

## Strengthening engagement and pride at top of College's 'to do' list

*Alumni and parents play essential role in future of Connecticut College*

›IF YOU LOOK at any truly great college or university today, you'll see a strong alumni body and an engaged parent community — people who are passionate about their institution and support it in numerous ways.

I've seen some of that same passion during my first six months as President, both on campus and through the trips I've taken to visit with alumni and parents in Massachusetts, New York, California, Rhode Island and here in Connecticut. I've gotten a much better sense of who our alumni and parents are and how you — individually and collectively — help sustain the College's mission and culture.

Your passion is most evident in your participation. And your participation is essential to the College — now and in the future. Some of you participate in alumni events in your home state or here on campus, or you mentor students or act as advisors for younger alums, even interview prospective students. Others are internship sponsors, or perhaps you attend College sporting events, music, theater, and dance performances, or symposia and seminars. Many of you contribute news and photographs to this magazine. You're involved as active members of the Connecticut College community.

There is a real pride evident across the Connecticut College community, and we want to make it even better. A large part of our strategic vision includes efforts that will improve the College's academic excellence, admission selectivity and reputation. These efforts will increase the value of a Connecticut College degree — and give alumni and parents

new reasons to be proud of this institution.

As a College, we're pursuing a number of new initiatives that will help us connect in more meaningful ways with our alumni and parents. These include launching our new Web site later this spring with more news and features geared specifically to alumni and parents. We're also adding features to this magazine focused on the interests of recent graduates, and re-designing the alumni and parents' newsletters. These initiatives support our overall strategy to enhance our communications — with alumni, parents and all of our constituencies.

I speak frequently with people about the College. As they share with me their impressions, their experiences and their aspirations, the word 'community' comes up again and again as a way people define Connecticut College.

The very essence of this community begins right here on campus, where I see faculty, students and staff engaged in the life of the College. I've toured the residence halls, gone to athletic events, attended performances, eaten in the dining halls, spent quiet time in the library. Everything I do as a member of this community helps me un-



HAROLD SHAPIRO

**"... this community is passionate about Connecticut College. And that passion is what makes us strong."**

derstand it better and encourages me to do more, and I hope you feel the same way.

I ask all of our alumni and parents to consider supporting the College financially. Financial support from our alumni, parents and friends ensures that the College continues to provide its superior educational experience to all our students. Of equal importance is your involvement in Connecticut College.

For those of you who are involved, thank you. For those who may be waiting to be asked, please consider this to be an open invitation. Come to campus for a game, a play, a concert, a lecture, Commencement,

Reunion. See the improvements being made in the Arboretum, in the dorms, in the classrooms. Meet with students, faculty or staff. If you can't visit the campus, reach out to other alumni, to parents. As you re-connect with each other and the campus, you'll find, as I have, that this community is passionate about Connecticut College. And that passion is what makes us strong.

Thank you for your interest, commitment and involvement.

— Leo I. Higdon, Jr.