

D'61 DAM Article – January/February 2021

On October 2-3, 2020, the Class of 1961 once again made Dartmouth history, as it became the first class to hold a successful two-day virtual mini-reunion. After our regular annual Fall on-campus mini-reunion had to be cancelled because of the coronavirus, several class officers, led by the class' on-campus mini-reunion chair **Maynard Wheeler** and assisted primarily by class president **Don O'Neill**, class digital content manager **Harris McKee**, and class 60th Reunion chair **Pete Bleyler**, in less than a month redesigned and converted our anticipated on-campus mini-reunion into a multi-day virtual mini-reunion. From a diverse seven session agenda beginning on mid-Friday and ending on Saturday evening to a technically perfect ZOOM set-up which allowed for and encouraged classmate participation and even included small breakout discussion sessions following each of the six faculty/college administrator led sessions, and which included three current students in diverse areas of study who were recipients of annual grants awarded by our class. In all, 81 classmates, spouses/widows/significant others and session presenters/outside guests attended at least one of the two days' sessions, a very good turn-out from our small class base.

One highlight of the event was the filmed broadcast of the recent original musical piece, *Symphony for Winds 'Dartmouth'* – 250th Anniversary composition composed by Oliver Caplan '04, which includes the second of its three movements as a tribute to the increasing significance of the Robert Frost statue contributed by the Class of 1961 to the College during the mid-1990's. Another highlight was the formal adoption into the Class of 1961 of Vince Wilson, a College DCF administrator assigned to and working primarily with our class' DCF efforts for several years. The final highlight was the presentation of two *1961 Special Recognition Awards* by **Vic Rich** to David & Joan Prewitt and to Maynard Wheeler for outstanding long-term service contributions (1) to the Class of 1961, (2) to the College and (3) to society in general, in that order. In this case, the two awards were primarily for providing all or most of our on-campus and off-campus successful mini-reunions during the entire 21st Century to date. All three award recipients were completely surprised.

To conclude, the Class of 1961 continues to carry its weight in College affairs!

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