

Alumni Council Rep report to the Classes of 1967 and 1968

There are many things happening in Hanover, exciting things about the future of Dartmouth and some things less exciting, such as the financial situation. This report will cover some of the more notable topics and give you some flavor of things on campus. For those with limited time, the Executive Summary will give you a brief synopsis, and the longer text below attempts to give a more detailed picture of Dartmouth today. All of this is supplementary to the information available every day on the various College web sites and that of the "Daily D."

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This week's announcement of the seventeenth President of Dartmouth, Dr. Jim Yong Kim is obviously at the top of the news. He is an M.D.-Ph. D. (Brown '82, Harvard and Harvard) with a record of both academic achievement and participation in solutions to some of the world's important problems, captain and quarterback of his high school football team, profiled in TIME magazine by Tracy Kidder, and a recent recipient of a MacArthur Foundation "genius grant." His appointment was noted in The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal. He closed his acceptance speech, available at www.Dartmouth.edu, with a paraphrase of Daniel Webster's comment to the U.S. Supreme Court, showing that right from the beginning he is sensitive to the traditions of Dartmouth.

While there is no Trustee election this spring, and the offices of the Association of Alumni are not being contested this cycle, there is a very important referendum on amending the Association constitution this spring to conform the voting process to the requirements recently set forth by the Board of Trustees. More detail below.

Following last year's AOA election where those candidates opposed to some of the former AOA officers' lawsuit against the college and the Board of Trustees concerning trustee elections, the lawsuit was withdrawn. In the fall of 2008 seven alumni, six of whom are from classes older than ours, brought a new suit claiming to represent all alumni and essentially making the same claims as the dismissed suit. That action is still pending.

The economic situation has had an impact on the College's finances just as on almost every other aspect of life. Endowment losses have resulted in a plan to reduce spending and postpone certain activities as detailed below.

For those with more time, the full report:

The 197th meeting of the Dartmouth Alumni Council was held in December. The council was founded by Ernest Martin Hopkins in 1913 to guide and support Dartmouth Alumni Relations and meets twice a year.

The mission of the Alumni Council is to sustain a fully informed, representative, and engaged exchange of information and sentiment between the alumni and the College, and to enhance and inspire alumni involvement that furthers the mission of the College.

This report is meant to complement the wealth of information--about this council meeting and alumni affairs in general--available on the Office of Alumni Relations Web site at www.alumni.dartmouth.edu.

The Financial Situation

Adam Keller, vice president for finance and administration, was kind enough to brief the council on the impact of the economic downturn on the College.

The Campaign for the Dartmouth Experience (capital campaign) is still on track for meeting its goals of increasing the size of the faculty, enhancing financial aid, and completing various projects to enhance the facilities.

As of the end of November the endowment was down about 13.5 percent (not including private equities). Harvard's was down 22 percent. As a practical matter, Dartmouth is looking at a possible \$40 million shortfall, and so the school is taking steps to cut up to \$40 million out of the operating budget over the next two years. The two areas which will not be subject to cuts will be the tenured faculty and financial aid commitments, both present students and future students. There is more detail about financial plans on the College web site.

In the area of capital projects, trustee Jose Fernandez '77 told the Council that the Class of 1978 Life Sciences Building is far enough along that it will go forward. The replacement of Thayer Hall and the new Visual Arts building will be put on hold, as will the full renovation of the West Stands of Memorial Field.

Highlight Items

Alumni Council meetings provide council members with lots of information. Here is a 20-second summary (see below for details on each item):

- * The economic downturn means Dartmouth will have to cut up to \$40 million in operating expenses over the next two years. The endowment is down 13.5 percent. (Harvard's is down 22 percent.) See above.
- * Dean Tom Crady has practical, effective, data-based insights into forming a sound alcohol policy.
- * International student applications are on the rise.
- * Alums will soon vote on a referendum on the nominating process for alumni-nominated trustees.
- * Watch the "Wearers of the Green" video at www.alumni.dartmouth.edu/wearers. You can also register there for the induction dinner in Boston May 16.
- * The new Biondi baseball complex and Floren Varsity House are beautiful.
- * Visit the Dartmouth YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/Dartmouth.
- * Alums can send their thoughts to the trustees through the Alumni Liaison Committee at alc@alum.dartmouth.org. (Please put a subject in header field.)

Dean Tom Crady: The Practical Approach to Alcohol on Campus

Tom Crady has been dean of the College for a year. He talked with the Alumni Council about "Alcohol at Dartmouth: Context, trends, and considerations in developing a workable policy."

Crady, who wrote his PhD dissertation at Iowa State on alcohol and fraternities, has a refreshingly practical approach to the difficult subject of alcohol on college campuses. Many aspects of effective alcohol policy are counterintuitive. Dry campuses, for example, have higher binge drinking rates (56 percent vs. 42 percent) than non-dry ones. The higher drinking age has led binge drinking to go up. Banning kegs often leads to greater use of hard liquor. Students like substance-free dorms so they can drink elsewhere and not have people throwing up in their halls. And putting responsibility back in students' hands seems to work better than unenforceable rules. With these things in mind, Crady wouldn't mind seeing a national discussion on bringing the drinking age back down from 21 to 18.

When he first arrived, Crady studied the data on students' health, including alcohol, drugs, eating disorders, and depression.

In general, 60 percent of Dartmouth students have had experience with alcohol in high school; 80 percent drink at Dartmouth, which means that 20 percent don't.

Taking this data, and seeing what works and what doesn't, he is trying to craft an alcohol policy that is "safe, realistic, and enforceable."

Happily, binge drinking seems to be down a little, from 57 percent in 2004 to 44 percent in 2008.

Crady feels that the College's Good Samaritan Policy, under which a student in a risky situation can call for help without fear of punishment, is "absolutely crucial" in avoiding dangerous situations. Without it, Crady feels, we "might have had a death." It is also helpful to have Dick's House on campus. And it is also important that the College policy is for first offenses to result in discussions, not permanent records. "When you have 1, 2, 3 and you're out," says Crady, "You're almost guaranteed to have a death on campus, because students have such a fear of getting caught."

An effective alcohol policy will also include educating the students on risk and liability. "Kids don't know New Hampshire laws about serving peers," says Crady. If a person signs for a keg, for example, he or she can be liable for what happens to someone who partakes of it. New Hampshire law also allows police officers to charge a person with possession of alcohol based on the alcohol in his or her bloodstream.

Crady feels that "environmental management" is the best management approach to the issue, such as consideration of the physical situations that lead to binge drinking, and having a space in which students can have a get-together that doesn't involve alcohol.

Alumni Affairs

In a dinner program, Karen McKeel Calby '81 received the Dartmouth Alumni Award. At the May 2009 Alumni Council Meeting our own Sam Ostrow '67 (at least for the '67 half of our group) will receive the Alumni Award in respect of his years of service to the College and to the Class of '67. Sam's insight and efforts in last year's AOA election were an important factor in the outcome.

Presidential Address

President Wright spoke on the many things going on at Dartmouth, noting that 14 percent of the entering Class of 2012 are first-generation college students and 8.5 percent are international students. He spent some time describing his efforts to bring Iraq/Afghanistan veterans to Dartmouth and other colleges and his plan to devote substantial efforts to that activity after his June 2009 retirement.

International Students at 8.5 Percent of the Class of 2012; Applications Rising The Alumni Council heard from Rebecca Munsterer, who oversees international recruitment as senior associate director of Admissions. She graduated from Colby College in 2001, then got her master's in creative writing at Dartmouth in 2004. Her master's thesis was a TV documentary on college admissions.

Dartmouth is now one of just eight schools in the country that has need-blind admissions for international students. They've seen an increase of 28 percent in international applications, and they are expecting more increases in the future.

Stephen Silver, director of International Student Programs in the Office of Pluralism and Leadership, helps deal with life and issues for international students when they arrive. Three students talked with the Council about their experiences.

Kevin Jackson '10 is an economics major from Venezuela and the president of the International Students Association (ISA), which has grown very active, putting on events and expanding its voice in the community.

Helen Chow '09 is from Hong Kong. Even though she'd spent two years in high school in Wales (at a United World College), Hanover was a culture shock and at times a lonely place. The art studio became her outlet.

It actually hindered Helen somewhat that she appeared to be quite comfortable at Dartmouth. "Because I don't have a pronounced accent," she says, "people assume I'm American. But the fact is that I don't know some of the things I'm supposed to know, like the difference between Republicans and Democrats, NASCAR and NAFTA." She had a meaningful spring work trip to post-Katrina Biloxi, Miss., and a Copenhagen exchange term. When she pledged Sigma Delta, she said, "I realized why people confuse me with other Asian women on campus. I looked at the other 39 pledges, all Caucasian, and they all looked the same to me."

Kevin Mwenda '10 is from Nairobi, Kenya. He, too, went to a United World College for two years in high school. His was in Victoria, B.C. Before that he had gone to boarding school in Kenya. He also experienced culture shock, and even after having been in British Columbia surprised at the cold. He joined the ISA and took to heart its buddy system. At different times in high school he wanted to be a doctor, engineer, dancer, or any number of other things. In Kenya he would have had to decide early. At Dartmouth he had settled on an environmental economics major, but he very much values the liberal arts experience he's had.

Trustee Nomination Process

The current process by which the Alumni Council nominates three candidates for trustee elections (with other candidates eligible through petition) has been in place since 1990. The elections are conducted by the Association of Alumni, whose function is to hold these elections and an annual meeting of the association. (A small technicality: the elections yield a "nominee" for trustee, who is then "elected" by the board of trustees. The board has never failed to elect an association nominee.)

The nominating process has led to various problems, including the "churn and burn" of excellent, qualified candidates who agree to run, possibly lose, and come away understandably discouraged. As the nomination process has become politicized, it has also become expensive. Even a basic mailing costs thousands of dollars.

The new proposal from the Association of Alumni is to put forth one candidate (or two, if there is no petition candidate running), with each alumnus casting one vote for their preferred candidate. The objective is to have head-to-head contests, majority victories, and a "one person, one vote" system.

In order to adopt the changes, Alumni must vote to approve this new mechanism by a two thirds margin. Please make a point of taking part in this referendum. The voting period runs from March 25 to May 6.

As a practical matter, if this process is not approved, the trustees will turn the duty of running elections over to the College. The trustees don't want to do this, and the College doesn't want to get into the business of running elections, but the current system is untenable.

Wearers of the Green Video: Watch It

Associate athletic director Bob Ceplikas '78 and Northeastern University athletic director Peter Roby '79 --with help from football coach Buddy Teevens '79 and women's hoops coach Chris Weilgus--talked about the Dartmouth Athletics Wearers of the Green.

(Teevens noted that he was embarrassed by the winless football season. His boss, AD Josie Harper, said Buddy will turn it around in 2009. Apparently, this fall's Big Green was a young team that was beset with injuries.)

The Wearers of the Green (www.alumni.dartmouth.edu/wearers) was founded in 1984, with inductions held every five years. To be honored as a Wearer of the Green, a Dartmouth College student, alumnus, or coach must be an All-America selection; an individual or team national champion; an Olympian; a major league professional; a member of an athletic hall of fame; a First-Team All-Ivy member three or more times; an Ivy League Player of the Year in a particular sport; a member of a winning crew in either the International Rowing Association or Eastern Sprints; or a recipient of the Kenneth Archibald Prize, the Alfred E. Watson Trophy, or the Class of 1976 Award.

The council watched a moving video on what it means to be a "Wearer of the Green," which you can access at www.alumni.dartmouth.org/wearers.

More than 160 students, alumni, and coaches will be inducted on Saturday, May 16, at the Westin Copley Place in Boston (reception 6-7 pm, dinner 7-11 pm). President Wright will speak. Alumni are encouraged to attend. You can register at www.alumni.dartmouth.edu/wearers.

The Alumni Council saw the beautiful new Biondi baseball complex, featuring great new stands and artificial turf (including a brown artificial turf infield "dirt" area).

The council then toured the new Floren Varsity House, which features an auditorium, various team meeting rooms, a new football locker room and a new weight room for varsity athletes that will open up the old weight room in Alumni Gym to the rest of the student body, including club and intramural athletes and those just wanting to do their squats and bench presses.

Dartmouth YouTube Channel

Jon Murchinson '92, who works in communications at Google, introduced the council to the Dartmouth YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/dartmouth. It is up and running and already has had significant use as a vehicle for telling Dartmouth's story. Unlike the regular YouTube, which is limited to videos of 10 minutes or fewer, the university sites are allowed to upload videos of any length, making it possible to show entire lectures, presentations, concerts, and so on. Watch new President Dr. Jim Yong Kim's acceptance speech to the students and faculty in Spaulding Auditorium

The College, along with other institutions around the country, now has the challenge of figuring out how best to use these tools. (Hint: after the U.S., the country with the most hits on the channel so far is China.)

Alumni Liaison Committee: alc@alum.dartmouth.org

The Alumni Council helps communicate alumni opinions to the board of trustees. The Alumni Liaison Committee (ALC) has formalized that function by establishing a process by which all alumni input is tallied and sent along to the trustees. All alumni councilors are asked to forward input from their constituents to alc@alum.dartmouth.org with the general subject matter placed in the header field (e.g., academics, admissions, alumni governance, athletics, and so on).

Last year's input was compiled in a report and delivered to the trustees, who say it is extremely valuable and helpful. "We really pay attention to the feedback we're getting," said Ed Haldeman '70, chair of the board of trustees. (See further comments below.)

Comments by Trustees Ed Haldeman '70, Jose Fernandez '77, and Al Mulley '70

Ed Haldeman said he was pleased to welcome the five new trustees, with their diverse expertise, all of which will be put to use in guiding the College. Noting that 21 trustees are Dartmouth alumni (additionally, the trustees include the president of the College and the governor of New Hampshire, for a total of 23), he said that, "Working together, in my five years as a trustee, this is the best board we've had."

"Facing budget issues," he said, "we are going to have to make budget cuts. Our goal is for student life and academic programs to remain unchanged." Haldeman reiterated that they are working on reducing the operating budget by up to \$40 million over two years.

Jose Fernandez, speaking for the Facilities Committee, mentioned that it is good to have new trustee Steve Roth, a commercial real estate expert, on the committee. They have decided to do the following in light of the budget tightening:

- 1) Complete the projects that are under way, notably the Class of 1978 Life Sciences Building, the work going on at Tuck, and the new baseball complex, funded by the Biondi family.
- 2) Delay other projects, notably the Visual Arts Center, Buchanan Hall at Tuck, and the renovation of the West Stands of Memorial Field. "Instead, we'll just deal with the immediate maintenance needs on the West Stands," said Fernandez, "which will save about \$10 million."
- 3) Complete the planning of projects that still need funding, including the 1953 Commons at the medical school.
- 4) Defer construction of the parking lot on Route 120 and the renovation of Thayer Hall.

Litigation Resolution

Near the end of the Alumni Council sessions, I introduced a resolution which several of us had drafted resolving that the Alumni Council express its support for dismissal of the new litigation. The resolution was adopted 48 for, 2 against with 2 abstentions. The text of the resolution follows:

WHEREAS, a new lawsuit has been filed against the Trustees of Dartmouth College in New Hampshire Superior Court by seven self-appointed individual alumni claiming to represent the collective 69,000 alumni of the College seeking to compel the board to reverse its addition of eight charter trustees to the board and its decision to reform the trustee nomination process, which lawsuit is captioned Brooks, et al v. Trustees of Dartmouth College (the "Lawsuit"); WHEREAS, a lawsuit filed by certain members of the Association of Alumni Executive Committee and requesting nearly identical relief as the new Lawsuit was dismissed with prejudice in June, 2008, after the alumni of Dartmouth College voted by a 60percent to 40percent margin to replace such committee members and to elect a new slate of officers to the Association who promised to dismiss the lawsuit; WHEREAS, Dartmouth is in the process of searching for a new President of the College; WHEREAS, Dartmouth is being and will be forced to divert and expend significant time and effort to defend against the Lawsuit to the detriment of the College and its students; WHEREAS, the Lawsuit is counterproductive to ongoing discussions between duly elected alumni leadership and the Board of Trustees about improving the alumni trustee nomination process; and WHEREAS, the Alumni Council of Dartmouth College is constitutionally charged with the responsibility to represent and speak on behalf of the alumni of the College:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That the Alumni Council opposes the Lawsuit and calls for its immediate withdrawal. As demonstrated by the 2008 Association of Alumni elections, the lawsuit is opposed by a strong majority of Dartmouth's alumni. The continuation of such internecine litigation can only hinder the College's presidential

search, and is counterproductive to efforts to improve the alumni trustee nomination process.

Referendum Resolution

The Council also adopted a resolution supporting the proposed AOA constitutional amendments to be voted on this spring, adopted 67 for, 1 against and 3 abstentions. Text follows:

RESOLUTION:

In recognition of the unique and long-standing role of the Association of Alumni in the selection of nominees for the Board of Trustees of the College, and To assure the continued authority of the Association of Alumni in administering the alumni trustee nominee election process, BE IT RESOLVED that:

The Alumni Council supports the principles set forth in the current draft of the proposed Amendments to the Constitution of the Association of Alumni, which will simplify and make more democratic the election process by, among other things, (i)providing for a reduced number of required nominees, (ii)instituting a "one person, one vote" system, (iii)maintaining an open and fair, independent petition procedure, and (iv)requiring a majority of votes cast to determine a winner (including, if necessary, a runoff election).

The Alumni Council recommends the alumni vote in favor of the proposed Amendments to the Constitution of the Association of Alumni.

Conclusion

The next meeting of the Alumni Council will be held in mid-May in Hanover. By that time the voting on the AOA constitution will have concluded. If any '67 or '68 would like to discuss the constitution amendment matter directly, please email me at j.manaras@verizon.net. I am also available to look into other matters relating to Dartmouth or bring matters of concern to the attention of the Alumni Council or the Alumni Liaison committee.

As with my last report, I am interested in learning if anyone reads all the way to the end, and offer a free extra copy to the person finding the most typos and misspellings.

J.