Ms. Ramey will not accept a salary, but wages are paid for additional

household help and for the necessary staff for licensure, plus routine expenses of maintaining the home and feeding and clothing the children. The values to be learned from serving on such a board are many, but the outstanding one for me is the example of Gertrude's unselfish living day-by-day. She is living proof that formal training is not necessary to become a great teacher or to work miracles. When doctors say that they have done all they can for a child and send it to the home for care, they often see it respond to her nurturing and become a healthy, happy child in a short time. When children who had been failing in school become honor students, or when children from the home become contributing and well-adjusted citizens, who wouldn't consider it an honor and privilege to be associated with such a person and institution?

Another meaningful volunteer service developed through attending, at my own expense, a three-day workshop for each of the past four years on health promotion and wellness. This was an outgrowth of my husband's active membership on the Health Services Advisory Council. In these workshops, we have been privileged to hear many health providers from throughout the country, including outstanding scientists, doctors, nurses, counselors, and nutritionists. Each year the theme is different so that we are exposed to many dimensions of wellness, with various learning opportunities, experiences, and activities. These programs have emphasized that wellness relates to the total person—mental, physical, and spiritual. As a result of these sessions we have realized anew the importance of exercise, positive attitudes, the healing effects of laughter, the ability to handle stress, feeling good about oneself, good nutrition, and many other aspects of health care. The presentations were given in such impressionable ways that they will have a lasting impact on us. This has caused us to want to share them with others. Thus as a part of our volunteer services, we have given programs for church groups, senior citizens, and women's clubs.

A position at the state level which proved gratifying was that of Secretary-Treasurer of the Women's Auxiliary of the Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts. During this time a college scholarship fund was established with one of our own college students being accepted. During my tenure, the auxiliary was officially recognized by the State Department of Revenue as a tax-exempt organization. As a result of the many contributions received (which necessitated acknowledgment of many letters, investment of the money at top interest rates, establishment of auditing policies, and presentation of a detailed report at the state meetings), the fund has now grown to the point where interest alone is being used to provide a \$500 scholarship each year. As of this date, six such scholarships have been awarded.

My list of volunteer services would not be complete without including church involvement. For 35 years I have served in various capacities, but primarily as a Sunday School teacher for ages ranging from junior high school youth to young married couples. It is wonderful to see these young people assuming responsibilities and to know that the church will continue to grow under their leadership.

### **Rewards**

What have been my rewards in volunteerism? After having been gainfully employed for about ten years, one of the greatest feelings upon "retirement" was the freedom to choose how to spend my time. When we moved to Ashland, our children were 11 and 14 years old, so I thoroughly enjoyed being at home when they returned from school and being available to them in ways that would have been impossible with full-time employment. I also had the energy and desire to attend many functions with my husband.

Many concrete rewards already have been revealed in the preceding pages, but, in summary, I would include the following rewards:

- Seeing individuals develop confidence in themselves through the discovery of a hidden talent or leadership ability. Another chapter would be required if I were to tell about the many people who reluctantly accepted a responsibility, only to emerge a short time later into effective and enthusiastic leaders. Several volunteers have entered the job market after they built up their confidence and gained new skills through their volunteer service.
- Receiving satisfaction in knowing that community facilities have been added or preserved.
- Knowing that what has been learned, in order to manage many of the responsibilities, could enable one to receive college credit.
- Having the privilege of being with people who have taught me much and inspired me to do my best.
- Having an opportunity to further my education. For example, in addition to some enrichment classes taken at the college, the Three Arts Club has been a challenge because of the caliber of programs presented by the members themselves.
- Seeing our daughter chosen to take a place on many of the boards where I have served. In fact, a memorable moment in my life came when I retired from the YWCA board after completing two full terms (only to return sometime later). At the annual meeting I was surprised with a "This is Your Life" presentation. After the awarding of a plaque in recognition of services rendered, and naming the contributions I had made, the concluding remark was, "The greatest contribution this person has made is that of her daughter on this board."
- Being able to travel with my husband to professional meetings and organized travel tours.
- Pursuing hobbies such as tennis, where friendships with people of all ages have been developed.
- Having time to entertain, from small carefully planned dinner parties, to large affairs beyond the college community.

In pondering these rewards, I realize anew that my life has been enriched through volunteerism. It brings to mind a statement I made to a friend not

long ago when some form of appreciation was shown to me. I told her that my husband and I had received our roses while living, and that it was a marvelous feeling.

### Conclusion

I know that each community is different, and that the spouses' opportunities and needs are varied; however, if the desire is there, a meaningful role can be found by any president's spouse. I hope that the areas of service described in these pages will be helpful to others in finding that role and that they illustrate the diversity, enjoyment, and feeling of achievement to be gained in volunteerism.

My suggestions for enjoyable and effective volunteerism would include the following:

- Have a positive attitude about the community and the college's role in the community. This encourages acceptance of the spouse and the college and enables the spouse to establish the necessary rapport before knowing how and where to devote his or her time and talents.
- Be creative and innovative with new projects needed in the community. Some of my most satisfying accomplishments have been through serving in this manner, such as the health promotion program. Also, being creative within an organization can make it more dynamic and appealing. The organizations discussed in these pages are what they are today because they have had leadership that encouraged and developed new ideas. This has especially been true with the YWCA and the PWA. In addition to the regular programs, members of these two organizations have stimulated interest and participation through elegant fund-raising events. Two such special annual affairs, the International Evening sponsored by the YWCA and the Festival of Trees sponsored by the PWA are announced with formal invitations and are complete with special music and gourmet food presented in attractive settings. These events have been attended by several hundred persons and have proved that well-planned fund raisers for worthwhile organizations will be enthusiastically supported by the public.
- Investigate an organization carefully before joining; but once committed, do the best job possible, just as if you were receiving a salary, and do it enthusiastically. If changes need to be made, make them tactfully. Quite often, serving on a nominating committee or executive board can be an effective way of improving an organization. It has been satisfying to see a weak board or program change into a strong and vital one through these subtle means. I remember one comment, in particular, from a person who was asked to serve: "Why would anyone want to serve on that board?" Today, the general comment is, "Oh, I would love to accept." Yet, this can be accomplished without special credit being given to any one person. One of my best moments came recently when a long-time friend made this statement following a program I

had presented: "Pat C. . . master, no one really knows you, and all that you do." That is the way I prefer it to be.

- Know when to move off of a board or relinquish a position. This can be the key to effective volunteerism, for it prevents burnout and makes room for new persons with new ideas. However, there are times when it is desirable to remain or return in order to have a balanced board or to support the chair whom you may have convinced to serve.
- Avoid involvement in any activity that could create problems for the college president, for it should be the role of any spouse to be supportive.

As I review my past years, it is a pleasure to think about all that I have been privileged to experience. I hope that my sharing this will give encouragement to all spouses who choose the role of a volunteer. It has been my intention to illustrate that it can be fulfilling and rewarding, and that it does not need to be just "a cup of tea" and a "how do you do?". Volunteer activities can have educational value, can give one feelings of accomplishment, can promote the goals of the college, yet, can allow time for personal enrichment.

In discussing my role with my husband we agreed that my involvement with these many worthwhile activities and my association with so many interesting and diverse individuals has strengthened our marriage, because in all our undertakings we have shared and worked as a team. My freedom to participate in so many activities with him, both professional and social, has greatly enriched our lives. Also, I have had the time to grow with him and have chosen to do so. He, in turn, has always encouraged me in this, never resenting paying my registration fees and travel expenses to his professional meetings. As a result, I have been conscientious in participating and in learning. Quite often, I have returned to the community with a new idea for a program or used the information in some meaningful way. Presidents should encourage spouses in the development of their own roles, and spouses should accept responsibility for their personal growth.

In conclusion, it is important to emphasize that one's ability to learn does not have to decrease with age; it is only from disuse of our mental faculties that we become dull and lose our confidence. Twenty-five years ago I would not have dared attempt much of what I do today; I can do it now only because I have gradually matured by accepting and meeting each challenge. Otherwise, I would not have agreed to write a chapter in this book.

# A Moving Experience

by Ginger Crawford

**M**oving from one location to another is necessary if a person is to advance in an administrative position in education. Those of us in that role of the spouse accept this early in our relationship in order to be a successful, compatible team. No move is an easy move and each one is unique. I do find, however, that all moves are inherently exciting and none more so than the current one.

In sharing the “moving experience,” I must review the decision process that led to the actual event. My husband and I had moved from the East to the Midwest eight years ago when he became the chancellor of a multicampus community college district. At that time, one of our children was in elementary school and the other was just beginning her junior high school years. We had moved from place to place as opportunities arose, but we decided that our priority now was our children’s education and their sense of stability and well-being throughout their teen years. We concluded that this commitment meant not moving until our youngest child had graduated from high school. Even though many unknown factors can force one to change decisions, we were fortunate and, happily, remained in control of our destiny. Many opportunities that were more than a little appealing did come along during this time. We managed to resist such “temptations” and gained much strength from watching our children succeed in the most positive ways during those years. Staying in one location certainly does not assure the forming of good, solid character



for one's children; but, for us, it was an important factor. I believe that our children are appreciative of any "sacrifice" we made for them and will, perhaps, have the courage to make similar family-first decisions in their own lives.

Since we were in this "no-move mode," we nearly missed an important opportunity. My husband was nominated for a position in a relatively nice midwestern city; we discussed it in terms of "being proud to have been nominated." Since our youngest child would be graduating from high school before it would be necessary to move, it occurred to us that we could accept this position. I must say it was a revelation; we could consider the possibility of a new position with no guilt. It was an ideal time for me to make a change since I am a full-time homemaker, and my "nest" was about to be empty.

Having determined that we were free to make such a decision, we began to consider all of the ramifications of moving. We had already satisfied our concern for our children; they would be going to college, remaining in their home state. It is interesting to note that the children, who were once our main concern, now became the easiest to satisfy. Instead, we had to be concerned about elderly parents and, in our case, elderly pets!

Our parents are at an age when involvement with their children takes on a special emphasis. My husband and I each have one living parent, my father and his mother. Both are in their mid-to-late seventies and live in the state that we were considering leaving. Our discussion revolved around issues of how dependent they might be on us, how quickly we could get to them in an emergency, how willing they would be to travel and other issues of that sort. Obviously, we arrived at satisfactory conclusions in this area.

Next we had to deal with the problem of changing the environment of a 15-year-old dog and an 18-year-old cat. I know this sounds ridiculous, but one does not dismiss lightly this long, ongoing relationship with trusting animals. Remember, I said every move is unique. We were concerned about these animals now because they could no longer see or hear well. The combination of adjusting to new surroundings and the absence of our children would present problems for them and, thus, for us.

After considering all these concerns, we explored the new position, and became very enthusiastic about pursuing it. My husband visited the area and came back very excited about both the college and the community. At that point, we decided to share the possibility of a move with our children. We planned a lovely dinner when our oldest daughter was in town on tour with her college orchestra. This was not a kitchen-table dinner, but an elegant dining room dinner—a special occasion. We related the facts as we knew them; they immediately gave us their full support and were enthusiastic about the possibility of our move. With that accomplished, we decided to "go for it."

My husband applied for the position in February and was selected to be the new chancellor in May. Now, from my perspective, many community projects had to be finished or phased out. Since I had a few months to accomplish this, I was able to either complete each or leave it in the hands of someone who would see that it would be completed.

As with any move, the house you are living in must be sold. Our house was in wonderful condition, in a very desirable area, and should normally sell rather quickly. However, the community we were leaving in a depressed economic slump and would be for sometime. Since we had always sold our homes quickly and for a profit, this was new to us.

This situation was easier to tolerate because a home is provided for us by the community college district that appointed my husband as their new chancellor. In addition, the trustees were willing to redecorate it for us. This, I discovered, was a mixed blessing. By nature I move rather slowly and deliberately when making decorating decisions. But when one is given the opportunity to make changes in a home to fit one's particular needs, one does it more quickly to fit many other people's schedules and does it long-distance without having spent any time in the home. I decided that it would be a good idea to use the community college's interior design program in some way so that the house could become an example of the quality programs offered there. This would take a little long to complete the interior and would require having many students scrutinize the house and our possessions; but the result should prove to be worth the effort.

Since this is my first experience with a college-owned home, I have many ideas that may or may not be practical, or even beneficial, to the college. I would like to consult with the horticulture program on the garden and landscaping, use student and staff art pieces in the house, have the restaurant and food management program do some of the catering for college-related gatherings, ask the music department to provide some small groups to entertain guests, etc. Big ideas, I'll have to see if they work in this community. I envision using this house to help sell the community college as the quality institution it truly is.

Once my husband accepted the new position and his acceptance became public knowledge, life became hectic. My husband was very active in the community, and it seemed every group had its own way of saying good-bye. This all coincided with the year-end school activities of our daughter and our foreign exchange student. One of my projects was to coordinate the foreign-exchange program for our community and surrounding towns; plans had to be made for 38 exchange students to gather together, tour this country for a couple of weeks, and return to home countries. Well, believe it or not, they are all home now, their trip went without a hitch, and my husband and I did not miss one farewell dinner or reception.

Everytime we have moved, my husband has gone to the new location before the rest of the family. Such was the case this time as well. He moved into the home, which was being remodeled, and "lived" in the bedroom and kitchen. I remained behind to sell the house and to continue to provide a home for our children until they were able to pack up their possessions and go off to college.

Perhaps I would be remiss if I did not share some of the burdens of the one "left behind" while the person with the new position enjoys the excitement

of meeting new people and new challenges. The person left behind gets to take care of all those little repair jobs that need to be done before the house can be sold. Those chores that my husband usually did became my responsibility. In the process I became more appreciative of all that he does do around our home and, I believe, he would say the same thing about me from his vantage point in our new home.

During this time I kept the house "ready to show" at all times. Believe me, with three teenagers in the house, this is not easily accomplished. At a time like this, one's home is no longer truly home. The moment one allows some carelessness the door bell or the phone rings, and all must be put in order in a hurry so that a realtor can bring someone through the house.

Well, finally, the girls were off to college, moving day arrived, and if all had gone according to plan, the new house would have been painted, papered, and carpeted when our furniture arrived. But things did not go according to plan. As is quite natural, there were delays on the arrival of materials that had to be ordered, and consequently, our furniture had to be stored in two rooms of the house until various jobs were completed. Regardless, it was wonderful to be living under the same roof again with my husband. It is much more beneficial for us to share our activities and concerns face-to-face than by phone.

We are now putting some order back into our lives. The house is beginning to reflect our taste as each day passes, our aged animals are adapting to their new surroundings, and our children are planning to visit (how strange to be saying "visit") at the first opportunity. Another of life's major events has been survived or, more accurately stated, conquered. Such is the life of the spouse of a president of the move.

# The Presidential Team: President and Spouse

by Carol Parker Thompson

With time and energy a premium, the productive community college president needs to draw on all available resources. Yet, in this writer's opinion, the presidential spouse has been an underutilized resource. If used to advantage, the spouse's role as a team member, as opposed to an adjunct position, could be beneficial to all parties involved—the president, the spouse, and the college.

Research on the role of the presidential spouse is emerging, but the results are primarily anecdotal. With the exception of *The Partners* (Croball, 1977), most works describe the roles of the president and spouse as separate and distinct. The literature is replete with illustrations of problems encountered by presidents and spouses relative to a change in locations, uprooted families, conflicting expectations, role confusion, and absence of useful models. Obviously, this stress spills over into the home life. There is little to identify the positive factors and teamwork that enable the strong executive family to remain functional within the stressful and often lonely lifestyle associated with the presidency. Little research has been conducted on the positive aspects of presidential families and the strengths exhibited by presidential families or teams (Stinnett et al. 1985).

The specific factors that have been considered relative to presidential effectiveness have been the ability to provide clear and appropriate direction for the college, board, institutional, and community support; stress and time management skills; physical fitness; emotional health; and only peripherally, family

relationships. In most cases, spouses have not been perceived as a part of presidential teams.

Any mention of the community college presidential team composed of anyone other than the president and upper-level administrators might elicit responses ranging from disbelief to indifference. One might speculate that the performance of a president in most community colleges is enhanced by a supportive and contributing spouse. Beyond that the presumption could be made that what makes the achievement of the president's office superior is teamwork between the president and spouse. The inclusion of the spouse as an important part of the team could bring an added dimension to the perception of the role. But, "by choosing to ignore the role of the spouse, those interested in the community college presidency have been denied an important insight into the presidency, especially if one views the job as extending beyond the president's office" (Vaughan 1986, p. 143).

Several assumptions underlie Vaughan's statement. One, ignoring the role of the spouse is often choice, not simple omission. Two, the inclusion of a broad perspective on the spouse's role would provide a more comprehensive look at the presidency. Three, the job of president encompasses more than the activities of the office. The assumption is that the president cannot do the job alone, that outside support is desirable, and in fact critical for success in the performance of the role. The spouse can be used as a resource to provide the necessary support.

### **The President Spouse Team: Necessary or Desirable**

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the concept of the presidential team. Most community college presidents are men, and generically, the role of the spouse has traditionally been held by a woman. Despite the reality of changing women's roles that have resulted in more women becoming chief administrators, the projection is that "there will not be an equal number of women and men presidents in U.S. colleges and universities until 2070." However, the number of women college presidents is increasing and has "grown by 93 percent from 148 to 286—between 1975 and 1984, for an average net gain of nearly 14 positions per year" (Watkins 1985, p. 1).

The theses related to the concept of a presidential team is as follows: (1) when a president has a supportive and contributing spouse as a part of the team, productivity is increased; and (2) a fully functioning, effective team, utilizing the talents of both team members under optimal conditions makes a contribution in geometric proportions to the welfare of the college and the community in contrast to the contribution that the president could make alone. Is a president-spouse team necessary? Probably not. Many single presidents assume their role and discharge their responsibilities admirably. Is the team desirable? Most definitely, yes!

I am the wife of a community college leader who has been a president for nine years. During my tenure as the spouse of a president, I have functioned in

a team role, assumed the responsibilities consistent with the traditionally perceived role, and in addition have sought out appropriate opportunities to be a resource for the college by utilizing skills and abilities that were beneficial. Some examples are serving as a workshop presenter at "Women's Festival Day," conducting training and personal development seminars through the continuing education division of the college, researching and compiling a history of all of the college's presidents, assessing the learning needs of the senior citizens at the college, and frequently representing the president's office at functions when the president had other demands on his time. I believe that my role as a team player in tandem with the president has contributed to his successful tenure and to my own fulfillment of the spouse's role.

### Contemporary Concepts of Teams

Because little has been written on the role of the community college president, and that includes the complementary role of the spouse as a member of the team, there does not appear to be an educational model that could be used to describe the concept, roles, and functions of an effective president-spouse team. For that reason, I selected a business model, and used a systems approach found in organizational development theory to explain the concept of teams and how they function. French and Bell describe a systems approach as follows:

A systems orientation views and emphasizes organizational phenomena and dynamics in their interrelatedness, their connectedness, their interdependence, and their interaction. Issues, events, forces, and incidents are not viewed as isolated phenomena. A systems approach encourages analysis of events in terms of multiple causation rather than single causation. One cannot change one part of a system without influencing other parts in some ways. The final point is that if one wants to change a system, one changes the system, not just its component parts (1978, pp. 77-78).

Parallels will be shown between a systems approach and the growth, development, and operation of the presidential team.

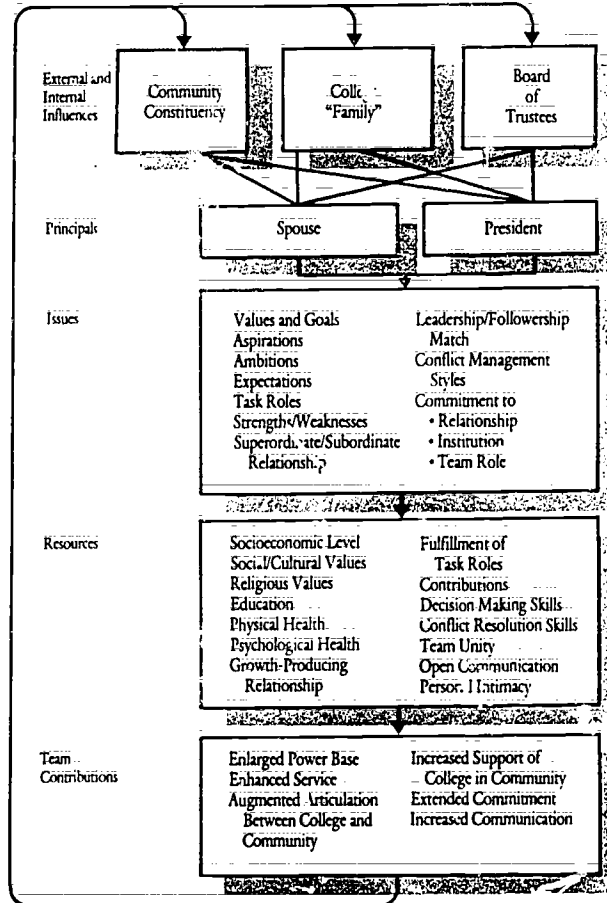
The president-spouse team is a small group. Tubbs (1984) has described the interaction of a small group as complicated and in a continual state of flux. Rubin, Plovnick, and Fry (1978) addressed the ramifications of team building in an organization. Their thesis is that team building results in increased efficiency, which in turn results in greater productivity, decreased stress, and decreased turnover. Mills (1967), among others, has identified models for studying and analyzing small groups. These models alternately describe groups as evolving, developing, goal seeking, balance maintaining, adapting to constantly changing demands, self-maintaining, and involving continual learning.

Intimacy is not included in a systems model, but it is an important part of president-spouse team building. Presidential couples often have to work harder at the marital relationship strained by the responsibilities of the presi-

gency than other less demanding situations. Oftentimes, the marital relationship has to be subservient to the team effort. Techniques need to be developed for setting aside unresolved differences for a higher purpose. The president-spouse team needs to set aside time for working on their personal relationship.

Tubbs' model of small group interaction, determined to be appropriate for analyzing the functioning of a president-spouse team, uses a systems perspective to illustrate the idea of multiple causes and complex interaction of forces that have an impact on the group behavior (1984). Building on the ideas of Tubbs and of Rubin, Plovnick, and Fry, an interactive model of the president-spouse team was developed. Figure 1 illustrates these concepts.

**Figure 1. Interactive Model of President-Spouse Team Functioning**





### **The Team Approach**

Margulies and Wallace have described the team approach to getting the job done as “commonplace.” There is a critical need for “collaborative and coordinative approaches” that the president-spouse team can provide when “functions, tasks, and people are interdependent, that is, when the successful accomplishment of one function, task, or goal depends on how well other functions and tasks are performed” (1973, p.99). The interactive model (figure 1) illustrates the interdependency of the president and spouses as they balance the impact of internal and external influences and issues against team resources and contributions.

### **The Effective President-Spouse Team**

According to Team Effectiveness Theory, issues that generally relate to the “bottom line” in management are strategic planning, goal setting, budgeting, policy making, staffing, systems development, and product innovation. Effectiveness is achieved by planning, controlling, leading, and organizing these issues (Weisbord 1985, p. 27). Weisbord based his ideas on the theories of Mike Blansfield, a consultant who developed a theory of effective team members. The relationship of team members is the means by which the results are achieved, according to Blansfield’s theory. The team first works on issues, and then on assessing its effectiveness.

President-spouse teams also have “bottom lines.” The expectations and interpretations of what it takes to get the job done may differ depending upon the community, the board of trustees, institutional needs, and the financial and political climate. What is accomplished often depends on the relationship of team members. The results are what matters. The contributions that result from effective president-spouse team functioning may include an enlarged power base from which to address problems, enhanced service to the college and the community, augmented articulation between the college and the community, increased support of the college in the community, extended commitment to the institution and the community, and increased communication among external and internal influences such as the board of trustees, the college “family,” and external constituents.

### **Qualities of an Effective Team**

It is said that a successful team is made up of effective members. Tubbs asserted that “compatible individual personalities tended to develop more effective groups” (1984, p. 108). In their research on executive families, Stinnett and his colleagues identified five strengths in the teams they observed: (1) the expression of appreciation to each other; (2) the willingness to spend time and participate in activities together; (3) good communication patterns; (4) commitment to a religious lifestyle; and, (5) effective crisis management (1985). They concluded that cohesion in the family unit is the major resource in dealing with crisis.

In the workplace, effective teams appear to be made up of a number of components. Argyris, in *Organization and Innovation*, offered this description of an effective team: (1) the team contributions are additive; (2) the team moves forward as a unit with high involvement and team spirit; (3) decisions are made by consensus; (4) team members have a commitment to the decisions made by consensus; (5) continual evaluation is taking place; (6) each team member understands the unit goals; (7) team members effectively use conflict management skills; (8) the team utilizes problem-solving skills that result in alternate ways of addressing problems; (9) leadership is given to the team member best qualified; and, (10) there is open communication between the team members (1965). The parallels between systems management and the effective president-spouse team appear obvious.

### External and Internal Influences

There are at least three categories of external and internal influences that have an impact on president-spouse team productivity. They are: (1) the board of trustees, (2) the college "family" composed of the administration, faculty, staff, and students; and, (3) the community at large.

#### The Board of Trustees

Members of the boards of trustees may or may not have "expert" power. However, they do exercise legitimate and coercive power and influence the selection and hiring, the functioning, and the continued success (or failure) of the president. But the board's influence extends beyond the president to include the spouse. The influence is sometimes overt, but more often covert in its nature. Its purpose is often a genuine attempt to help the team "fit in," conform to community standards, or to fulfill expressed and unexpressed trustee expectations of team role and performance. Some examples of board influence are telling the presidential team (and especially the spouse) which clubs to join, which organizations to become involved with, which people to court, include, or exclude, and where to be seen.

Covertly, board control is exercised in where and how often the presidential team, the president, or the spouse are invited as guests, and how they are made to feel welcome. A powerful means of influence is also exercised in board members' attitudes and opinions expressed in the community. Existing community groups quickly determine whether board members support the president-spouse team and respond accordingly.

The dark side of trustee influence is self-serving, ego-enhancing control of the team at the expense of the team and often the institution. Some examples are expecting personal services, demanding excessive attention, requiring ticket selling for their preferred projects, promoting college programs or budget allocations designed to benefit personal interests, or seeking to promote the employment of friends or relatives.

The expectations of boards have been considered in other chapters in this book, but a few thoughts about unexpressed expectations are pertinent here. During the interviewing process board members are frequently asked what they foresee as being the role of the team, and especially of the spouse. The usual answer is that there are few or no expectations. To the contrary, there are several unexpressed expectations of the team.

With the best of intentions many board members expect that both members of the team will be of "good" moral character, that the team members will be supportive of each other and of the college, especially that the spouse will be supportive of the president and of the institution, that the team has a solid marriage, that the team members exhibit warmth, personality, and sufficient social skills to carry on the social functions of the college, that the team members are interdependent but have a quality of independence and the ability to manage their own lives, that the spouse has a sufficient level of education to understand and appreciate the complexity of the learning enterprise, and that the spouse will not play an active role nor interfere in the daily operation of the college (as one trustee put it, "We don't need two bosses here").

### **The College Family**

Members of the college family exercise a number of influences on the president-spouse team. Like board members, they have the capacity to be supportive of the executive couple for their own benefit, for the benefit of the president-spouse team, or as a contribution to the college. The college community can exclude the president-spouse team or make it feel a part of the community. Many faculty members circumvent what is often an adversarial relationship with the president and spouse by inviting them to social functions. However well their intentions, based on this writer's experience, it does not appear to be realistic to expect the president and spouse to have a lasting intimate relationship with faculty or staff members.

In their enthusiasm for special interests members of the college family frequently solicit the spouse as a sounding board or a source of influence when attempting to gain consideration for special projects or promotions. In addition, expectations including financial contributions to college organizations, personal funding to support special events, buying and selling tickets, and attendance at a wide range of college activities are perceived to be the official responsibilities of the team.

Privacy is a precious commodity because presidential couples symbolically represent the college wherever they appear, on campus or in the community. Members of the college family often attempt to conduct business at social functions or at activities not related to the college. Also, there is an unspoken expectation that the president-spouse team will be present at weddings, make hospital calls, and attend funerals. Phone calls on evenings and weekends interrupt family and social gatherings and detract from quiet time together. Probably that is why many presidential couples have elected to spend their weekends

and “spare time” out of town. Although being known and respected is one of the bonuses associated with a college presidency, being lobbied and otherwise solicited is often burdensome to the president-spouse team.

### **The Community Constituency**

The expectations and demands from the community on the team are not unlike those of the board and college family. It is assumed that the president and spouse will support the community in tandem and individually. It is anticipated that the team will be visible and active and will share their talents and resources by serving on boards and committees and by assuming leadership roles in social, civic, and cultural organizations. In addition, there is frequently an expectation that the presidential couple will contribute personal resources, and those of the college to all community functions in which they are engaged.

It is often assumed that the president's spouse is fully informed concerning all programs, policies, procedures and current events at the college. Frequently, there is a presumption in the community that the spouse has the authority, knowledge, and ability to resolve, or refer to the appropriate source, any and all problems presented. Most presidents handle the majority of these challenges alone; however, if the responsibility can be divided between the couple working as a team, the burden on the president is lessened.

### **The “Unteam”**

It could be argued that the presidential team is not a team at all; that the members are yoked together for a common purpose, but are in fact, an “unteam.” Margulies and Wallace provided insight into this issue when they described some of the operating problems of teams: the problem of the membership; the satisfaction of individual needs; the tendency toward parochialism; the tendency toward losing differentiation; the task-process gestalt; and the problems of control (1973, pp. 107-109). The existence or development of an “unteam” may be the result of internal or external influences or of issues that the team has not resolved. Such a condition places additional stress on an already tension-producing situation.

### **The Problem of Membership**

A problem of membership is the degree to which team members feel that they are part of the team. A successful team permits members to feel that they are making a contribution and adding value to the team effort. An “unteam” may occur when the spouse chooses not to be an integral part of the team, is ignored, is made to feel that the contribution is unneeded or unwanted, or receives no recognition for expended efforts.

Today, spouses do not always have the luxury of positioning themselves apart from the team. Those who elect to be non-participants in a team role pay dearly for their noninvolvement. The consequences include significantly more

pressure and stress on the couple, greater tension placed on the president because of the lack of support, a greater burden assumed by the president because of the loneliness of the role, and ultimately the risk of the disintegration of the couple's relationship.

Neither can spouses realistically separate their personal lives and career aspirations from the work of the team. This issue may become critical as spouses pursue individual careers and interests more actively. However, pursuing one's own role does not relieve the spouse of team responsibilities. If the team concept is to be retained, tasks may have to be delegated to others. The critical issue is whether the spouse will contribute to the team effort effectively or create a setting for an "unteam".

### **The Satisfaction of Individual Member Needs**

There is evidence to suggest that the spouse who chooses to be a team player is happier. It appears, however, that presidents receive rewards from their role far in excess of the recognition or compensation given to the spouse, regardless of the contribution of the team members. These rewards include income, perks, position, prestige, power, recognition, and a sense of personal satisfaction and accomplishment. Granted, presidents normally have greater burdens, pressures and stresses in their role than the spouse, but presidents are compensated for their efforts in a variety of ways. One might argue that the rewards are commensurate with responsibility, that spouses should not expect to be compensated for "doing their job." Since nearly every other worker is compensated for doing the job, should it be different for spouses, especially when there are expectations of the presidential spouse beyond what is required of the spouses of other employees at the college?

The problem of satisfaction or the degree to which team members receive recognition for their efforts "is often taken for granted and can inadvertently affect the way the group proceeds with its activities" (Margulies and Wallace 1973, p. 107). Some sensitive community college boards have acknowledged the contribution of the spouse and have provided additional remuneration as a way to recognize the team effort. Such benefits have included travel and meeting expenses, secretarial services, and public relations costs. The development of the "unteam" may relate to the degree to which there is a lack of tangible recognition of the spouse's efforts on behalf of the institution, especially on the part of the trustees.

### **The Tendency Toward Parochialism**

Parochialism is defined as restricted, narrow thinking. A fact of living is that individuals view problems from their own perspective. Ideally, in a team approach, members with diverse points of view work together to solve problems creatively, while recognizing their individual differences. The "unteam" may occur when there is no recognition of the importance of different perspec-

tives, or where absolute power is placed on the wisdom, experience, or position of one or the other team members.

Obviously, decision making is hierarchal and frequently authoritarian. Authority to make decisions for the college is entrusted to the president by the board of trustees. However, there needs to be open sharing of viewpoints by team members to avoid parochialism and give added value to the expertise of both team members in the performance of their common tasks.

### **The Task-Process Gestalt**

The purpose of the team development and team building process is to maximize skills, potential, and ability. When meshed into a collective whole, teams are able to complete assignments more effectively. Further benefits of a task-process gestalt are the ability to perceive more clearly the task to be addressed; the importance of the tasks to be addressed, the importance of the task, and necessary changes in the team building process. "Unteam" behavior will be evidenced when the team members collectively cannot define the task, when they do not recognize the urgency of the task, when the pressure of time does not allow for team members to work in tandem, and when the elements of the task-process do not unify team members.

### **The Problem of Control**

Team members need to have a sense of their ability to influence each other and members of the college and community. Team members have three issues that determine whether they are a team or an "unteam": Am I in or out of the team? Do I have any power, influence or control? Will I have a chance to develop and use needed skills and resources? (Weisbord 1985). Presidents and spouses, if they are functioning as a team, need to feel that the power making decisions, though unbalanced, are shared, that each has a voice, especially as the decision effects both of them. To paraphrase Cartwright and Zander, there are at least six factors that destroy the cohesiveness of the team and result in an "unteam": (1) unreasonable or disagreeable demands on individual team members; (2) disagreement over procedures, activities, and rules; (3) unpleasant experiences between team members; (4) competition between team demands and preferred outside interests; (5) unfavorable public image of the team (or individual team members); and (6) competition for membership by other groups (1960, pp. 78-86). Unresolved conflicts, arguments, and manipulation by external and internal influences, unresolved issues and difficulties in the team member relationship, and inadequate resources often result in an "unteam".

### **The Issues**

In addition to the internal and external influences that have an impact upon the functioning of the president-spouse team, the couple must deal with significant and complex issues within their own relationship. Because of the

demands of the presidency, the marriage is often left to look after itself. Team members may become involved in the challenges of daily living and tend to skip sharing and spending time with each other.

Rubin, Plovnick, and Fry (1978) described a number of problems with teams and a series of questions about team relationships that tend to develop around the following four issues: goal issues, role issues, procedural issues, and interpersonal issues. (1) *Goal issues*: Do team members understand their "mission"? Are their individual needs included in team objectives? Are the objectives achievable, and are they consistent with team members' personal goals? (2) *Role issues*: What do individual team members see as their responsibility to the college? Do team members understand how they "fit" together? How has the superordinate-subordinate, leadership-followership issue been resolved? "One frequent source of conflict is the leadership struggle between superior and subordinate in decision making" (Tubbs 1984, p. 296). The best match appears to be a democratic leader and an independent follower (Tubbs 1984, pp. 167-176). Do team members understand not only the needs that each brings to the relationship, but how the needs change over time? Do the members recognize that the relationship is an exchange? Does each team member clearly understand and communicate role expectations? Does each spouse specify what kind of help is needed from the other to function as a team? Do the team members understand the constraints under which the president functions? (Baird and Kram 1983). (3) *Procedural issues*: Do the team members understand how they will solve problems, resolve conflicts, and make decisions? Do team members understand how they will operate as a team, and how each member will be involved? (4) *Interpersonal issues*: Do team members respect, trust, and support each other? Do they recognize their interdependence? Are they committed to the relationship and to working together as a team? The quality and harmony found in relationships do not just happen. They are nurtured and developed, based on each team member attending to the relationship.

Some of the related issues may be as follows: individual values; goals, aspirations; ambitions; expectations of the team and task roles; strengths and weaknesses of team members; conflict management styles; commitment to the institutional and presidential team roles; and commitment to the team relationship. How the president and spouse resolve these issues determines to a great extent their effectiveness as a team.

### Team Resources

An inference can be made that the more similar the background of the team members in terms of socioeconomic level, and in social, cultural, and religious values; the greater the strength of the relationship. In addition, it appears that the more similar the educational level, the more similar the values. Tubbs' research indicated that "educational differences would generate severe value differences" (1984, p. 71). Tubbs also reported that the more similar the age, the easier it is for team members to communicate.



Other resources that may promote unity and teamwork include physical and psychological health; a growth-producing, satisfying personal relationship; fulfillment of task and team roles; the problem solving, consensus decision making ability of the team; conflict resolution skills; and open communication.

Working together, team members often have greater knowledge and information with which to confront issues. Problems that require information are more easily addressed since one team member may fill in the knowledge gaps of the other. Working together frequently creates a greater number of approaches to problem solving. Team members tend to be more open to varied approaches, given the input of another member. In addition, team members tend to take more risks than they might if they were reaching a decision alone (Maier 1986, pp. 418-430). Given these skills and abilities, the president-spouse team is better able to confront effectively the external and internal influences as well as the goal, role, procedural, and interpersonal issues and utilize them as resources to make significant contributions to the strength of the team, to the college, and to the community.

#### Team Contributions

By functioning as a team the president and spouse can make a contribution to the welfare of the college and the community that is greater by geometric proportion than the contribution the president could make alone. Working as a team, the members may contribute an enlarged power base to aid in the solution of problems; enhance service to the community in civic, social, and cultural affairs; augment articulation between the college and the community so that the community becomes aware of the availability of the community college as a potential resource and as a community problem solver; and increase support in the community, which may result in greater local tax millage and bond approval for the college. The college and the community benefit from extended president-spouse commitment to the role as team members and from increased communication with external and internal influences.

#### Conclusions and Recommendations

What has been discussed in this chapter is the functioning and development of an ideal president-spouse team. Several assumptions were made: that the two would want to work together for the benefit of the team, the college, and the community; that the couple were able to work in tandem; that the president and spouse both had skills and abilities that could and should be utilized to enhance the college and the community; and that the president-spouse team effort would result in increased productivity.

In *The President's Spouse: Volunteer or Volunteered*, Clodius outlines three predictions for the future role of the spouse. They were that the spouse would receive increased recognition for the role; that the spouse's role would be better defined, and that the spouse would receive compensation for at least that part

of the total effort that would be paid for in the absence of a spouse (1984, p. 147).

To date, little has changed in regard to the role of the spouse. Spouse recognition has not increased appreciably. Few people have any idea of how to define the spouse's role exclusive of hostess and caretaker, which probably excludes most male spouses. It is only an especially sensitive board of trustees that rewards a spouse with appreciation for efforts as a team member.

Based on the experience and observations of this author, there are several recommendations that may be useful to those couples attempting to understand and develop the president-spouse team role:

1. Work out priorities in terms of your work demands, values, needs, hobbies, interests, and habits. The objective is to spend the most time on what you value most.

2. Plan the most efficient use of your time, energy, and resources. For example, if the spouse will cover certain functions, it leaves time for other things, especially time together. You may want to assess the strengths and weaknesses of both team members and assign responsibilities according to individual ability, talent, and interest. The key is that it will create greater productivity for both team members and increased personal time for the president-spouse relationship.

3. Understand the difference between work and play. The team plays a heavy price if it assumes work time is play time. Some examples of work which might appear to be play are an evening on the town with the board of trustees, attending a faculty barbecue, or attending a play at the college. These activities preclude relaxation.

4. Determine ways to promote sharing. To compensate for a clear imbalance of power, team members should clearly understand their roles. Spouses should have tasks or roles in which they clearly have more power than the president, e.g., the spouse may have a more authoritative role in family or in social decisions, or in the allocation of free time.

5. Promote communication within the team structure and within the college. Survival as an individual and as a team may depend on the linkages you establish. The spouse may need to recruit or enlist support from members of the administrative team, especially the assistant to the president, who can assist the spouse by providing warning when the president has had an especially difficult day (or an unusually rewarding one), keeping calendars coordinated, mailing the spouse notices of meetings and board minutes, sharing perceptions and rumors of impending trouble at the college, helping keep a sense of perspective, and providing a sense of team sharing and effort.

6. The administrative team normally evaluates predetermined goals and objectives annually. The presidential team might consider a similar exercise. This procedure would assist the team in setting priorities and in planning the efficient use of their time, energy, and resources.

7. Set a high priority on time together. Involved in acquiring a sense of role definition, harmony, and team effort is the willingness of president-spouse

team members to support and affirm one another. Team members need to create and promote a social network where support is given and received. President-spouse teams can provide continuity in growth and help to mediate loss. They can act as a buffer against the demands and problems they both encounter.

Prior to serving in their roles, presidents and spouses may observe others in that capacity and believe that they understand the responsibilities and benefits; when in fact, they cannot fully understand the position until they have been in them. It is impossible to comprehend the demands of the presidential or team role until it is experienced, even if one has come up through the academic ranks.

The ability to deal with responsibility will allow for greater efficiency in the utilization of institutional and team resources. Under the best conditions, resources will always be insufficient to meet the demands. The expectations and demands on the team will always exceed the time, energy, and resources of the team. Therefore, the relationship between the president and the spouse needs to be periodically examined and realistically managed to maximize individual and team productivity.

# Observations and Recommendations

by George B. Vaughan

The most important observations one can make based on the foregoing chapters is that the role of the community college president's spouse is a complex one requiring tremendous amounts of energy, time devotion, patience, and sheer perseverance. Indeed, few positions in society demand so much and offer so little help in terms of supporting resources. For examples, the presidential spouse at a university may have a more demanding role but has many more resources with which to accomplish the tasks at hand.

A second observation offers no surprises; each spouse approaches the role in a different manner, depending upon her or his value system, the locations of the college, and, in some cases, the traditions associated with the spouse's role at a particular college. The case for the last statement is somewhat weakened by the fact that there is little historical precedence associated with the role of the spouse at most community colleges because most community colleges are relatively new. This situation may change, however, as today's spouses set the patterns for the future.

A third observation is that the study of the role of the presidential spouse is still relatively unexplored. There is much to be learned about the role and its impact on the presidency, the college, and the community. As further study is undertaken on the role, a certain amount of tension will exist between and among those individuals and groups who see the role in different lights. As suggested in chapter one, some polarization between the various groups will take place, a healthy and necessary situation if one is ever to understand the complexities of the spouse's role.

A final observation is that the contributors to this volume have given much thought to the spouse's role. The result is a better understanding of the role, an understanding that is now public knowledge. By their willingness to speak out on the spouse's role, the contributors—and especially the spouses—have called attention to the role and have provided a starting point for other spouses who wish to engage in the introspection that is so vital to the mental health and well being of the individual and society.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered in no particular order of priority. Nor are they blanket recommendations to be picked up and carried forward, regardless of local circumstances. Indeed, many of the recommendations are not only not new but are borrowed from existing practices at some of the nation's community colleges.

1. Spouses, presidents, trustees, and society in general should separate those functions that emanate from being married to a community college president from those that are inherent in most marriages. Once the spouse's functions are identified, they can be discussed, and some sense of order and priorities can be established. This recommendation will be extremely difficult to carry out for obvious reasons. Most people simply do not think in terms of their reasons for doing what they do; most simply plow ahead "doing until they can do no more," the exact situation the carrying out of this recommendation will help to avoid.

2. Related to the above recommendation, feminist leader Gloria Steinem recently urged women to deal with the "superwoman" role thrust upon many women who try to juggle job and home. Her recommendation and mine is that husbands should take on more of the household chores. If the team approach to the presidency as advocated in this volume is to work, both members of the team must share in household work, especially when one considers that most presidential spouses are women and most work outside the home. The "eternal triangle" for most spouses consists not of lover, husband, and wife, but rather of job, home, and college.

3. Some spouses like "living in a fishbowl" and getting their "20 minutes in the spotlight" (or is it 20 seconds in this electronic age?), and others do not. Spouses, trustees, and presidents should work to give maximum exposure to those spouses who enjoy publicity and minimum exposure to those who shun it.

4. Governing boards should include spouses as part of the presidential selection process when the candidate is married. The spouse's involvement should consist of a formal interview and not simply a bit of chitchat at the evening's cocktail party and dinner. In recent years some boards have shied away from interviewing the spouse for fear that the impression would be given that they expect "two for the price of one." This need not be the case. The interview provides an opportunity for the board to discuss its expectations of the spouse and for the spouse to discuss her or his expectations of the board. If much is ex-

pected; this should be made known during the interview. On the other hand, if the board expects little or nothing of the spouse, this should be clearly understood during the interview. Many new spouses assume the role of presidential spouse with a sense of "rising expectations," only to find that the spouse has no role in relationship to the board and to the college. The interview should also provide the opportunity for the spouse to "interview the board," as one spouse advocates. It is important that the board agree on the purpose of the interview prior to its taking place, including agreeing on questions that are important to the board at that college at that time.

5. While no one position description or role description would be right for all spouses at all colleges, it is nevertheless desirable that some boundaries be drawn regarding the role the spouse is to play. Does the spouse do what she or he desires or what is expected? There is a big difference. For example, if the spouse is expected to host the annual board cocktail party in her home, this should be made known at the time of the interview. If this is not acceptable to the spouse, this too should be made known.

6. In regard to establishing relationships with the board and the college community, presidents must realize that most spouses do not have a forum from which to make their views known; therefore, the president must serve as the spouse's advocate until the time when some guidelines are developed whereby the spouse can speak for herself or himself.

7. Spouses want to have their expenses paid to professional meetings. If the presidential team is to function as effectively as desired, spouses must keep up with developments in higher education that extend beyond the local campus. One way of doing this is to attend professional meetings either with their presidential spouses or alone. Funds should be available to pay the spouses' expenses to professional meetings.

8. In line with the above, those who plan professional meetings must assure that the activities planned for spouses go beyond "the rose garden tour." As Katha Pollitt writes in the December 5, 1985, issue of the *New York Times*, society is doing women a disservice if they are viewed as "tagalongs" at business parties and professional meetings. There is much to be discussed regarding the role of the presidential spouse; the professional meeting is an excellent place to start the discussion. Recently the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, under the leadership of Beverly Parnell, has begun a series of discussions on the role of the spouse. This practice needs to be continued and expanded. The American Association of Community College Trustees should assume a leading role in interpreting the role of the spouse, especially as that role relates to the governing board.

9. If spouses are expected to entertain, funds must be available to pay for the entertainment. Resources should be made available for sending invitations, readying the house for the reception, and other activities that go well beyond simply having the food catered.

10. Boards should establish a "welcome wagon" committee whereby individuals—trustees, the spouses of trustees, college employees—will welcome

the new spouse to the area. Ideally, the welcoming should begin before the presidential family moves to the area, for the committee should offer a tour of neighborhoods, schools, etc. Also, the committee can go a long way toward making the children (assuming children are involved in the move) feel good about their new location.

11. The American Association of Community and Junior College should establish a Spouses' Council similar to the other councils currently in existence. A Spouses' Council would provide spouses with a voice at the national level and would make it possible for a spouse to be elected to the Association's board of directors. In addition, the Spouses' Council would add understanding, prestige, and visibility to the spouses' role in much the same way that the standing Committee of Presidents' and Chancellors' Spouses of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges has added understanding, prestige, and visibility to the spouses associated with its member institutions; or, in the same way that the work done by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities on the role of the spouse has added understanding, prestige, and visibility to the role the spouses play in regard to its member institutions. America's community colleges are important enough, mature enough, and interested enough to bring the spouse into the mainstream of the community college movement. A Spouses' Council would be a major step in the right direction and inform the rest of higher education that the spouse of the community college president is important and worthy of recognition.

This volume is only a beginning in understanding the spouse's role; much additional work needs to be undertaken, published, and discussed. On the other hand, the authors who contributed to this volume have opened the door for future discussions on this important subject. Until the spouse's role is more fully defined, understood, and appreciated, the community college can never reach its full potential. To ignore the spouse's role is to fail to understand the complexities and potential of the presidential leadership team.



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