



"No story sits by itself. Our lives connect like threads on a loom, interwoven in ways we never realize." - Mitch Albom

Dear Class of 1995,

Our Reunion Committee has continued to meet (online) to plan our 25th Reunion despite the fact that our lives are changing daily. However, as you might expect, our conversations have shifted some from reunion planning and fundraising to how everyone is doing in these uncertain times. We are talking about how we can support each other and our need to reach out to let you know that we're thinking of you, and how we can stay connected in this disconnected time.

First off, Reunion has not been cancelled. As soon as there is a clearer picture of the next few months, the College will communicate about the status of key milestone events including Commencement and Reunion. A bit of good news is that [Reunion registration](#) is refundable, and many airlines are offering affordable, flexible tickets. We don't know what the future will bring, but until we know we can't, we will keep making plans for our Reunion.

We also send our heartfelt thanks to all who have made reunion gifts to the Annual Fund. **So far this year, our class has already donated \$444,576.**

Our generous donations are already at work supporting students whether they needed to stay on campus or went home. (The majority of students who petitioned to remain on campus are international students who have challenges at home in terms of food or safety or domestic students from areas hard-hit by COVID-19 like Seattle or New York City.)

For example, last week our class gift helped the the College to provide:

- **Transportation:** Assistance for airline tickets and transportation to the airport for students who, given the short notice, would not have been able to afford going home.
- **Food:** For students concerned about food insecurity when they got home, Carleton provided money for immediate food needs.
- **Computers:** In order to ensure all students could participate in remote learning during spring term, Carleton purchased and sent roughly 240 technology packages to students who didn't have computers available to them at their destination.
- **Wi-Fi:** For students who don't have Wi-Fi at home to facilitate online classes, Carleton is covering that cost.
- **IT Connectivity:** ITS is checking in with all students and sending routers as needed to anyone who doesn't have enough bandwidth at home.
- **Spring Break Campus Housing:** Due to the quickly changing landscape, some students found that they needed to stay on campus during break, Carleton waived the \$15/day fee for room and board for students unable to afford it.
- **Support Access:** The Student Life Office reduced the barriers to students who request support, including adjusting request limits, and easing documentation requirements.

Like many things right now, the Annual Fund is being tested in unprecedented ways. As online learning ramps up, it will be a resource for additional needs and costs. Consider the words of our classmate, Claire Miller Olsem:

*"When I read how Carleton was helping students, I was moved to tears, and struck by the thought that if there was a GoFundMe set up for any one of those items, I would donate to help out current students with those needs--they are part of my extended Carleton family. **But the great thing is, we DO have a GoFundMe for those things—it's the Alumni Annual Fund.**"*

We know every situation is different, but if you haven't donated yet, and are able to, [now is the time](#). Or if you have donated, and are able to make a second gift, please know your gift is definitely needed.

In addition to helping current students, we are interested in ways to support you. How can we connect, be an ear to talk to, help navigate working from home while also homeschooling kids and/or taking care of family? Maybe you've already found an answer or two that you can share?

In the meantime, we've started brainstorming and here are some ideas we are kicking around:

- Class of 1995 virtual happy hour
- Connect on networked computer/ipad game, remote trivia contest
- Virtual book club, or television show discussion
- Listen to and share new music, create a virtual radio show or playlist for a virtual Arena Theatre Dan party
- Share restaurant recommendations in your area (Support local restaurants - especially ethnic restaurants that may be disproportionately affected by the current situation)
- Have a knowledgeable classmate host a virtual wine tasting and/or cocktail hour (Support your favorite wineries or breweries)
- Communicate live on Google Hangouts, Zoom, FaceTime

What sounds interesting to you? Our Carleton Class of [1995 Facebook page](#) is one place where you can put your comments or ideas or reach out to any committee member directly. Our emails and phone numbers can be found in the [Alumni Directory](#).

We look forward to a time when we can be together again – when social distancing will be a distant memory, and we can toss a frisbee on the Bald Spot, walk through the Arb, or eat some gyros pizza. Until then, remember you are not alone. Together we are the Class of 1995. Larry Gould said (and Steve Lewis reminded us): "From this day forward, you are a part of Carleton, and Carleton is a part of you."

Wishing you health and safety,

Susan (Thysell) Rodgers and Courtenay Brown,
on behalf of the 1995 Reunion Planning Committee

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