

2009 Alumni Association Annual Report

Welcome to the 170th Reunion Weekend and meeting of the Oberlin College Alumni Association! We have a wonderful tradition at Oberlin of celebrating together the Commencement of the newest class of Oberlin graduates, along with the renewal of friendships among previous generations who have experienced an Oberlin education.

I am especially pleased to welcome both the 50th reunion Class of 1959 and the newest members of our Association, the Class of 2009. This year, in addition to our 50th reunion Class of 1959, we have the Classes of 1943, 1944 and 1945 celebrating a 65th cluster reunion, the Classes of 1973, 1974 and 1975 celebrating their 35th cluster reunion, the Class of 1984 celebrating its 25th reunion, and the Classes of 1993, 1994 and 1995 celebrating their 15th cluster reunion.

All graduates and former students, currently more than 40,000, who attended the College of Arts and Sciences of Oberlin College, the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, the Oberlin College Graduate School of Theology, or the Kindergarten Primary Training School, are members of the Alumni Association (hereinafter the Association). Members of the Association meet annually at the Alumni Luncheon, the day before Commencement.

The Association's Vision:

- Provide a lifelong community for students and alumni of Oberlin College.
- Be an effective partner in supporting Oberlin's academic and artistic excellence.
- Enhance commitment to Oberlin's historic values of excellence, justice and service.

The vision guides alumni activities as diverse as career services and bowling, reunions and regional book clubs, selection of six members of the Board of Trustees and picnics for newly enrolling students. These activities and countless others help maintain our partnership with today's Oberlin and reinforce Oberlin values in us. Association leaders commit seriously to the vision and strive to realize it through our decisions and actions.

Association committees provide an opportunity for alumni to interact with key College and Conservatory administrators. The work of our Trustee Search Committee on the identification and selection of well-qualified candidates to stand for election as Alumni-Elected Trustees is one of the most important areas of alumni involvement in policy making and we are very proud of the excellent candidates that our process has identified who have gone on to provide service to Oberlin on the Board of Trustees.

The Alumni Association facilitates alumni involvement in many College and Conservatory activities. Each year, for instance, the Alumni Office manages the Alumni in Service to Oberlin College (ASOC) program that supports alumni coming back to campus for programs generally sponsored by academic departments. In addition, more than 270 alumni are actively involved in helping the Admissions Office recruit students for Oberlin, by attending college fairs, conducting interviews, and hosting informational meetings or admitted student receptions. Alumni actively support the Career Services Office, with more than 3,180 alumni registered as career mentors.

In September 2008, more than 200 alumni volunteers returned to campus for the Alumni Council Weekend. During that time the Executive Board, each of our eight committees, affiliate group steering committees, regional coordinators, class presidents and lead class agents held meetings.

The Development Committee has substantially strengthened the number of alumni directly engaged in encouraging giving to Oberlin; almost 350 lead and associate class agents are now reaching out with personal contact to our alumni.

Xavier Pi-Sunyer '55, professor of medicine at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons and professor of applied physiology at Columbia Teachers College, received the Distinguished Achievement Award. Jackie Bradley Hughes '76 was given the Distinguished Service Award in recognition of her many contributions to the Association, and Maxine Wenzler Houck '58 and Andy Goldner '56 were both awarded the Certificate of Appreciation. Carl Read Gerber '58 was recognized during the 2008 Commencement Ceremony with our 2008 Alumni Medal.

The Association has had another busy and highly productive year of activities in Oberlin, throughout the United States and in foreign countries. Highly visible activities of the Alumni Office include Commencement/Reunion weekend, the travel program, and special reunions. Last year more than 1,700 alumni returned to campus for Commencement/Reunion Weekend. The travel program operated four trips in 2008 to destinations such as India, the Galapagos, the Dalmatian Coast, and France. ObieAdventures! conducted two bicycling trips; one in Napa Valley and one in Vermont. In May the Alumni Association helped coordinate an Oberlin Shansi reunion on campus that was attended by 112 alumni. In October, the Oberlin Asian Pacific American Alumni Association (OAPAAA) celebrated an affiliate group reunion.

The past year has been very successful for Oberlin's regional outreach program. These events have included the traditional Western New England gathering at Tanglewood Music Festival that was attended by more than 150 Obies and friends, the seventh annual alumni concert in San Francisco with more than 19 musicians performing, a "Beethoven and Broadway" alumni concert in North Carolina, post-election events following the presidential election, and a host of other activities in our alumni chapters across the country. You can see when something is happening in your part of the country by visiting the alumni web page at <http://www.oberlin.edu/alumni/>.

There were many changes to the staffing of the Alumni Office this past year. Executive Director Laura Gobbi '91, Director of Alumni Outreach and Education Paul Wolansky, and Administrative Assistant Linda Gwinn all left for other opportunities. Danielle Young, who came to Oberlin in 2005, was named the new Executive Director of the Alumni Association in August 2008. John Keller was hired as the Director of Alumni Regional Activities, Ruth Mercer '03 was hired as the Assistant Director of Alumni Events, Deb Stanfield was hired as an administrative assistant, and a new position in the office, the Assistant Director of Alumni Outreach and Engagement, was filled by Liz Weinstein '02. Special thanks go to Aaron Mucciolo '02 who assisted during the staffing transition.

The Association wishes each of you a most enjoyable Commencement/Reunion Weekend. We hope that you will consider ways to maintain your contact with Oberlin in between reunions through our regional activities and many volunteer opportunities. Serving as your president is a great honor and privilege and I must give my sincere thanks to the staff in the Alumni Office and my fellow members of the Executive Board of the Alumni Association for their exemplary service and support.

Bill Hilton '65
President
Oberlin College Alumni Association