

## **Resolution 1: Constitutional Name Change of the Recycling Committee to the Green Ambassadors Committee**

Submitted by Piper Martz '16 and Rudrani Sarma '16

*Whereas*, Article VII, Section I, Subsection C and Article VII, Section II, Subsection D, Subsection E, and Subsection F of The Constitution of the Self-Government Association of the Undergraduate School of Bryn Mawr College (henceforth known as SGA Constitution) references "Recycling Representatives" and "Recycling Committee,"

*Whereas*, Article VII, Section II, Subsection F states that the "Recycling Representatives shall oversee recycling in the dorms and other activities the committee undertakes,"

*Whereas*, the recent expansion of projects and responsibilities of the Recycling Committee and Recycling Representatives have surpassed the overseeing of recycling in dorms to include a variety of other "green" projects and initiatives that encompass sustainability efforts at Bryn Mawr College,

*Whereas*, the term "Recycling" restricts the implications of the committee's extent and responsibilities,

*Whereas*, Victor Donnay, the chair of the Sustainability Leadership Group, has indicated support for changing the name of the "Recycling Committee" to "Green Ambassadors Committee" and the title of "Recycling Representatives" to "Green Ambassadors,"

*Whereas*, Jim McGaffin, the Assistant Director for Energy and Project Management of Facilities Services, has indicated support for changing the name of the "Recycling Committee" to "Green Ambassadors Committee" and the title of "Recycling Representatives" to "Green Ambassadors",

*Whereas*, the Sustainability Leadership Group Committee, has indicated support on Friday, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 for changing the name of the "Recycling Committee" to "Green Ambassadors Committee" and the title of "Recycling Representatives" to "Green Ambassadors,"

*Whereas*, the 2012-2013 Recycling Committee met consensus regarding this name change during the fourth quarter of the academic year, after the 2013 spring Plenary,

*Be it resolved*, that henceforth all initiatives set out by this committee will be attributed to the Green Ambassadors and Green Ambassadors Committee,

*Be it resolved*, that the use of "Recycling Committee" in Article VII, Section II, Subsection E be changed to "Green Ambassadors Committee,"

*Be it resolved*, that the use of “Recycling Representative” in Article VII, Section I, Subsection C and Article VII, Section II, Subsection D, Subsection E, and Subsection F be changed to “Green Ambassadors Representative.”

## **Resolution 2: More Gender Neutral Language in the Constitution**

Submitted by Sofia Oleas '15 and Elizabeth Vandenberg '16

*Whereas*, The Constitution of the Self-Government Association of the Undergraduate School of Bryn Mawr College (henceforth known as the SGA Constitution) does not consistently use gender neutral terms throughout the document,

*Whereas*, Article IV, Section I, Subsection K, Point 4; Article V, Section I, Subsection A and Subsection G; Article VII, Section II, Subsection O, Subsection P, and Subsection Q; and Article VIII, Section IV, Subsection B use the words “Freshman” and “Freshmen” when referring to first-year undergraduate students,

*Whereas*, Article VI, Section IX, Subsection A uses the word “Freshwoman” when referring to the Songs Mistress,

*Whereas*, Article VI, Section VI, Subsection A uses “her/his” and Article VIII, Section III, Subsection E uses “s/he”,

*Whereas*, “Freshman”, “Freshmen”, “Freshwoman”, “s/he”, “his/her” are non-neutral nouns and pronouns,

*Whereas*, the SGA Constitution should use inclusive, neutral language,

*Whereas*, not all students of the Bryn Mawr College student body identify with the gendered language of the SGA Constitution,

*Be it resolved*, that the use of “Freshman Class Songs Mistress” in Article IV, Section I, Subsection K shall be changed to “First-Year Class Songs Mistress,”

*Be it resolved*, that the use of “freshman” in Article V, Section I, Subsection A shall be changed to “first-year”,

*Be it resolved*, that the use “freshmen” in Article V, Section I, Subsection G shall be changed to “first-years,”

*Be it resolved*, that the use of “Freshman Dorm Representative” in Article VII, Section II, Subsection O, Subsection P, and Subsection Q shall be changed to “First-Year Dorm Representative,”

*Be it resolved*, that the use of “Freshman Songs mistress” in Article VIII, Section IV, Subsection B shall be changed to “First-Year Songs Mistress,”

*Be it resolved*, that the use of “Freshwoman Songs mistress” in Article VI, Section IX, Subsection A shall be changed to “First-Year Songs Mistress,”

*Be it resolved*, that the use of “her/his” in Article VI, Section VI, Subsection A shall be changed to “their,”

*Be it resolved*, that the use of “s/he accepts” in Article VIII, Section III, Subsection E shall be changed to “they accept.”

### **Resolution 3: Student Collaboration with the Board of Trustees and Divestment**

Presented by Sofia Oleas '15 and Betsy Helm '16

*Whereas*, the Environmental Justice League's (henceforth known as EJL) mission is to work for and promote environmental justice,

*Whereas*, in order to achieve that environmental justice—and thereby make Bryn Mawr College an environmentally-sustainable institution—EJL hopes to use the tactic of fossil fuel divestment to help initiate real institutional change,

*Whereas*, The Bryn Mawr College Self-Government Association Constitution (henceforth known as SGA Constitution) provides the student body with self-governance and therefore empowers the student body to express and put into action the change wanted,

*Whereas*, in accordance with this tradition of self-governance, students deserve a voice in the discussions and decisions that ultimately affect student life on campus and should have a role discussing surrounding issues brought to the Bryn Mawr College Board of Trustees (henceforth known as the Board) by students from the outset,

*Whereas*, Bryn Mawr College as an institution resolves to “encourage students to be responsible citizens who provide service to and leadership for an increasingly interdependent world (A),”

*Whereas*, Bryn Mawr affirms in its Climate Action Plan a commitment to work with other educational institutions to facilitate the growth of alternative energy and pursue issues surrounding sustainability (B),

*Whereas*, the leaders of 167 countries (including the United States) have agreed that any warming of the planet above a 2°C (3.6°F) rise would be unsafe, and we have already (as of 2012) raised the temperature 0.8°C, causing far more damage than most scientists expected (C),

*Whereas*, in their campaign for fossil fuel divestment EJL has received overwhelming support from the student body in 250 petition signatures and a vote in favor of supporting divestment from the 2012-2013 Representative Council of the Self-Government Association (henceforth known as SGA) during the SGA meeting on February 3, 2013 (D),

*Whereas*, the EJL has previously met with the Committee on Investment Responsibility and the Investments Policy Subcommittee to present the rationale behind divestment,

*Whereas*, the Board recently responded to student requests by sending a letter with no further explanation and the Board rationale has not been fully explained,

*Whereas*, further student support was accumulated through a photo petition—wherein members of the student body took pictures of themselves holding sheets of paper stating each individual’s reason for supporting divestment—from the student body after they were informed of this decision,

*Whereas*, EJI hopes to remove any obstacles and complications to foster better communication and collaboration between the Board and the student body,

*Be it resolved*, that the Board invite members of EJI to a negotiations meeting, with a third party facilitator, at its February meeting. This meeting will model active student participation in Board decisions regarding topics brought before trustees by students as well as supporting the formation of open communication channels between students and the Board,

*Be it resolved*, finally that student supporters of divestment should consider backing up their vote today by coming to the open section of the Board meeting in October.

## Appendix

(A) Bryn Mawr College Mission Statement (1998) states “The academic and co-curricular experiences fostered by Bryn Mawr, both on campus and in the College's wider setting, encourage students to be responsible citizens who provide service to and leadership for an increasingly interdependent world.”

"Bryn Mawr College Mission Statement." Bryn Mawr College. Ed. Board of Trustees. Bryn Mawr College, Dec. 1998. Web. 15 Sept. 2013.

(B) Bryn Mawr’s Climate Action Plan states “At present, there is a lack of renewable energy capacity, both regionally and nationally. To address this fundamental problem, the College will work with other institutions of higher education to support the growth of alternative energy sources as well as other sustainability initiatives (5).”

Bryn Mawr College Sustainability Committee. Bryn Mawr College Climate Action Plan. Publication. Bryn Mawr: Bryn Mawr College, 2010. Bryn Mawr College. Bryn Mawr College, 15 Jan. 2010. Web. 15 Sept. 2013.

(C) Facts and figures used were found in a resolution put forth by the MA United Church of Christ advocating for fossil fuel divestment.

Antal, Jim. Resolution Urging Divestment from Fossil Fuel Companies. Publication. N.p.: n.p., 2012. Massachusetts Conference UCC, Dec. 2012. Web. 19 Sept. 2013.

(D) In a vote taken on a proposal to recommend divestment at the February 3, 2013 SGA meeting, the Representative Council of the Self-Government Association voted in favor of divestment with zero votes of opposition and four abstentions.

Self-Government Association, comp. Bryn Mawr College SGA Blog. Proc. of February 3, 2013 SGA Meeting, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr. Bryn Mawr College, 7 Feb. 2013. Web. 15 Sept. 2013.

(E) The response was sent via email to the members of the Environmental Justice League following an in-person meeting the previous April and a subsequent conference call in June. Holland, Cheryl L. Letter to Bryn Mawr Earth Justice League. Aug. 2013. MS. N.p

## Summary

Damage caused by extraction, transportation and burning of fossil fuels is a real and present threat to our generation, especially indigenous peoples, people in the global south and those with fewer resources who bear the brunt of destructive industry practices and will face the worst costs of climate change. The nationwide divestment movement seeks to address the lack of action on this issue by making the connection between money and destructive practices. Bryn Mawr has an opportunity to be a leader in this movement, highlighting its commitment to social justice and to student involvement in decisions by moving the money of its endowment out of the fossil fuel industry. Members of the Environmental Justice League (formerly the Earth Justice League) seek to continue negotiations with the Board of Trustees while calling for more transparency in decision making processes on campus. This resolution is an opportunity for the student body to speak directly to the Board on this urgent matter.

## Rationale

Climate change is a very real and immediate issue that will impact the future of the planet not just decades into the future but tomorrow as well. Climate change is an issue of environmental justice and social justice as the phenomenon disproportionately affects those nations least responsible for the anthropogenic carbon that exacerbates the warming of the planet. Individual actions—recycling, turning off lights, and conserving energy in the home—though helpful do not have the broad systematic impact that divestment could bring about.

The divestment movement is powerful and continuously growing. Already six schools have divested and over 200 schools in addition to many churches and municipalities are campaigning for fossil fuel divestment. Investments are political and divestment sends fossil fuel companies a message opposing “business as usual” practices. Divestment provides an opportunity for students to stand up and bring about real political change for a better planet.

This fits our mission as Bryn Mawr College as an institution resolves to “encourage students to be responsible citizens who provide service to and leadership for an increasingly interdependent world.” It is also a bad investment.

Environmental Justice League began the campaign for fossil fuel divestment in winter of 2012. Environmental Justice League has received 250 student signatures on a petition supporting divestment as well as a vote of support from the Self-Government Association of the Undergraduate School of Bryn Mawr College. Environmental Justice League has had two meetings, one with the Committee on Investment Responsibility and one with the Investments Policy Subcommittee, as well as a conference call with the Committee on Investment

Responsibility, but has been informed that the committee will not recommend divestment to the full Bryn Mawr College Board of Trustees.

Environmental Justice League asks that the Board provide greater transparency regarding Bryn Mawr's investments and the Board's decision-making process. In the past, the Board has made little effort to validate student voices and concerns and allow students to take part in Board decisions. Environmental Justice League believes that by offering greater transparency to and more actively working with students, Bryn Mawr can realize its true potential as a self-governed institution.

Environmental Justice League asks that those present at plenary support this call for greater student power and involvement and take this opportunity to stand up for the right for student voices to be heard. Environmental Justice League may have received a "no," but will not stop pushing to achieve its goals.