

Colgate University Alumni Council January 2020 Meeting Summary

The Colgate Alumni Council consists of 55 alumni elected for their exemplary volunteer service to Colgate. Its members represent the approximately 34,000 living alumni in the Colgate Alumni Corporation, and each member strives to be a "Colgate ambassador": 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.

From January 9 – 10, 2020, the Alumni Council met in New York City for its second 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. 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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The Alumni Council was pleased to hold its winter meeting at Price WaterhouseCoopers in New York City, hosted by Vice President Susie Becker-Gould '03. All other meeting logistics were managed by the officers of the Alumni Council in cooperation with the staff in the Alumni Relations Office at Colgate.

Dinner with Board Chairman Michael Herling '79

The Alumni Council invited Michael Herling '79, P'08, '09, '12 and his wife Nancy '81 to join them for dinner on Thursday, January 9. Mr. Herling is a former Alumni Council member and current chair of the Board of Trustees. President Brian W. Casey was also in attendance. Mr. Andrew Roffe '68 and his wife Anna were the hosts for the dinner held at the Columbus Citizen's Foundation.

During his remarks at dinner, Mr. Herling spoke about the important role the Alumni Council plays for Colgate, the capital campaign, and [The Third-Century Plan](#). He also outlined the ambitious plans for Colgate under President Casey's leadership.

The Alumni Council was pleased to welcome Michelle Grant, widow of recently deceased member Alan Grant '64. Mr. Roffe offered a personal tribute to Alan and presented his wife with a certificate.

Special Event with President Brian W. Casey

On Friday, January 10, the Alumni Council sponsored an alumni event with President Casey at 787 7th Avenue in NYC. Prior to the main event, 125 current and former members of the Alumni Council joined a private reception to reengage with one another. Once inside, Mr. Christian Johnson '02 (Alumni Council President) addressed the audience of 300 guests. He welcomed [Ms. Goldie Blumenstyk '79](#) from *The Chronicle of Higher Education* who moderated a discussion with President Casey. Discussion topics included *The Third-Century Plan*, financial aid, capital projects, and ways alumni can support Colgate.

The event concluded with a reception for all attendees.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The full membership of the Alumni Council participated in a discussion on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Mr. Timothy Mansfield, Executive Secretary, provided a brief overview of [Colgate's comprehensive plan](#) for DE&I. Following his remarks, Ms. Lauri Hadobas '77, vice chair of the Nominations Committee, gave a report on the recent meeting of the "*Alumni Board Cooperative*", a cohort of alumni volunteers from sixteen peer institutions. Ms. Hadobas reported how different institutions were managing diversity on their boards and several best practices. Following her remarks, Mr. Christopher Nulty '09, vice chair of the Communications Committee, facilitated a conversation among the full Council which ultimately led to a recommendation to the Executive Committee to create an ad-hoc committee to address these important issues.

Admission in Higher Education

Mr. Christian Johnson '02 introduced Ms. Tara Bubble, Dean of Admission at Colgate to the full Alumni Council membership. Ms. Bubble opened her presentation with questions for the Alumni Council to answer in different groups whom were divided among graduation years: "what words best describe Colgate?" and "what words best describe the Admission process?"

Following some discussion, Ms. Bubble provided an overview of the college admissions industry and some of the current crises that dominated the national news in 2019. She described how other institutions faced these challenges and what they learned. Colgate University maintains high ethical standards and complies with all federal and NCAA regulations in admissions. However, Colgate is not immune to applicants who seek to "game the system" and misrepresent their qualifications.

The Alumni Council appreciated learning about the modern college admission industry and how Colgate is positioned strongly in the marketplace.

Lunch with Presidents' Club Membership Council

In cooperation with Ms. Jennifer Stone (assistant vice president of advancement), several alumni leaders in the Presidents' Club Membership Council joined a productive lunch meeting. Mr. Thomas MacCowan '85 (chair) and Ms. Amy Jurkowitz '85 (vice chair) introduced themselves and other PCMC volunteers to the Alumni Council. They sought feedback and support on two initiatives for 2019-20: *Table for 13* and outreach to "power" companies with large cohorts of Colgate alumni.

Table for 13 are small gatherings of alumni (over a meal) that include discussion topics related to Colgate and its third century. Hosts, cities, venues, and general subjects were all discussed as part of an intimate and strategic means of engagement for Presidents' Club members and guests.

The Annual Giving Office and the Presidents' Club are looking for alumni in some key (or "power") companies to help build a pipeline of new members. Some successful examples are Ernst & Young and Barclay's which include a high number of alumni and high number of Presidents' Club members.

Committee Meetings

Alumni Engagement Committee

Ms. Sheverne Martin '08 (chair) led her committee on a discussion on volunteer engagement. They discussed how volunteers are recruited, trained, held accountable, and recognized for their work. Ms. Martin also collected ideas and feedback on an "Alumni Leadership Weekend" (October 17-18) when volunteers will be brought to campus for training, recognition, and common messaging from Colgate.

The committee also discussed engaging former Alumni Council members. Mr. Robert Raiber '68 (former member) and Mr. Thomas Levine '70 (former member) offered to help advise the Alumni Engagement Committee on their efforts.

Communications Committee

Mr. Christopher Nulty '09 (vice chair) led his committee on a review of the new Colgate alumni Twitter account ([@colgatealumni](#)) showing analytics on usage and stories. Mr. Nulty also encouraged his committee to examine the Alumni Council website for any recommendations or edits.

Nominations Committee

Mr. Richard Burke '92 (chair) and his committee participated in an important discussion on the process for member nominations. Some recommendations include personal outreach to different affinity groups, asking self-nominees to provide a biography, researching top alumni who are disengaged with Colgate, creating some guiding principles on membership criteria, and collecting deeper data on the current membership of the Council (race, occupation, volunteer service, philanthropy, etc.).

Career Initiatives Committee and Campus Connections Committee

Mr. Stephen Rock '85 (chair of the Campus Connections Committee) introduced Mr. Michael Sciola (associate vice president for career initiatives), Ms. Carolyn Strobel (director of Thought Into Action), and Mr. Wills Hapworth '07 (TIA) during a joint meeting with the Career Initiatives Committee. Guests provided an overview of [Thought Into Action](#) progress and plans.

Ms. Teresa Olsen, director of career services, joined the committee by phone to provide an update on student and employer engagement with career services on campus. The committee was very pleased with impressive results.

Academic Life Committee

Ms. Betsy Levine-Brown '01 (vice chair) introduced Ms. Jillian Cole '10 (senior associate director of alumni relations) to provide an update on faculty programs for alumni. They received an update from Colgate staff about events from Fall 2019, and continued the discussion about *Table for 13*. They discussed Colgate's new podcast, [13](#), and shared ideas for promotion and future alumni guests. The group was also updated about the new [travel programs](#) for alumni being researched by Alumni Relations. We learned more about the great experiences from those on previous trips, and discussed ideas for future trips.

Awards Committee

During Executive Session, Mr. Jon Tiktinsky '82 (chair) announced the names of the annual alumni awards. His committee spent countless hours reviewing data and profiles to select very worthy recipients for the Ann Yao '80 Young Alumni Award, Humanitarian Award, Entrepreneur of the Year Award, Maroon Citations, and Wm. Brian Little '64 Award for Distinguished Service.

The 2020 winners include:

- *Ann Yao '80 Young Alumni Award* - John Lee '15
- *Entrepreneur of the Year* - David Fialkow '81
- *Humanitarian Award* - Jack Kupferman '77
- *Non-Alumni Maroon Citation*
 - Grace Huff - Planned Giving
 - Gert Neubauer - Campus Safety
 - Heather Palmer - Finance Operations Manager

- *Maroon Citation*
Robert Youker '55
William Baker '70
Raymond Hartung '70
Robert Gold '80
Kimberly Taylor '80
Carmine DiSibio '85
Joseph McGrath '85
Stephen Rock '85
Jaclyn Broad '90
Max Haspel '95
Chad Cooley '00
Debra LoCastro '05
Clarissa Shah '10
- *Wm. Brian Little '64 Award for Distinguished Service*
James Himoff '65
Russell Wilkinson '70
Margaret Flanagan '80
Stephen Errico '85