The Power of Community: A Proposed Branding Amendment

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Linfield College has long been in need of a brand that is unifying, distinctive, and meaningful. To facilitate this Linfield hired Brand Navigation, an outside marketing company, to undertake an intensive study of the college and create a new logo and slogan; the slogan that has been created is “The Power of Small.” While BrandNav has put forth a tremendous effort and it is clear as to why this slogan was crafted, it fails to encompass the dynamism of the college and has not resonated with a broad selection of students, alumni, faculty, staff, and other friends of the college. A poll conducted by The Linfield Review has found that, of 206 respondents, 82% disliked the new slogan, demonstrating widespread skepticism of this new brand identity. While not being a scientific poll, this seems to reflect the common sentiment on campus.

In light of this response, it is proposed that the new slogan be amended to “The Power of Community.” While small captures the size of the college, which is certainly an important feature of what makes Linfield attractive, community reflects:

- *Linfield's “warm, welcoming and caring” environment;* this was cited in the recent branding launch and pertains to the support that students, faculty, staff, and alumni demonstrate for one another
- *A small campus and student body with its positive attributes;* while “The Power of Small” hints at the size and potential of a small liberal arts college, “Community” implies these same features while expressing the value and benefits that our institution has to offer
- *Continuity with the slogan and mission of “Connecting Learning, Life, and Community”*; the proposed slogan reflects the long-term vision of the college and many aspects of the goals outlined in the mission statement
- *The interconnected community that is the McMinnville campus, Portland campus, and Department of Continuing Education;* this slogan unifies the several programs that comprise Linfield College under a single brand
- *A greater connection with the broader community;* Linfield is closely tied to businesses, organizations, and citizens in McMinnville, Portland, and elsewhere both domestic and abroad

The creation of a new brand has represented a significant investment by the college, and this amendment should by no means be considered an invalidation of the work that has been done. Rather, this is intended to be an improvement for the benefit of the college in pursuit of a brand that will appeal to those already affiliated with the college and to prospective students and their parents while representing the college in a way that is considered accurate and appropriate. Furthermore, whereas “The Power of Small” has the potential to be the subject of ridicule, “The Power of Community” is unlikely to be used in double entendre or innuendo.

“The Power of Community” represents the tremendous benefits of Linfield's small size, intimate learning environment, welcoming atmosphere, and the strong relationships that exist between the students, alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of Linfield College in a way that “The Power of Small” cannot adequately portray.