



Remembering Former Dean of Admission Dick Moll

Richard "Dick" Moll, who twice served as Admission Director at Vassar, died in May. A graduate of Duke University and the Yale Divinity School, Moll did admissions work at Yale University, Bowdoin College, Vassar, and the University of California, Santa Cruz, and wrote extensively on all aspects of the admissions process. He was also an entertainer who created a musical revue about "playing the admissions game." He is survived by his husband, Wallace Pinfold.

Dick Moll was brash, creative, and highly energetic. He thrived on challenges, facing them, meeting them, then moving on. He came to Vassar in 1975 to serve as Admission Director during our uneven transition to co-education. When he left for Santa Cruz five years later, the admission program was stronger, and the college more aware of the demands created by its new identity.

Dick returned to Vassar in the mid-1990s, when admissions were flagging, staying only two years. His brief stay culminated in the appointment of David Borus, who led the admissions effort effectively for the next two decades. Dick and David were entirely different, but, to his credit, Dick knew a good man when he met one.

At a critical time in our history, Dick served Vassar well. We should remember him with thanks.

—Michael McCarthy

Professor Emeritus of Philosophy
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In 1977, Dick Moll, then Dean of Admission at Vassar, hired me out of the University of Massachusetts Amherst to join the admission staff. I served at Vassar from 1977–1980. It was an incredible career break that sent me on an upward trajectory. Dick was an innovator, a visionary, a pioneer, a marketing guru, and someone who had a great understanding of human nature. Plus, he knew how best to package, market a college and match the right students to the college.

Working with Dick was powerful stuff, both challenging and inspirational. I shall always be in his debt for opening the door of opportunity and pushing me through it. As Dick would often sign his many letters to college counselors and headmasters, "Remember to proceed quietly, with resolve and a few snickers." Also, for admitted students Dick would start the admission decision letter with two words "You're in!" That was vintage Dick Moll.

Dick was a legend in the admission business. He recruited and brought together a most interesting group of admission professionals including Susan Connolly Eckert, Brooks Gekler '78, Bruce Moffatt '75, Carol Ramsey, Rab Thornton, and the late Elisabeth Chapman '38 to name but a few of the many lucky ones. It was both an honor and a privilege to have worked with such a uniquely talented and interesting person.

—Doug Cooney
Wellesley, MA