

**May 23, 2008**

To The Campus Community,

We just celebrated a very successful Commencement, and as we look forward to Reunion Weekend, I wanted to reach out and share some news with you, as well as give you a brief look at some of our plans for the summer.

During Commencement weekend, we also honored trustees whose terms on the board ended this year, including two very special alumnae who served a total of 22 years. Because both of these women have demonstrated outstanding leadership to the College over many years, we wanted to thank each of them in a very meaningful way. I am pleased and proud to announce The Connecticut College Green has been renamed The Jean C. Tempel '65 Green. Further, I am pleased to announce that Marshall House has been renamed Ann Werner Johnson '68 House.

Jean Tempel and Ann Johnson are both very characteristic of the remarkable people that comprise our Connecticut College community, including faculty, staff, students and our 25,000 alumni across the globe. As we work together to achieve our vision, it's important we all truly understand the ways in which we define and earn our reputation, and how all of our distinctive roles contribute to the quality of education here. I developed a piece, "Earning Our Reputation," for our alumni community and plan to distribute it to faculty and staff next week.

Reunion is May 30-June 1, and we will have an opportunity to connect with many alumni who celebrate milestones in their relationship with the College this year. This is also a good time for us to focus on the strong results of the 2008-2009 academic year and all the ways in which this campus community continues to contribute to our success.

We pursued a very aggressive agenda this year, one that was based on the goals and objectives I shared with you in September. At our recent meeting, I reviewed progress on the goals with the trustees in connection with my own annual evaluation. The goals document is available on CamelWeb for those who would like to review it. I will meet with our senior administrative and academic team later this summer to define our goals for 2008-2009, and plan to share those with the community early in the fall semester. Meantime, I am pleased to call your attention to just a few of the many successes we achieved this year.

We followed last year's record number of Fulbright Awards with another five Fulbrights this year. We also had a Marshall finalist, a Truman finalist, two Goldwater honorable mentions and a Udall honorable mention. The College – and specifically our outstanding professors – has been awarded more than \$3.5 million in corporate and foundation grants to date, national recognition of the exceptional research and teaching here. We also, with funding from the National Science Foundation, launched our Science Leaders program to increase the number of underrepresented students graduating from the College with a degree and research experience in the sciences.

Our faculty scholarship continued on a very strong note, with many professors achieving national recognition for their work. In addition, we hosted many distinguished speakers and symposia on campus this year, including the Ammerman Center's Arts & Technology symposium and Care's Race, Space and Memory.

We conducted a very successful launch of our freshman seminars in the residence halls.

With a \$1 million gift to the College from Sylvia Marx '57, through the Virginia and Leonard Marx Foundation, we will renovate all of our common room spaces this summer, including eight more that we can use as seminar space. This work is part of more than \$10 million we are investing in campus renewal this summer. In addition to the common rooms, we will also renovate classrooms, put a new roof, windows, siding and internal heating controls in Winthrop, and undertake critical structural work on historic New London Hall. We also will create a beautiful new plaza that connects Cro, Shain Library and Blaustein, and feature new pathways, seating areas and landscaping. This is all in addition to the start of construction on our new fitness center. You will receive more information on campus renewal throughout the summer.

With another month remaining in the fiscal year, we have already exceeded this year's fundraising goal of \$20 million. Alumni, parents and friends have made more than \$24 million in new gifts and commitments, including seven separate leadership gifts of \$1 million or more. Additionally, the Class of 2008 set a new record with 96 percent of the class participating in the Senior Giving effort. This overall success is encouraging as we approach Reunion Weekend, and focus on raising \$4.9 million for the Annual Fund and achieving 47-percent alumni participation by June 30. We are well positioned for the public phase of our capital campaign, which we will officially launch October 24 as part of a special Fall Weekend celebration of Connecticut College's past, present and future.

We have enhanced alumni programs by engaging faculty and administrators in events in key markets across the country. Additionally, I continue to travel frequently to meet with our alumni, parents and friends of the College.

We also continue to engage prospective students with a number of new admission marketing programs. This year's outreach has resulted in an incoming freshman class that is one of the most diverse in our history, as well as being top quality. I look forward to welcoming them all in August.

We've had a number of high-profile media placements recently, including several in the Wall Street Journal, a story in U.S. News & World Report and an appearance by Dean of Admission and Financial Aid Martha Merrill '84 on NBC's Today show. Additionally, a number of our professors and senior administrators continue to be featured as experts in their fields in a wide variety of publications.

Connecticut College is on an upward trajectory and our momentum continues to be strong. Last year, we outlined our vision and put the plan in place to achieve it. This year, our focus was on execution. By all accounts, we executed very well. Moving forward, we will continue to sharpen our focus and build on the College's key strengths and distinctiveness. I want to thank you all for the hard work and creativity you have given to the College during the past year – your commitment is critical to our success.

Sincerely,  
Lee Higdon