

**Colgate University Alumni Council**  
**Fall 2019 Meeting Summary**  
September 26-28, 2019

The Colgate Alumni Council consists of 55 alumni nominated for their exemplary volunteer service to Colgate. Its members represent the approximately 34,000 alumni in the Colgate Alumni Corporation, and each member strives to be a "Colgate ambassador": enhancing the experience of all Colgate alumni by helping to make all alumni become deeply familiar with the state of the college; promoting robust communications, interesting and useful programming, and other modes of connection and engagement; and providing venues for alumni to discuss Colgate issues. Please read what the Council is working on, follow the links to additional information, and feel free to contact us: we're eager to hear your thoughts and suggestions.

From September 26-28, 2019, the Alumni Council met in Hamilton for its first meeting of the 2019–2020 academic year. The Council's work is conducted through its committees and meetings of the entire Council. Below is a summary of the Council's work.

**Meeting with President Casey**

The Alumni Council met with President Brian W. Casey on Thursday evening for an informal reception and again Saturday morning for a meeting prior to the General Session. President Casey opened with a visioning exercise that imagined Colgate in ten years. He underscored the value of a successful capital campaign to realize the first stages of the [Third Century Plan](#). Our ambitions are high and he urged the Alumni Council to be ambassadors of that ambition to fellow alumni. President Casey also referenced a workbook that will help guide the Board and his administration on the Third Century Plan. He assured the Alumni Council and the community at-large that they will report on progress periodically.

**Third Century Plan**

Hanna Rodriguez-Farrar, Chief of Staff and Secretary to the Board of Trustees, met with the Alumni Council on Friday morning to discuss the [Third Century Plan](#). She led an interactive discussion on how to interpret the plan, embrace its four fundamental goals, and communicate it with others. Ms. Rodriguez-Farrar prompted the Alumni Council with these questions and collected votes on various parts of the Third Century Plan.

1. What two aspects about The Third-Century Plan that speaks most profoundly to your Colgate experience?
2. What two aspects of The Third-Century Plan that will most profoundly impact the reach and reputation of Colgate?
3. What aspects of The Third-Century Plan where the Council can be most helpful to Colgate?

### **Luncheon with students**

Chris Johnson '02, President of the Alumni Council, welcomed students from various organizations and invited them to enjoy lunch with the Alumni Council in the Hall of Presidents. Veronica McFall '89, assistant director of alumni relations, also provided an overview of the [Mosaic Initiative](#).

### **Alumni Survey**

Tim Mansfield, associate vice president of advancement and alumni relations, gave a presentation on the [recent alumni survey](#) that was conducted in July 2019. The primary goal of the survey was to gather data from the alumni community to better understand how alumni currently engage and want to engage with Colgate. The survey investigated attitudes towards Colgate, resonance of priorities and core messages, communication and engagement preferences, donor motivations, and propensity for philanthropy. Mr. Mansfield provided information about the respondents, the questions asked, and findings of the survey. Alumni Council members asked questions about ways they can address opportunities and how the university is adapting to any new information about alumni engagement.

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The following committees met on Thursday evening and Friday afternoon and reported their work during the General Session:

### **Nominations Committee**

The Nominations Committee met Thursday evening and reviewed/discussed the candidates identified in August during the seven ERA meetings. After detailed discussions, the Committee nominated primary candidates and two alternates for each of the seven ERA vacancies. The committee also nominated primary and alternate candidates for the two At-Large positions and primary candidates for the two Regional Director positions (Midwest and Mid-Atlantic).

In addition, the committee also identified a candidate to fill the unexpired term of a current AC member who recently moved notified the Council that he will no longer be able to attend. Regarding next steps, the Nominations Committee is capturing after-action comments from all members to identify what worked well with the new process employed this summer and where Nominations can continue to improve. The Alumni Council President will contact those nominated to confirm their interest in serving on the Council.

### **Awards Committee**

The Awards Committee achieved the following:

- 1) The committee established subcommittees to more efficiently screen the initial list of candidates. Elizabeth F. Levine Brown '01 will head the William Brian Little '64 Award for Distinguished Service subcommittee, Max Haspel '95 will head the Maroon Citation

subcommittee, Becky Bye '02 will head the Ann Yao '80 Young Alumni Award subcommittee and Ian Murphy '10 will head the committee charged with screening the remaining three awards.

2)The committee is reaching out to more sources to ensure candidates are better identified and evaluated for each award. Outreaches are underway for the Entrepreneur of the Year Award, the Humanitarian Award and the Maroon Citation subcategory focused on Colgate employees. In addition, invitations have gone out and in several cases been accepted to knowledgeable staff including Bob Tyburski '74 and Patti Caprio to attend our January Awards meeting to better evaluate candidates.

3) We plan on extensively evaluating final candidates ahead of the January meeting to better streamline the final evaluation discussions.

### **Career Initiatives Committee**

The two-hour meeting was split into two one-hour sessions. The first hour, Mike Sciola (Associate Vice President of Advancement & Career Initiatives) and Teresa Olson (Director of Career Services) updated the committee on the progress made in raising funds for the unpaid summer internship program. As a reminder, this program helps students who otherwise can't afford to accept a low (or unpaid) summer internship position.

The internship fundraising goal is a very aggressive \$525,000 in order to maintain the same level of students funded as in the past few years. Jen Stone (Institutional Advancement) co-presented that portion of the meeting and is working with her Advancement colleagues to execute a successful campaign to reach this year's goal.

Mr. Sciola then introduced the committee to Carolyn Strobel the new Director of Thought Into Action. Carolyn's demonstrated love of Colgate, service in the Advancement Office, and her Silicon Valley experience made her a perfect match for the position.

Ms. Olsen then briefed the committee on "First Destinations" for the Class of 2018 (impressively high and growing placement rate continues to grow), she also updated the committee on employer relations and gave a look at the fall/spring Career Services program highlights.

For the second half of the meeting, the members combined with the Campus Connections Committee and discussed the new structure which includes Career Services moving from Institutional Advancement to reporting to the Dean of the College - Paul McLoughlin.

After a talk with Paul, Teresa presented the portion of Career Services' Strategic Plan pertaining to the Athletic Ambassadors program (each varsity team selects a conduit for their team to make sure they are taking advantage of the help offered by Career Services), and Early Engagement Strategy, which has been doing a tremendous job preparing students for interviews and the "real world" in general.

### **Campus Connections Committee**

The Campus Connections Committee met with the presidents and vice-presidents of the Student Government Association in the presence of Paul McLoughlin, Vice President and Dean of the College. The SGA representatives discussed the background of how the four people from the two candidate slates came to share the top two officer positions, and a few of the areas that they are working on this year. Those areas include regular communication with the Board of Trustees, addressing the issue of food insecurity - particularly among certain groups of upperclassmen, and the perceived need for more social options - with a preference for more Greek options - particularly for women and African-American / multicultural communities.

The Campus Connections Committee also joined the Career Initiatives Committee to learn more about the reorganization of Career Services under the Dean of the College and some new initiatives within Career Services.

### **Alumni Engagement Committee**

The Alumni Engagement committee had a very productive meeting on campus. We were joined by Kate Saeger '09 and Kelly Best from the Alumni Relations office. The Alumni Relations team shared their FY20 goals and objectives, and we specifically aligned on ways the committee could best support the office, District Club leaders and engage alumni volunteers. We also used this meeting time to select the District Club Award winners (see below/attached).

Based on the District Club Awards survey responses, the committee took a much closer look at the submission process, club leadership, volunteer engagement, and recognition. The group came up with several recommendations and solutions regarding alumni volunteer engagement and ways to potentially improve and support the process.

The committee will regroup mid-fall for a conference call to further discuss FY20 goals, next steps with the District Club Awards process, volunteer engagement, as well as efforts to engage former Alumni Council members.

District Club Award Winners:

Carlton O. Miller '14 Memorial Cup for Outstanding District Club Achievement (MVP)

Metro Clubs - MVP: New York City

Large Clubs - MVP: Chicago, IL

Medium Clubs - MVP: Rochester; Sp: Sustained Excellence: Atlanta

Small Clubs - MVP: Chenango Valley; Sp: Sustained Excellence - Westchester

Gateway Clubs - MVP: Paris

RuthAnn Spear Loveless MA '72 Award for Distinguished Individual - Emily (Steiger) Baselt '11

### **Communications Committee**

1. Aligned on the rebranding of the Colgate Alumni twitter handle and broader social media presence ([@colgatealumni](https://twitter.com/colgatealumni))

2. Built out strategy and functional day to day work for executing new social media presence
3. Will be creating and locking a content calendar through EOY in the next two weeks
4. Discussed need to have joint session with Alumni Engagement committee in the future
5. As always, Vice President Laura Jack and her staff were tremendously helpful

### **Academic Life Committee**

Academic Life began the session with a review of Intellectual Engagement Goals for the Alumni Relations Office led by Jillian Cole '10. This was informative in understanding what events are already on the calendar for FY20 such as the remaining Bicentennial Book Tour events. It also led to a productive conversation about metrics for success and opportunities for exploring other vehicles for expanding the intellectual reach of the college among Colgate alumni/parents.

The committee then spent time discussing the existing program for alumni travel abroad which for FY20 consists of the Men's Hockey team's trip to Ireland and Professor Mary Ann Calo's trip to Italy. We then discussed the opportunity to explore contracting with a travel coordinator to offer more faculty led trips. Karl Clauss '90 offered to put staff in touch with Sarah Doody of Engaging Journeys used by Swarthmore College to discuss the possibility of offering a select number of trips in FY21 based on faculty availability.

The discussion then turned to how we might expand our offering of faculty / alumni expertise virtually via a video streaming or podcast platform. Is there an appetite for this among the Colgate alumni / parent community? What is being done already? Living Writers was cited as a very successful program that engages over 700 alumni annually. We agreed with Beth and Jill's help to explore the topic with Communications for more discussion at the January meeting.

The last agenda item discussed was the development of the "Table for 13" concept that would bring small groups of alumni together regionally - ideally with a member of the faculty and staff present to engage guests in conversations about their area of expertise. We also see these gatherings as an excellent opportunity to promote the 3rd Century Plan. Other volunteer leader groups such as the PCMC are interested in partnering in advancing this initiative. More conversation are needed to fully define the scope and goals of "Table for 13" before we can begin planning, but we expect to pilot the program in the spring of 2020. Jill/Beth have agreed to work with the Provost to obtain a current list of faculty travel plans for FY20 to get a better sense of where faculty are and when.