

Western High School Needs the Alumnae to Care

November 7, 2010

Several years ago when many people thought Western was going to close, former Westernites and supporters came out in droves. No doubt that had some impact on the fact that Western is still standing today as the oldest, all-female, public high school in the country. The fact that it is still standing today, however, does not mean it will be tomorrow.

Western is struggling to survive. Each day those in power to wipe away 166 years of rich traditions with the stroke of a pen are perhaps moving one step closer to making that a reality. Tomorrow is not promised to Western, particularly when there is little show of support from those who benefited from the school's open doors, as well as from its great teachers and administrators. Graduates of the greatest school in the land: *Do You Not Care?*

Since Western opened its doors in 1844, approximately 33,000 women have graduated and gone to become proud, dignified and confident women. At least 10,000 of them graduated after 1965. Sadly, though, there are less than 200 members of the Western High School Alumnae Association. Twelve people turned out for the membership meeting on October 26, 2010.

The Alumnae Association, and more importantly Western needs you to care. Care that the school's library was closed for two weeks a few weeks ago because there was no money to pay for a substitute. Care that the school lost \$42,000 in funding because they missed their enrollment goal by seven – Yes, seven students! Care, too, that the new principal had to make the tough decision of having to let one of the assistant principals go to try and make up for lost monies. I could go on and on.

We, the 13 members of the WHSAA Executive Board and committee chairs have made a pledge to recommit ourselves to the cause of saving Western from a fate that befell Eastern High School. While as volunteers we have given more of ourselves than we have to give, we realize there is still so much more we need to do. But we cannot do it alone. We need you to care.

Starting immediately we will be devising a plan for a 'Save Western' campaign. This means everything that we do from this point on will be geared towards giving back to Western like we never have done before. We will ask you for your time, your money, your knowledge, your suggestions, your opinions and your hearts. Whatever you can give will make a difference.

Western needs an army of support. What better army can you think of than one made up of bright, strong, powerful women? If we don't come together and save Western, who will?

The forces that want to close Western or turn it into a different type of school are gaining on us. Yes it is a race – but one that we can win! So please, show you love Western. Show that it meant more to you than a diploma. Show that you are grateful for the experiences that helped shape you lives. In other, very simple words – show Western that you care.