

Spring 2019 Meeting Summary

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" by enhancing the experience of all Colgate alumni by becoming 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.

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From April 5-7, 2019, the Alumni Council met in Hamilton for its third meeting of the 2018–2019 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 Brian W. Casey

The Alumni Council was pleased to meet with the President to discuss Colgate's Third Century Plan. President Casey discussed the timeline for review of this plan with the Colgate faculty (April 15), the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees (April 28) and then the full Board (May 3). He is looking forward to presenting this plan to all alumni at his Bicentennial Address at Colgate's All-Class Reunion on June 1 at 11:00 a.m. in the Memorial Chapel.

Vice President of Admission and Financial Aid, Gary Ross '77, joined President Casey to discuss the profile of the applicant class for the Class of 2023. Applications remain on an upward trend [just under 10,000] with our lowest admit rate ever of 21.6%. Ross also spoke briefly about Colgate's commitment to integrity in light of the national news on college admissions. President Casey ordered an internal review of our admissions practices by an external third party after the news of the scandal broke in order to ensure that we are compliant with the highest possible standards in the area of admissions.

Mind, Brain, and Behavior Initiative

The Academic Life Committee hosted three Colgate professors to discuss the new [Mind, Brain, and Behavior Initiative](#) at Colgate. Carrie Keating (Professor Psychology, Chair of Psychology Department), Ken Belanger (Associate Dean of the Faculty of Curricular and Academic Affairs, Professor of Biology), and Krista Ingram (Associate Professor of Biology; Chair of Biology Department) gave a compelling presentation on the scientific connections among these areas and then engaged in discussion with the entire Alumni Council.

The Robert Hung Ngai Ho '56 Mind, Brain, and Behavior Initiative will connect faculty in psychological and brain sciences, neuroscience, biology, philosophy, linguistics, and several language programs. The initiative is of significant scope and magnitude, with additional funding to be announced. Faculty and administrators are currently at work refining the details of the initiative, which is connected to a renovation and planned expansion of Olin Hall that is projected to be completed in the summer of 2022.

General Session

During the General Session, several important votes were made by members of the Alumni Council. The date for the fall meeting was changed to September 26 – 28, 2019 and the winter meeting location was changed to New York City. Several officer and director positions were approved unanimously by the board, including these positions which are active on July 1, 2019. Joining Christian Johnson '02 as President and Susie Becker-Gould '03 as Vice President:

- Chad Cooley '00 as Treasurer
- Andrew Roffe '68 as Legal Counsel
- Timothy Mansfield as Executive Secretary

The following members were also approved to serve on the Nominations Committee beginning July 1, 2019:

- Patricia Apelian '76 (pending as alumni trustee)
- Melissa Coley '79 (pending as alumni trustee)
- Lauri Curtis-Hadobas '77
- Christopher Nulty '09
- Emily Raiber Radovic '02
- David Rea '82

The following members were also approved to serve as Committee Chairs beginning July 1, 2019:

- Jon Tiktinsky '82 (Awards)
- Karl Clauss '90 (Academic Life)

The Bylaw Ad-hoc committee chairman Andrew Roffe '68 presented the final draft version of the bylaws, as amended, which were unanimously approved by the membership. President Melissa Coley '79 thanked Mr. Roffe and Mr. Co Bertsche '63 for their tireless work leading the committee through these important bylaw revisions to match the 2018 Strategic Plan.

At the end of the General Session, Ms. Coley asked committee chairs to submit a summary of their committee work by April 30 for inclusion in the new Alumni Council Annual Report.

Thought Into Action Showcase

The Alumni Council was pleased to attend the ninth annual [Thought Into Action](#) showcase which included student demonstrations, a Shark Tank competition, and presentation of the Entrepreneur of the Year Award to Robert Johnson '94.

Retirement Dinner

On Saturday, April 7, the Alumni Council recognized members of the council who are retiring in June. They include: Co Bertsche '63, Greg Threatte '69, Elizabeth Fischer '82, Debra Duarte '81, Christine Gallagher '83 (Alumni Trustee), Kathleen Dill '89 (Alumni Trustee), Scott Hague '96, Bob Fenity '06, Kelechi Oguh '08 and Kaela Mueller '09. All the retirees have been very dedicated volunteers for Colgate and the Alumni Council thanked them for their service.

Alumni Engagement Committee

Led by Chairperson Sheverne Martin '08, the committee discussed: 1) ways to engage retired Alumni

Council members, 2) the upcoming alumni survey, 3) Reunion, and 4) the new Colgate volunteer fundraising platform. The committee was able to identify next steps for outreach to alumni, including volunteer opportunities, personal invitations, and the upcoming Alumni Council winter meeting to be held in New York City. Engagement efforts will be collaborative with other Alumni Council committees. The committee members are also providing some valuable feedback for the alumni survey, set to be distributed in early June to all alumni.

Jennifer Stone, Assistant Vice President for Institutional Advancement, provided an overview of the new Colgate Volunteer Fundraising Platform. The tool is a helpful mobile/desktop platform that allows users to track who they call, allows staff to track who was called, update information and streamline the process for class gift committees.

Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee met to discuss their roles and responsibilities for the 2019 nominee review process. One of the new committee members, Lauri Curtis Hadobas '77, agreed to serve as the Vice Chair. In addition, the committee discussed the practical impact of the newly approved Council bylaws on the committee as well as the action items that they will complete prior to the fall meeting and selection of new candidates to serve on the Alumni Council. Near term action items include a review and update of the current database by June 30th; coordinated outreach to affinity groups for recommendations of potential Alumni Council candidates; expectations for member participation in this summer's small group ERA candidate review.

Communications Committee

Led by Chairperson Jessica Cianciara '01, the committee acknowledged what a terrific job Bill Baker '70 is doing coordinating the monthly alumni Maroon News articles. The committee also proposed the following questions be added to the alumni survey:

- What are your preferred communication platforms?
- How do you communicate with the Alumni Council, if at all?
- How would you prefer to communicate with Alumni Council moving forward?

Committee member Karl Fries '10 brought forward an idea on how to broadly gather feedback on key Alumni Council issues as they arise. He will be putting together a proposal to outline a process for review and further discussion.

Ms. Cianciara presented a proposal which outlines a game plan for a one year social media pilot. The intent is to hire a Colgate student to help manage the social media presence for the Alumni Council. Vice President of Communications Laura Jack attended the meeting and spoke to her support and enthusiasm around the new endeavor.

Success will be measured by a) tracking what stories are fed from the Communications office that didn't fit the criteria for the central Colgate social media platform b) the number of follows/likes, and c) overall feedback from all involved.

Career Initiatives Committee

The Career Initiatives Committee heard from Steve Wright, Assistant Dean for National Fellowships and Scholarships at Colgate. He shared the record-breaking year his office facilitated: 139 applications from 90 students and alumni (the previous record was 79 applications in 2001-2). Of those, 20 have received

fellowships and scholarships to-date -- including six Fulbrights and one Watson -- and there are still 40+ undecided so he expects more good news in the coming weeks. His ask of the council is to spread the word among any alums looking to pivot their careers or go back to school; so often Colgate reaches out asking for money, that post-graduate fellowships and scholarships are a great way for the school to seemingly give money back to alumni. The committee also suggested connecting with the professional networks and hosting a young alumni reception at the January meeting in NYC to promote this opportunity, as well as showcasing others who have received fellowships, such as US Representative Antonio Delgado '99 who was a Rhodes Scholar himself and is delivering the 2019 commencement address.

The committee then met with three students to review a proposed Excel training and the "Learn to Earn" personal finance initiative. The latter program has existed for three years but most recently more than doubled its outreach impact to 200 students (vs 60 per semester) through regular two-day seminars around personal finance, budgeting and investments. Given this peaked interest, the Career Center is considering offering an AI-driven app (Life Cents) to ensure all students graduate with fiscal responsibility and financial goals - with a potential push during Financial Wellness Month in November. Similarly, the Excel training would provide students with spreadsheet modeling fundamentals to succeed post-graduation and during internships within the finance, accounting and science industries. The council suggested partnering across disciplines to ensure the online training (\$10pp) meets the needs of a diverse set of students/studies.

Campus Connections Committee

The Campus Connections committee met with Maria Flores-Mills, Colgate Dean of Students, followed by four members of the Student Government Association (SGA). The presentation made to the committee was the collaborative work of Ms. Flores-Mills and Katie Griffes, [Director of Shaw Wellness](#). The presentation showed a variety of nationwide and Colgate-specific trends. Some of these included the frequency of one-on-one counseling sessions, adjectives describing the frequent feelings expressed by college-aged students, frequency of dating in high-school and frequency of young adults leaving home without an adult. The nationwide trend is more counseling visits and services and Colgate has also seen this trend with a current rate of approximately 23% of the student body utilizing one-on-one counseling services in the last full school year. Colgate offers a multitude of wellness programs included in its tuition.

The final third of the meeting was spent with four members of the Colgate Student Government Association (SGA). The SGA Director of Communications, Micah Dirkers '19, organized the meeting on behalf of the SGA and was accompanied by Emma Darcy '22 and two other SGA members. The committee started by explaining the role of Colgate's representative organizations and the makeup of each: the SGA is made up of approximately 100 students and is broken into the executive committee, senate, and class councils. The senate is comprised of ten per class and the class councils are comprised of eight per class. The SGA also has representation of various university governing boards: Academic Affairs, Student Activities, IT, Safety, and Athletics to name a few. These governing boards each have two SGA representatives on them. The committee agreed that the SGA and the Alumni Council should keep in touch with one another through periodic meetings as well as regular reviews of the published minutes of each organization to identify areas where we can collaborate or be of assistance to one another.

Centennial Committee

The Centennial Committee informed the Council that plans continue to fall into place for the Alumni Council Centennial Celebration luncheon to be held on Friday, May 31, in the Hall of Presidents. Former Alumni Council Executive Secretary and current Hamilton Mayor RuthAnn Loveless MA '72 will provide the opening remarks and introduce keynote speaker Duncan Niederauer '81. President Brian Casey and outgoing Alumni Council President Melissa Coley '79 will also share a few thoughts with the group.

Looking ahead, the committee had planned a Fall Alumni Council Centennial Cocktail Party in Manhattan because the largest concentration of AC members lives in the NY Metro area. They had also intended to invite recent alumni to this event in an effort to inspire them to continue their engagement with Colgate, a crossover task with the Alumni Engagement Committee, and begin to instill the importance of giving back to the University and current students.

Given that the January 2020 Alumni Council meeting will be located to NYC, it may be beneficial to move the Fall Centennial Cocktail party to coincide with the January Alumni Council meeting whereby we would also have the benefit of all current Council members in attendance. While the official Centennial will have ended in 2019, the committee will fashion this get together as "looking forward to the next 100 years," a perspective that would mesh well with the lifelong engagement goals for recent alums.