



March 2006

A Moment for Grove City College

This moment for Grove City College will have a single topic – our Alumni Association, its organization, activities and future plans.

I reviewed a lot of old source material recently while I was preparing to give a lecture on the history of Grove City College. Early records indicate a loosely organized General Alumni Association since 1897. Activities included alumni banquets held on campus at Commencement. The first recorded Alumni Association president, serving from 1940-41, is a very familiar name – Dr. J. Stanley Harker '25, our fourth College President.

For me, membership on the Alumni Council (from 1971-2003) was my first introduction to College service, being privileged like Dr. Harker to serve as Alumni Association president from 1985-87.

Today, the Alumni Association is 22,000 strong across the nation and around the world. All alumni are members. The Alumni Council is the leadership arm of the Association. As you will see below, it is doing a lot to advance the vision, mission and values of our great alma mater.

Pictured below is our current Association president, Laura (Ritchey '87) Havrilla. While on campus, she was the Senior Woman of the Year and active in many organizations including SGA President, Director of the New Grace Singers and the Alpha Beta Tau Sorority. Since graduation, she has worked in accounting, marketing and business development capacities. Currently, she is a Director of Global Product Management at Respirationics in Pittsburgh. She received her CPA and also earned an MBA from Duke University's Fuqua School of Business, where she received the J. Paul Sticht '39 Scholarship.

To help explain and illuminate the activities of the group, Laura and I recently sat down to discuss the Alumni Association:

Richard G. Jewell – What is the purpose of the Alumni Association?

Laura (Ritchey '87) Havrilla – The Association's vision is to engage alumni in a dynamic relationship with the College in building a greater family and partnership for their mutual benefit.

Simply stated, our mission is to support the College's mission and values, maintain connections and nurture relationships between the College and its alumni.

RGJ – Who serves on the Council and how does one get that opportunity?

LRH – As the governing body of the Association, the Alumni Council consists of 36 alumni of various ages and backgrounds. Nominations are received from alumni interested in participating in the Council. Every spring, the Council elects new members to fill open positions. Alumni who are interested in participating in the Council can contact Jeff Prokovich '89, senior director of alumni and college relations, at (724) 458-3846 or jdrokovich@gcc.edu.



Laura (Ritchey '87) Havrilla

RGJ – Like the College itself, the Alumni Association has just finished a strategic plan. As a result, what's on your horizon?

LRH – Our strategic plan focuses on “engaging” the alumni through:

- Increased awareness of the Association and Council
- Enhanced relationships between Grove City College students and alumni
- Leveraged e-media and other tools to enhance communication between alumni and Alumni Council
- Improved alumni participation in peer-to-peer development programs
- New learning opportunities to alumni and friends, particularly in the Grove City area

Our strategic plan supports the goal that the Alumni Association, led by the Alumni Council, can be an integral part of the lives of our alumni.

RGJ – What are some of the initiatives currently being led by Alumni Council and how does each support the College?

LRH – Supported by our strategic plan, we have multiple key initiatives underway. I'll highlight a few examples:

One program we recently initiated is the Grove City Student Connection Program. Led by Barbara (Lyons '84) Lyle, the goal of the program is to develop alumni/student relationships. Viewing freshmen as "alumni in residence," the program is designed to enhance the students' GCC experience by providing them with an additional network of positive, reliable friends who share a love for their College. Students in the program are connected with host families, who assist the students in their development by exposing them to traditions, customs and courtesies associated with the GCC family. The pilot was initiated in the 2005 spring semester and included 18 students and nine host families. We plan to grow this worthwhile program and include many more students and families in 2006-07.

Another program initiated in the fall of 2005 is the Lifelong Learning Series. Conceived and led by Anne (Harker '60) Dayton, this program targets area alumni and friends. Seventy-nine attended the pilot series, which included four classes: gourmet cooking, financial planning, collecting antiques, and College and community history. The schedule is set for the spring 2006 series and more information is available online at www.gcc.edu/alumni.

One of our long-standing initiatives is the Jack Kennedy Memorial Alumni Achievement Awards. Since 1964, the Alumni Association has been recognizing significant achievement in all fields with this award. Each spring, an anonymous committee of alumni selects three or four candidates for this honor that is presented at Homecoming. A more recent addition is the Distinguished Service Award, which recognizes significant service to the College. Nominations for both awards can be sent to the Alumni Relations Office throughout the year. For details or to nominate someone, e-mail alumni@gcc.edu or call (888) GCC-GRAD. Nominations or letters may also be mailed to 100 Campus Drive, Grove City, Pa. 16127.

Another initiative is still in an early stage of development but has great potential for our alumni. It is focused on leveraging "e-capabilities" across all alumni. The Internet enables us to effectively connect with alumni, regardless of their age or address. Our goals include the development of an alumni web-based database and career networking capabilities.

RGJ – What kinds of service (besides direct Council membership) can alumni provide and how can they volunteer?

LRH – Engagement of our alumni is critical.

One way alumni can help is through career networking with Grove City College students. We know they work in diverse careers and live in every corner of the world. We have a great opportunity to open doors to internships and/or full time opportunities for Grove City College students. Alumni who can provide such opportunities to students are encouraged to contact Jim Thrasher '80, director of career services, at (724) 458-2200 or jthrasher@gcc.edu.

Our Alumni Council initiatives are supported by active committees and task forces. Our goal is to include both Council members AND non-Council alumni on these task forces. I encourage alumni who have a passion for Grove City College and an interest in furthering our initiatives to contact Jeff Prokovich '89 at (724) 458-3846 or jdprokovich@gcc.edu.

This is an exciting time at the College, and alumni financial support is also critical to our alma mater. Grove City College is a unique and special place and our support can help keep it that way for our children and future generations of our students.

RGJ – Thank you, Laura. Our Alumni Council and all alumni are not only important to the College, but to also our living heritage; they are, in fact, our lifeblood. We will continue to keep alums and alumni programs at the heart of all we do. And that is a promise.

Yours for Grove City College,



Richard G. Jewell '67, J.D.