A Report from The Campaign for Colgate

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PASSION FOR THE CLimb

By all objective measures, Passion for the Climb: The Campaign for Colgate is off to a start worthy of Mr. Ware’s words. Generous Colgate alumni, parents, and friends already have committed more than $200 million to the campaign, putting us halfway to our $400 million goal.

We have reached this point with remarkable balance: many are stepping up to make leadership gifts while, at the same time, record dollars are being raised for the annual fund. Gifts of all sizes have allowed Colgate to reinvent the Case Library and Geyer Center for Information Technology. New institutes of advanced study are being launched and our residential education and student leadership programs are being infused with new energy. We have accomplished great things in such a short time, but much remains to be done.

Our financial aid resources continue to depend too heavily on our annual budget, rather than endowment funding. The Upstate Institute, the Sophomore-Year Experience, and many other institutional priorities must be supported through campaign gifts so that we can solidify existing initiatives and pursue new opportunities.

We must reach our $400 million Passion for the Climb campaign goal, but our success will also be measured by our ability to expand upon Colgate’s traditions. As students, we participated in the Torchlight Ceremony, worked closely with faculty, and made friendships that have lasted a lifetime. Now we stand on the shoulders of alumni who have come before us, giving back so that future generations can have the same quality of experience and preparation for life that we remember so well.

Thank you for carrying on the tradition.

James L. Elrod Jr. ’76, P’04, P’05
National Campaign Chair

“All glory comes from daring to begin.” — EUGENE WARE
“Thanks to the generosity of alumni, parents, and friends, Passion for the Climb: The Campaign for Colgate is off to a fast start. We have reached the halfway mark in the campaign, but there is still much to do. Colgate must grow its endowment and annual fund. We must raise funds for our initiatives in academics, student life, and financial aid. Colgate is in a strong position, and now is the time to invest in our future. Every gift counts.”

PRESIDENT REBECCA S. CHOPP
Gift is a reflection of Geyer’s dynamism and curiosity

As a Colgate geology major and member of the Konosioni senior honor society and Sigma Nu, “Indian Bill” Geyer was a football hero who piloted his own plane to and from campus and played the occasional prank. After graduation, the legend continued. Geyer served as a gunnery officer in the Navy, played professional football for the Chicago Bears, and hunted wild game in India, Africa, South America, and elsewhere. His wife, a fashion model and Hollywood starlet, posed for Norman Rockwell and was featured on the cover of the Saturday Evening Post and dozens of other magazines. Yet the couple was always a team. Bill eventually took over management of his father’s Scientific Glass Apparatus Co., which made glass equipment for university and hospital laboratories. When Bill and Helen traveled together, she took meeting notes in shorthand and mailed them to the home office for transcription.

In a world — and on a campus — we now know as “flat,” William H. Geyer ’42 would have been especially comfortable. Long before technology compressed distance and created boundless opportunity, Geyer circumnavigated the globe five times. He was an adventurer, world traveler, and entrepreneur whose greatest asset was having mastered the tools of his time.

Now, thanks to a generous and transformational commitment by his wife, Helen, a long-time friend of the university, Colgate students and professors will utilize the Case Library and Geyer Center for Information Technology to master the vast information resources of the 21st century. The dramatic new five-story structure will serve as their home base for engagement with each other and with all that is yet to be discovered.

While Geyer served as the youngest-ever member of Colgate’s Board of Trustees, he and Helen often arrived for meetings via their own plane, a Cessna Super Skymaster, which Bill landed at the Hamilton Airport. In those years, the couple enjoyed mingling with students at tailgate parties and college events.

“Bill was at the controls and I was the navigator,” Helen said. “We’d fly over the valley and see the steeple of the chapel so we’d know we were close to ‘home.’ That’s what Bill always said.”

Bill, a trustee emeritus, served Colgate for more than 50 years, working closely with Everett Needham Case. Case became Colgate’s ninth president the year Geyer graduated and served for the next 20 years. In 1962, Colgate’s library was named in Case’s memory. Now, adding the Geyer name to the building is meaningful to both families.

In honoring Bill’s legacy on the Colgate campus, Helen also sought a place where student life intersects with technology. “As fun-loving and public as Bill was, he would choose a place that is full of life,” Helen said. “Bill and I got great joy from seeing so much of the world. I think everyone should have that opportunity.”

Read more about the Case Library and Geyer Center for Information Technology at www.colgate.edu/caserenovation
Financial Aid and Access

ATTRACTION TALENTED STUDENTS — ONE FINANCIAL AID GIFT AT A TIME

As Colgate evolves for the future, it is important to attract talented individuals with diverse skills, interests, and backgrounds. In this way, the campus will mirror the multidimensional world.

Colgate is committed to meeting the full financial need of every student we admit. That means that once we exhaust our $30 million annual financial aid budget, we are forced to deny admission to many qualified students.

Through a new Annual Fund Scholarship Program, donors can contribute a minimum of $10,000 per year for spendable scholarships that are assigned to specific student recipients. After just one year, it is clear that generosity and gratitude can effectively bridge the generations.

“I was just amazed and grateful that someone that I had never met before would help me in such a way.”

MICHAEL BENOWITZ ’10

“I, myself, would not have been able to attend Colgate if not for the very generous financial aid package that I received, and so I long ago made the decision that if circumstances permitted, I would try to make it possible for other young people to attend Colgate,” Kershow wrote in response to Benowitz, a first-year student from Marblehead, Mass. Benowitz had written of working as a WRCU disc jockey and assistant news editor for sports, and traveling to Geneva with the Model UN team.

“I assume the radio station still goes by WRCU. I was a late-night DJ myself there for a short time when the station was squirreled away in the basement of Dodge House [which became part of Curtis in 1994]. I’m sure the facilities and technology have improved significantly since then.”

Today, WRUC has 100 DJs. The 2,000-watt station brings student voices as well as National Public Radio programming to the Hamilton community all year long.

After a successful first year on campus, Benowitz reflected on Kershow’s gift: “I was amazed and grateful that someone that I had never met before would help me in such a way. I’m glad that I have the opportunity to spend my time in college at Colgate.”

According to Kershow, providing an Annual Fund Scholarship makes financial sense and feels good. “The full amount helps a student immediately,” he said. “I have to say, it’s very gratifying.”
Campus life at Colgate is driven by our comprehensive four-year Residential Education Program. While learning to live independently and as contributing members of a community, students build traditional social and entrepreneurial skills. They engage in activities that foster leadership, ethics, and responsibility.

Passion for the Climb: The Campaign for Colgate will raise $30 million for student life initiatives. This includes $14.5 million for leadership development programs, $3 million of which is earmarked for debate-related initiatives. Competitive speaking programs improve students’ communications skills, enhance intellectual diversity on campus, and engage everyone in the discussion of ideas.

Ultimately, this will prepare Colgate students for 21st-century leadership.

During the silent phase of Passion for the Climb, Colgate students were anything but silent. Led by Patrick Kabat ’06, students sought ways to nourish intellectual discourse at Colgate. They re-energized the Debate Society and developed a new Student Lecture Forum (SLF) to honor the year’s best student-authored papers.

But the university needed a source of funding to encourage these and other nascent programs. In 2004, an anonymous donor offered $125,000 every year for five years, and the Colgate Speaking Union (CSU) was born.

The union now contains debate, Mock Trial, Model United Nations, and the Student Lecture Forum, which received an additional gift recently from trustee emeritus Paul J. Schupf ’58 in recognition of Kabat’s impact, as well as President Rebecca S. Chopp’s support for intellectual discourse on campus.

Organizations have learned to distribute budgets, monitor their accounts, and create new initiatives. They have traveled locally and abroad—most recently to Canada, Malaysia, Switzerland, and Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania.

Student-inspired faculty debates have taken place as well, including one in 2005 on “Liberalism and Conservatism in American Politics” featuring political science professors Robert Kraynak (left) and Joseph Wagner. Kabat, then a senior, served as moderator.

During 2006–2007 the CSU continued to thrive, with the next generation of students leading the charge. The Debate Society offered a series of brown-bag lunches and Brendan O’Connor ’09 organized SLF Asks, a series of informal discussions attracting a cross-section of students who respectfully yet fervently argued their personal stances on controversial questions: “When is terrorism OK?”; “Why can only a white male become president?”; and “Does society need religion?”

Now that Passion for the Climb is out of the silent phase, there’s no telling what the Colgate competitive speakers will have to say next.
Faculty support, financial aid, athletic programs and more: Colgate’s endowment and annual fund support all these important parts of the Colgate experience. Passion for the Climb promises to raise an additional $163.5 million for these essential sources of revenue.

Annual fund gifts of all sizes — made consistently by half of our alumni, parents, and friends — provide money to live by. These unrestricted dollars ensure the stability of existing programs, and allow us to respond to trends in research, education, and technology. Endowment gifts also are important, as they can help us grow. Every gift counts at Colgate. For members of Colgate’s Class of 2007, that message inspired generosity and camaraderie — and a whole lot of competition.

This May, the Class of 2007 set a giving record that will be hard to beat. When all the gifts were counted, 88 percent of the class had contributed to Colgate, with gifts ranging from $1 to $250. Their successful strategy offers a lesson in fundraising for classes of any decade.

Rather than rely on just a few key individuals, the effort was led by a core team of 17 seniors who accepted equal ownership for success of the plan. They broadened the fundraising message to educate seniors about creating a lasting connection with Colgate, and generated broad consensus on the senior class gift — helping to endow the Global Leader Lecture Series, which brought to campus Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner, authors of Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything.

Persistence pays off for Class of 2007

“We kept asking, and people kept giving.”

KELLY EGLER ‘07

and Stephen Dubner, authors of Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything. Sarah Gonzalez Bocinski ’03, associate director of the Colgate Annual Fund, provided the tools they needed, including an appealing logo to market their campaign. Shortly before the fundraising began, an anonymous donor extended a challenge that ignited the competitive Colgate spirit: as each 25 percent increment in participation was reached, the class would earn an additional $25,000. If they set a new campus record of 86 percent, the donor would add $100,000 to their sum.

Over the next seven months the committee held events on campus, on the Village Green, at Nichols & Beal, and at the Colgate Inn. They set up information tables at the Coop and sent e-mail messages. Michael Tone ’07 and Matt Kroll ’07, both members of the Delta Upsilon fraternity, garnered 100 percent support from their brothers. Elise Bartlett ’07 and Kelly Egler ’07 were especially persistent, going door-to-door. By March 1, they reached 50 percent, and on April 10, 75 percent of the class had made a gift. On April 21, the seniors achieved their participation goal of 86 percent. At last, they earned the full $100,000 challenge gift.

Egler, especially, knew the importance of teamwork. Her mother, Terry Egler ’77, P’07, P’11, serves as chair of the Presidents’ Club, Colgate’s leadership giving society. “We were so excited because we had met the challenge and left a real mark at Colgate, but we didn’t want to stop there,” she said. “We kept asking, and people kept giving.”

By graduation day, 88 percent of those who flung their mortarboards into the air could say that they had played a part in the class’ success. Now there’s a lesson for life.
Alumni and friends inaugurate Mark S. Randall Jr. Endowed Coach for Swimming and Diving

Through the generosity of Robert Fox ’59 and dozens of other investors, Colgate inaugurated the Mark S. Randall Jr. Endowed Coach for Swimming and Diving—one of the first coaching chairs to be announced and funded at the university. The $1.5 million Randall chair, adopted by current Head Swimming and Diving Coach Stephen Jungbluth, comes at a critical time when programs across the nation are being cut.

Read more at www.colgate.edu/campaign

Colgate lands $600K challenge for Upstate Institute

Colgate has been awarded a $600,000 challenge grant from the Fred L. Emerson Foundation of Auburn, N.Y., to help endow the university’s Upstate Institute. Colgate must raise $5.4 million for the program by November 1, 2009, in order to receive the funds. The Upstate Institute was launched in fall of 2003 to help regional organizations utilize the research and scholarship of Colgate faculty and students, in order to enhance the economic, social, and cultural capacity of the area and sustain the environment.

Learn about the Upstate Institute at www.upstate.colgate.edu

Presidents’ Club members bid for Colgate’s future

On May 3, about 500 Colgate parents, friends, and alumni from the Classes of 1937 through 2006 helped raise $117,000 for Passion for the Climb: The Campaign for Colgate. Among the items offered at the second annual Presidents’ Club reception and auction were an Anaheim Ducks hockey jersey signed by Stanley Cup-winning forward Andy McDonald ’00, dinner for two with university President Rebecca S. Chopp, and tickets to next year’s Super Bowl. The top bid was $14,000 for a one-week stay in a restored 16th-century Tuscan farmhouse in Italy.

Learn more about the Presidents’ Club at www.colgate.edu/presidentsclub