

Dear Classmates:

I have hesitated to impose on you with yet another message on the new Constitution for the Alumni Association, but the situation is so critical that I ask you to give me a few minutes to tell you why its absolutely essential that you vote - and that you vote YES.

We've all benefited from our Dartmouth experience - not just the priceless education, but the lifelong friendships and the doors that opened for us because of Dartmouth's reputation - and many more things. Many of us have had issues with the college over the years over one thing or another, just as with other organizations we've been part of. Dartmouth is not perfect - far from it. Its faculty is more liberal than conservative, as is true of virtually all institutions of higher learning (and as it was in our days), although this doesn't seem to have warped the recent grads any more than it did us (I'm still a Republican). Will the school change? Of course it will, just as it has continuously evolved in the 46 years since we left.

The real issue in this voting is - who will play a role in these changes? Will it be us, the vast majority of alums that want the place to grow in a positive way? Or will it be a minority group dedicated to agendas that advance their personal philosophies, which might not advance Dartmouth?

I voted for TJ Rogers when he ran for Trustee because I felt, possibly like many of us, that it might be good to have an opposing voice at the table - the old checks and balances we were taught - what harm could it do? Plenty. Since then the real objectives of his group have become more apparent - and they are scary. One grad of our vintage in his camp wrote an article for the Daily D proposing that Jim Wright be ousted as President - pointing out that the liberal faculty at Harvard had gotten their President (and implying this would be a way for folks of his ilk to get even). Another recently posted a blog stating: "The more I think about Peter Fahey's column, the more I think Dartmouth has failed as an educational institution and should close up shop." Peter is a fellow who loves Dartmouth and has supported the school in many ways, including the lacrosse field that has helped build Dartmouth's championship teams - I've attached his column for you to judge if your reaction is the same. I could go on with many other examples, but you get the drift. Are these the negative folks that we want guiding the school that we hope our grandchildren will attend? If we don't act, they will, for they've found the loopholes in our antiquated constitution that make it possible for a group representing a minority of alumni to take control - as they've proven in the last several trustee elections - and they plan to extend their reach to other alumni organizations.

What to do? A fine group of alums of all persuasions, our Jim Adler and Joe Mandel among them, has spent several years listening to every point of view anyone has wanted to present and has drafted a new constitution that truly gives us, as alumni, organizations through which a majority opinion can be expressed and heard - and which ensures elections will be decided by a majority vote. I won't take you through the details; the attached editorial from the Daily D, and a letter written to his fellow med school grads by our classmate Sol Rockenmacher are excellent sources, as is the website www.dartmouthcommonsense.org.

The natural instinct that we all have when confronted with a contentious and complex issue where we can't quickly see that it will personally affect us, is to take a pass - let those who are really involved decide. We can't afford to do that in this case. The opposition is counting on the majority of us sitting on our hands while they energize their troops to outvote us - and they have a real starting advantage, as it takes the YES vote of 2/3rds of those voting to pass the new constitution. That's why its absolutely essential that we all send in our YES votes for the new constitution NOW! If you've misplaced your paper ballot, you can vote online or by phone - see www.voxthevote.org for how to do this. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to email me back.

Finally, I've made up this email address list from classmates I've exchanged emails with over the last several years. If you share my concern for Dartmouth, please forward this email to classmates you're in touch with - and encourage them to vote.

Thanks for your time -
Wah Hoo Wah!
Rick Roesch

PS If one of your concerns is the fairness of trustee elections, read the thoughtful analysis by J.B.Daukus, a conservative member of the task force - its on www.dartmouthcommonsense.org under "Alumni Speak Out".