

Class Connections Dinner with the Class of 2018

On Wednesday, Sept. 10th, early in the Orientation Week for the Class of 2018, members of our class were invited to join the '18s for a lobster dinner at '53 Commons. We used this event to introduce ourselves to the first year students, and to distribute Class Connections pins to each member of that class. Assisting in this effort were **John Engelman, Peter Fahey, Bill Rich, John Everett, David Peck, Chris Mayer, David Walden, Gerry Bell, Dan Bort** (all the way from San Francisco, he was in the northeast on a business trip to Boston), and **Gerry Hills** (in from the Virgin Islands, and headed to a 50th high school reunion).

The pins were designed by the College and each was placed in a small velour pouch along with a note from our class welcoming the '18s to the Dartmouth family. We stationed ourselves just inside the entrance to the dining hall, and distributed the pins as the students filed by. Most stopped to thank us, and some took time to engage in brief conversations. Perhaps of greater interest to the first year students was the presence of Phil Hanlon and his wife, Gail Gentes, who spent nearly 2 hours shaking hands with the students and putting their own personal touch on this event.

Throughout the nearly two hours we were there, we took shifts going into the dining rooms and joining the '18s for the lobster dinner. The students were incredibly excited about being at Dartmouth, very personable and engaging, and we all were impressed by their friendliness and their obvious enthusiasm about the four years that lie ahead. Many talked about their Freshman Trips and how that experience helped make them feel immediately connected to the College and classmates, as well as providing them with a new set of "best friends". One humorous aspect of the entire experience was watching many of these '18s struggle with eating a lobster for the first time in their lives.

Along with some of our classmates spending nearly two weeks at the 2nd College Grant feeding Freshman Trips, this dinner provided us with a terrific start to the Class Connections Program. There will be numerous other opportunities for our class to engage with the Class of 2018 during the next four years, culminating in their commencement and our 50th Reunion in June of 2018. We hope many more '68s will take advantage of those opportunities when they occur.