

## **Report from the Alumni Council**

**By Gerry Bell**

The May 2011 meeting of the Dartmouth Alumni Council has come and gone, and it was quite routine, without any real controversy or earth-shattering news. The official detailed digest of the meeting is attached in the class website version of this report, but I did want in this summary to pass along two bits of good news, along with a reminder for your input.

The first news has to do with the change in the fall term academic calendar, of which you may already know, and the effect it has on the Freshman Trip, a subject near and dear to our 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion Project hearts. Briefly, the faculty has prevailed upon the College to move up the fall term ending date (starting in 2012) so that finals end before the Thanksgiving holiday. (It is thought to be a waste of time to come back after the holiday for three or four days of classes, then reading period and finals, ending the term about December 8 or 10.) But in order to do this and not abbreviate the length of fall term, it's necessary to move the start of classes to much earlier in September -- which in turn advances Freshman Week (oops! I mean "First-Year Student Orientation"), and, before that, the Freshman Trips.

I was concerned that the time thereby made available for Trips -- between the end of summer term and the beginning of fall activities -- might be so compressed that one or more "flights" of trips might need to be canceled or shortened, thereby diluting our project's goal of providing the Trip experience to all incoming students. So, from the smorgasbord of Friday evening activities offered to alumni councilors, I chose the DOC session and asked the question. The young woman (Class of 2012) who will run Trips this year was very forthright -- yes, they'd recognized the problem, and they absolutely are not going to compress the time available for Freshman Trips or cancel or shorten any trips. They will need to start the first round of trips during summer term finals, so sophomore-turning-junior trip leaders won't be able to participate at the very start. However, since the Freshman Trips always have far more volunteers for trip leaders and support staff than spaces available, that shouldn't pose a problem. Heartening news!

Parenthetical note: When I asked my question, she said, "I know you! You're the guy in the Trips DVD!" Ah, fifteen minutes of fame ... anyway, after our session, several councilors asked me, "What was that about?" When I told them, they all thought our project was a fabulous idea and wanted to know if they could contribute. No fool I -- I told them, "Of course you can; we'd be honored to have you participate!" So here's hoping Bill Rich sees some non-'68 checks coming into the Trip Endowment Fund!

The other good news comes from SVP for Development Carrie Pelzel's presentation on "re-imagining reunions." The College is very interested in increasing the "yield" (academic word for "attendance") for reunions, and, in my estimation, well it should be. I've often been struck

by the intensity of the reconnection that occurs when an alum -- especially a long absent alum -- arrives back on campus. Why wouldn't the College do everything it could to make that reconnection as attractive and as feasible as it could for as many alums (and their checkbooks!) as possible?

Carrie acknowledged this, and summarized a number of programs and activities that might make reunions more attractive. (Although, to my mind, the biggest single attraction is not College-sponsored activities, but the reunion program put together by the class itself. In this we have been blessed by a succession of remarkably creative and hard-working reunion chairmen and committees.)

Then she addressed the biggest single damper on reunion attendance. The elephant in the room, as everyone realizes, is midweek reunions. We've struggled with this ourselves, most notably at our 35-year reunion (which had the best program ever. Thanks, Greg Marshall!) I am now happy to report that the College is taking a very serious look at scheduling all reunions on the weekends -- commencement weekend and the following weekend -- perhaps as early as June 2012. There would obviously be unprecedented demands on resources (tents, poles, tables, chairs, rooms, wine, cheese ...) but the staff in Alumni Relations believe they can pull it off. I sure hope so. A weekend schedule for our 45<sup>th</sup> in 2013 would really help us keep the momentum going from our fabulous 40<sup>th</sup> to the runup for our 50<sup>th</sup>. Keep your fingers crossed that this unfolds successfully.

One final reminder. You have probably already seen the notice from the College and the Alumni Council that three alumni-elected seats on the Board of Trustees will be available next spring. There is a call out for candidate suggestions from the alumni body; please don't be shy about making your ideas known to the Alumni Council Nominating Committee.

That's it, guys. Thanks for reading. Keep those cards and letters coming; I will be at our class fall weekend Sept 30-Oct 2 if you want to bend my ear personally.

Here's the official transcript of the meeting:

### **Report from the 202nd Alumni Council Meeting**

**May 19–21, 2011**

This was the 202nd meeting of the Dartmouth Alumni Council. In 1913, Ernest Martin Hopkins formed the council to guide and support Dartmouth Alumni Relations. The mission of the Alumni Council now 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 Website at [www.alumni.dartmouth.edu](http://www.alumni.dartmouth.edu). If you haven't already, it's a good idea to save this address among your "favorites."

## **The Elevator Talk**

Alumni Council meetings provide a plethora of information on a broad range of topics. This is a bullet point summary. See below for expanded information.

- President Jim Yong Kim '82a addressed the councilors on Friday focusing on three topics: innovation at the College, student health, and student life.
- Martha Beattie '76 attended the session in her new role as vice president for Alumni Relations.
- Tom Daniels '82 gave an update from the Nominating and Alumni Trustee Search Committee, which he chairs.
- Alumni Council election results were announced. Danielle Dyer '81 Tu'89 will become president of the Alumni Council and Marty Lempres '84 will be the president-elect. Regina Glocker '88 and Jennifer Avellino '89 will join the Nominating and Alumni Trustee Search Committee. Alan Barstow '75 was elected to the Alumni Liaison Committee.
- Mark Davis '81 Tu '84 was appointed to the Nominating and Alumni Trustee Search Committee and John Walters '62 was appointed to the Alumni Liaison Committee.
- Dean of Faculty, Arts & Sciences, Michael Mastanduno reflected on his first year, gave a preview of the upcoming curriculum review, and answered questions from the floor.
- Carrie Pelzel '54a, senior vice president for Advancement, presented on "Reimagining Reunions at Dartmouth."
- Campus tours provided alumni with the opportunity to visit new athletic facilities, the transformation of Thayer Dining Hall into the new Class of 1953 Commons, as well as the Rauner Library Special Collections, the Hood Museum, and the fabled underground steam tunnels.
- Alumni were invited to formally visit with students to discuss a topic of their interest. Topics included the Dartmouth Entrepreneurial Network (DEN), off-campus programs, high-risk drinking, diversity, and the Dartmouth Outing Club (DOC).
- Dartmouth College Trustees Peggy Tanner '79 and Bill Helman '80 made a presentation from the Board of Trustees that focused on College finances and student life.
- We "met" the Class of 2015 when Maria Laskaris '84, dean of admissions and financial aid, gave us an update on admissions, noting a 19-percent increase in applications from the previous year.
- Councilors had an opportunity to return to the classroom on Friday morning to attend an undergraduate class.
- A delightful panel of students involved with community service shared what their experiences have been, how they got involved, and what it has meant to them.

**Alumni Council President Tom Peisch '70 opened the 202nd Alumni Council** and noted that 90 percent of our 125 alumni councilors were present. He introduced the newest councilor, Gordon Campbell '70, the former premier of British Columbia. Senior Vice President for Advancement Carrie Pelzel introduced new Vice President for Alumni Relations Martha Beattie, former president of the Alumni Council and magna cum laude graduate of Dartmouth's first four-year class to matriculate women. Beattie has had a 30-year career as a math teacher, crew coach, and volunteer leader and board member for a range of charities and schools. "We can get even better—we will need all of you and all your ideas to do this," she said. The vice president for Alumni Relations is charged with strengthening connections with Dartmouth's 71,000 alumni and engaging them in the life of the College.

### **Tom Daniels '82, Chair, Nominating and Alumni Trustee Search Committee**

Councilors received an update on the Nominating and Alumni Trustee Search Committee from Tom Daniels. Tom reviewed the alumni trustee nomination process the committee undertook to select the candidates for the most recent election for the two alumni-nominated trustee vacancies, including its working agenda and timeline. Tom also listed the incoming councilors who will join the Alumni Council on July 1, 2011, to represent classes, regions, affiliated groups, professional schools/programs, and other constituencies.

As of this April, Dartmouth alumni nominated two new alumni trustees to the board and elected a new Association of Alumni Executive Committee. Approximately 15.5 percent of the Dartmouth alumni body participated in the election. New trustees are Gail Koziara Boudreaux '82 and Bill Burgess '81, who joined the board on June 12, 2011, following Commencement ceremonies. More about Nominating Committee procedures is available at <http://alumni.dartmouth.edu/leadership/association/nominationandballoti>.

### **Conversation with President Kim**

Next on the agenda, President Kim made a presentation based on feedback that was solicited from the Alumni Council in advance of the meeting. In his address, he discussed three topics: innovation at the College, student health, and student life.

"We want to be the place where entrepreneurial scholars come because we're going to be friendlier than any other institution" in supporting their ideas and bringing them to fruition, he said. Both tradition and innovation are essential.

"Every year we want Dartmouth to be responsible for a fundamental innovation in higher education," he said, such as the Center for Health Care Delivery Science and a broad effort to address high-risk drinking. President Kim cited new Dartmouth research showing that exercise in

adolescents doubles the amount of time during which they remember data. Involvement in athletics therefore reinforces learning.

President Kim also discussed new initiatives aimed at supporting first-year students through mentoring, and other programs that demonstrate Dartmouth's understanding of what students need to succeed. On student health, he identified five critical areas: high-risk drinking, sexual assault, depression, tobacco use, and eating disorders. The College must focus on creating opportunities for healthy social interactions and keep those initiatives that work.

Dartmouth's aspirations are:

- Global leadership in teaching;
- Cutting-edge interdisciplinary research;
- Enhanced leadership in higher education;
- Tackle sustainability;
- An alumni network unlike any other; and
- To be the institution of choice for the best faculty, students, and staff.

### **Reflections on the Arts and Sciences with Dean of Faculty of Arts and Sciences Michael Mastanduno**

According to Dean Mastanduno, the quality of the Dartmouth student body is simply too good to listen passively. It is his opinion that Dartmouth students want to be part of the process—they want to be active learners and researchers in their own right. It is Dartmouth's responsibility, then, to create the environment to foster those aspirations.

Mastanduno is finishing his first year as dean of faculty. His first year was clearly affected by the severe budget cuts and constraints that the College has had to implement. Mastanduno appreciates President Kim's approach—that of facing the problem head on, trying to solve it as quickly as possible, while trying to maintain the core values of the institution, and then moving on to other things. Mastanduno says Provost Carol Folt's launch of a strategic planning initiative is the signal to move ahead.

Dean Mastanduno commented, "We have gone from 350 to 415 faculty during the course of a decade. This has allowed us to do so much more both on the teaching side and on the research side." Dartmouth teaches between 1,500 and 2,000 courses, in 40 departments and programs, and student demand for social science courses is high. Mastanduno said he planned to gather faculty soon to review the curriculum and arts and sciences programs. The graduate schools have also adapted some graduate courses for undergraduates, such as a class on strategic decision-making in a liberal arts context.

### **Reimagining Reunions with Carrie Pelzel, Senior Vice President for Advancement**

At the 201st alumni council session in December, Carrie Pelzel presented an overview of the new Advancement division to the council. Throughout this, the 202nd session, the alumni were informed, directly or indirectly, of the progress on some of these initiatives, such as building the team and reimagining the reunion experience.

*Build the team:* Three key searches are being brought to a close (vice presidents for Alumni Relations, Development, and Communications). Martha Beattie has been hired as the vice president for Alumni Relations. Two announcements followed the session completion for vice president for Development and vice president for Communications. Roderic (Roddy) Olvera Young has been appointed vice president for Communications. Tom Herbert was named vice president for Development.

*Reimagining Reunions:* Carrie Pelzel noted that between 2,200 and 2,400 alumni—or about 23 percent of reunion-class alumni—attend reunions every year. Although other Ivy League universities tabulate results slightly differently, their reunion yields range from 14 percent to 35 percent. Staff found that the classes with the lowest reunion turnout have had consistently low turnout at every reunion. In general, alumni return in larger numbers for their fifth reunions but drop off as their professional and personal obligations expand; turnout rises again several decades later. Pelzel offered the following ideas to consider for reunions:

- Saturday all-day programming;
- Saturday evening spectacular event;
- Creative fun;
- Venues for affiliations other than classes;
- Life-changing lectures or experiences; and
- Address by the president.

At subsequent focus groups, we brainstormed about potential reunion programming ideas and considered whether clustering reunion classes should continue, whether the College might subsidize more of reunions to reduce cost, and how to schedule reunion activities around shared interests. One group recommended scheduling activities geared toward life stages, such as seminars on returning to the workforce after a hiatus to care for children or parents, or on how to reinvent ourselves post-retirement.

### **Remarks by Trustee Jeffrey Immelt '78**

General Electric CEO and Dartmouth Trustee Jeff Immelt was the keynote speaker on Saturday night. Deborah Klenotic covered Mr. Immelt's remarks to the alumni in her article for the alumni website, "Truly the Big Green': Alumni Council Explores Dartmouth's Reach in 202nd Session," at [www.alumni.dartmouth.edu/News.aspx?id=441](http://www.alumni.dartmouth.edu/News.aspx?id=441).

## **Update from the Board of Trustees: Peggy Tanner '79 and Bill Helman '80**

Dartmouth Trustees Peggy Tanner and Bill Helman made the presentation from the Board of Trustees with their comments focused on the College finances and student affairs. Topics covered included the following:

- Helman reflected on the strategic approach that Dartmouth took to closing the budget gap.
- Regarding board membership, Helman said, “We’re trying to get the best managers to make the decisions for us and be broadly diversified to get the best long-term returns.”
- Tanner discussed Provost Carol Folt’s strategic planning initiative and commented on the work of the board’s Student Affairs Committee.

## **Meet the Class of 2015: An Admissions Update by Maria Laskaris, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid**

Dean Laskaris said that the number of applicants has more than doubled since 2005—from 10,000 to about 22,000. Some 2229 applicants were admitted this year, which is about 9.7 percent of the applicant pool. The Admissions Office is focusing its messaging on Dartmouth’s affordability and accessibility, and it considers applicants based on their substantive commitments, in addition to academic excellence.

Historically, the yield for accepted students is about 50 percent “and there’s an awful lot we do to make sure applicants take a hard look at Dartmouth,” she said. “Admissions uses phone calls, alumni clubs, Facebook, email...to convince them to come; this year they tried more videos, online chats, and now Spanish- and Chinese-language chats.”

Laskaris then showed a video, [www.tampabay.com/components/video/hard-work-focus-brings-ivy-league-payoff/944330841001](http://www.tampabay.com/components/video/hard-work-focus-brings-ivy-league-payoff/944330841001), about a unique student who was just accepted. “We are steadfastly committed to a need-blind admissions process...there are only a handful of institutions that are committed to this,” she said.

## **Community Service Student Panel**

Councilors enjoyed a student panel called “Round the Girdled Earth,” in which the following panelists spoke about their community service involvement:

**Wills Begor '12** volunteers as a member of the Dartmouth Ski Patrol, is an active member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon, and is a James O. Freedman Presidential Scholar in the economics department. About 18 months ago, Wills co-founded a nonprofit, Project RightChoice, that

promotes leadership development through the framework of social action. In its first year of operation, Project RightChoice raised \$104,000 for the Fisher House Foundation and its work on behalf of our nation's wounded veterans and their families. To date in 2011, Project RightChoice has raised more than \$20,000 for Water.org in order to provide clean water and sanitation facilities to communities in Haiti and Ethiopia.

**Emily Broas '11** is currently the student director of education programs at the Tucker Foundation, where she advises school outreach projects that address literacy, college awareness, in-school mentoring, and English language tutoring. She has also volunteered with the Summer Enrichment at Dartmouth program as an academic coach and has chaired the STAR Mentoring program for teenagers dealing with chronic health issues and disabilities.

**Ahra Cho '11** has worked closely with the Tucker Foundation, leading an alternative spring break trip to New Orleans, working as a Dartmouth Partners in Community Service intern at the Children's Advocacy Center, and volunteering as a Tucker Fellow in rural Ghana. Currently, she is the chair of Students Fighting Hunger and works at the Tucker Foundation as the student director of the Alternative Spring Break Program.

**Mayuka Kowaguchi '11** has been involved in service at Dartmouth through ASPIRE as a trained mentor to children on the autism spectrum and as philanthropy chair for her sorority. Most recently, she coordinated the Dartmouth for Japan initiative, the student effort to raise money and awareness for the Tohoku earthquake in Japan.

**Ahmad Nazeri '11** is an undergraduate advisor, a member of Beta Alpha Omega, and has served as the chair of America Reads and as the president of Al-Nur, the Muslim Student Association. He currently serves as the student director of Tucker Foundation. Additionally, he has participated in various activities at Tucker, including leading an alternative spring break trip to San Francisco this past spring. Following the spring break trip, he completed an off-term, Tucker-funded internship at the Refugee and Immigration Services in Richmond, where he helped refugee students with homework and developing reading skills. Next year, he will be teaching high school social studies in Baltimore through Teach for America and he hopes to pursue a career in education.

## **Committee Reports**

Committees meet at least once during the Alumni Council session. Each committee then presents an oral report to the council at the end of the session and submits a written report soon after the session disperses.

Committees include: Academic Affairs, Alumni Awards, Athletics, Communications, Enrollment and Admissions, Honorary Degrees, Student Affairs, Young Alumni, and Young Alumni Distinguished Service Award. Additionally, there is an Executive Committee, a Nominating and Alumni Trustee Search Committee, and a committee that liaises with the trustees: the Alumni Liaison Committee (ALC). Committees often work throughout the year, not



just during Alumni Council sessions. The ALC and the Executive Committee have monthly meetings.

The ALC's 2010–11 annual report to the Dartmouth Board of Trustees is in the process of being drafted and will be presented later this year. A link to last year's report is available online at <http://alumni.dartmouth.edu/council/resourcesforalumni>.

The chairs of all committees presented oral summaries of their respective committee meetings. Full reports on the meetings will be posted on the Alumni Council website at <http://alumni.dartmouth.edu/council/committeenews>.

### **Open Microphone**

Deborah Atuk, Native American Alumni Association of Dartmouth representative, suggested that a committee at the Alumni Council level be formed in order to address minority faculty recruiting and retention. Chief of Staff David Spalding '76 responded to the suggestion from the floor and Danielle Dyer, president-elect, said the issue would be discussed by the executive committee.