Volunteer Spotlights, September 2014: CALS and Human Ecology

Greg Bassuk ’94  
Human Ecology  
Rye Brook, NY

Favorite Cornell Spot: Lynah Rink during Cornell hockey games  
Favorite Cornell Tradition: Slope Day  
Cornell Volunteer Communities: Cornell University Council (CUC); Committee on Alumni Trustee Nominations (CATN); Class of 1994 Reunion Campaign (Chairman); Human Ecology Alumni Association (HEAA) Board of Directors; Cornell Club Alumni Association Board of Directors; Quill & Dagger alumnus  
First CU Volunteer Experience: Board of Trustees Committee on Academic Affairs and Student Life (Student Member)  
Most Recent CU Volunteer Experience: Committee on Alumni Trustee Nominations (CATN)  
Most Impactful CU Volunteer Experience: As Chairman of the Class of 1994 20th Year Reunion Campaign, I had the opportunity to work with a great Campaign Committee and we had record-breaking results, including the largest-ever number of Tower Club donors in a 20th Reunion Campaign, as well as strong results in the number of individual gifts and total dollars raised. Separately, as Co-Chair of the Career Networking Team of the HEAA Board of Directors, I have enjoyed working to establish opportunities for student internships hosted by alumni, as well as providing student grants that support their academic and career-related pursuits.

Sheryl Haft Flug ’86  
Human Ecology  
New York, NY

Favorite Cornell Spot: The DEA (Design and Environmental Analysis) design studios in Martha Van, where I pulled many all-nighters  
Favorite Cornell Tradition: Yelling "Sieve Sieve Sieve" to the other team's goalie at Big Red ice hockey games  
Cornell Volunteer Communities: Human Ecology Dean's Advisory Council; Cornell Women's Network (Co-Chair); Cornell University Council (CUC)  
First CU Volunteer Experience: Cornell Women's Network event in NYC  
Most Recent CU Volunteer Experience: Cornell NYC Sesquicentennial Advisory Committee  
Most Impactful CU Volunteer Experience: Meeting with current seniors at the College of Human Ecology to share thoughts and ideas about their present experiences and futures

Andrea Glanz ’74 and Jim Irish ’74  
Human Ecology (Andrea) and ILR (Jim)  
Hartsdale, NY

Favorite Cornell Spot: Andrea > A tie between Newman Overlook (Cornell Plantations), which offers amazing views of the plantings and ponds, and the Commons in the new wing of Martha Van Rensselaer, a bright and airy space with dazzling light fixtures designed by Human Ecology students. | Jim > The top of Libe Slope. For the first three years I was at Cornell, I lived at the bottom of Libe Slope. Walking up the slope most mornings was an unwelcome chore, but on the way home each afternoon I had a spectacular view of Lake Cayuga, the sunset, and the beauty that is Cornell and the Ithaca area. It was literally all downhill from there.  
Favorite Cornell Tradition: Andrea > Eating Cornell ice cream! I'm so glad Stocking Hall is back in operation and creating new flavors. | Jim > Over the years, it has become the singing of the Alma Mater. It reminds me that Cornell is special and that no matter what it is that attracts volunteers and alumni to the Cornell campus or a Cornell activity, we respect and encourage each other to stay connected, support the current students, and make a difference.  
Cornell Volunteer Communities: Andrea and Jim > Cornell Annual Fund (National Co-Chair, Quadrangle Club); Cornell Plantations Advisory Council; Cornell University Libraries Advisory Council;
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Cornell University Council (CUC) (Administrative Board); established the Africana Library’s Caribbean Studies Collection in tribute to Professor Locksley Edmondson; Major Gifts Committee, 40th Reunion Campaign, Class of ’74 | Andrea > President’s Council of Cornell Women (PCCW) (Sustaining Member); Cornell Alumni Association of Westchester (VP and Board Member) | Jim > Class of 1974 Class Officer (Annual Fund Representative); Cornell Alumni Association of Westchester (President and Board Member); Alumni Phonathons (Chair); Cornell Cares Day Volunteer

**First CU Volunteer Experience:** Andrea > Chaired a Cornell Phonathon in Westchester | Jim > Calling classmates in 1984 to encourage them to contribute to Cornell and attend our 10th Reunion. I won a bottle of wine for getting the most contributions and I had a long conversation with a lovely woman I had not known at Cornell. She and I just celebrated our 28th wedding anniversary.

**Most Recent CU Volunteer Experience:** Andrea > Calling classmates to encourage them to make Tower Club gifts in honor of our 40th reunion | Jim > Serving on the University Library Advisory Council. Being a member of the Advisory Council has allowed me to see how the library provides basic library services, maintains and renovates its many facilities, acquires and preserves collections, delivers research and other support to faculty and students, and then meets the challenge of funding these essential functions.

**Most Impactful CU Volunteer Experience:** Andrea > As a two-term member of Cornell Plantations Advisory Council, I helped Plantations to actively market itself as one of Cornell’s—and the region’s—treasures. This was a wonderful opportunity for me to apply my business and marketing expertise to an extraordinary Cornell asset that more Cornellians should know about and support. | Jim > Serving as President of the Cornell Alumni Association of Westchester for 10 years, which gave me a chance to share what I knew about Cornell and its vast resources. I hope my work had an impact on others in Westchester; I know it paved the way for me to become even more involved with Cornell. (Oh, and that 1984 phonathon had a bit of an impact too!)

**Nate Houghton ’11**
Human Ecology
Orchard Park, NY

**Favorite Cornell Spot:** In college I was in much better shape than I am now. A buddy of mine and I would run from our fraternity to the Plantations, ring the bell at the top of one of the hills, and then run back. Honestly, every single place (that isn't a classroom) is my favorite.

**Favorite Cornell Tradition:** Slope Day is the best tradition (and it's really not even close), but the very best memories tend to be of unplanned activities. In that light, here's my recommended activity for alums: drive through Ithaca and be astounded at how you have a memory associated with a ridiculous number of the places you see. They won't all be good memories, but they'll make you feel like you had a full life just during the four years of college (and honestly... you did).

**Cornell Volunteer Communities:** Human Ecology Young Alumni Association (HEYAA)

**First CU Volunteer Experience:** Quite a bit on campus through Greek life, the Public Service Center, and other outlets.

**Most Recent CU Volunteer Experience:** Coordinated the Human Ecology Young Alumni Association’s first-ever events in three cities during the fall of 2013. Always fun to start something from scratch and see it make a difference to people, especially in three very different settings.

**Most Impactful CU Volunteer Experience:** Returned to campus to speak with current students about applying to Harvard Business School, where I am currently getting my MBA. I have always considered this to be a valuable help that I can offer to those still on campus and I always enjoy answering questions and providing advice for students. Sometimes the students are helpful too. One time I promised a student that I would chat and promised to help a friend move in to a new apartment at the same time, so the student gave us a hand with a couch and some chairs! Even better: he got in.
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Jonathan Leiman ’08
Agriculture & Life Sciences
Chicago, IL

Favorite Cornell Spot: Fernow Hall  
Favorite Cornell Tradition: Concerts at Barton Hall  
Cornell Volunteer Communities: CALS Alumni Association; Cornell Club of Chicago; CAAAN (Extern programs)  
First CU Volunteer Experience: Interviewing Cornell applicants through the CAAAN network while in graduate school at the University of Montana  
Most Recent CU Volunteer Experience: Hosting a Chemical Engineering student extern at my company (Environ International Corporation) in Chicago  
Most Impactful CU Volunteer Experience: Supporting academic programs at the Chicago Public High School for Agricultural Science on the Southside of Chicago

Pranav Mehta MHA ’01
Human Ecology  
Sharon, MA

Favorite Cornell Spot: Foot bridge across Beebe Lake. I remember this as the scenic view and calming waters that drove the energy to start off each day of classes after walking from North campus and that reenergized me after the long days for the two-mile walk back to the apartment.  
Favorite Cornell Tradition: Sloan Alumni Reunion Weekend/Wagner Dinner. It is the graduation celebration for the Sloan program that we have now converted into its official reunion weekend. It's amazing to go back every year and reconnect.  
Cornell Volunteer Communities: Sloan Alumni Association Board (Treasurer)  
First CU Volunteer Experience: My first experience was during my student year as the treasurer of the Sloan Student Association. Then about 5 years ago I was asked to join the Alumni Board and have been connected ever since.  
Most Recent CU Volunteer Experience: As the chair of the Student Affairs committee of the Sloan Alumni Association, I was glad to convince my fellow board members to join me in reviving the tradition of one legendary alumni of the program. When I joined the program, my first major alumni interaction was when Bernie Kershner took the entire first year class to dinner and it was an experience that students looked forward to. We established a tradition last year, where board members coming up for the fall board meeting take 4-5 students out for dinner and it creates a lasting bond between the current students and alumni.  
Most Impactful CU Volunteer Experience: Colloquia and student mentoring. I have gone back and delivered colloquia on the health insurance industry and the follow-up student conversations and questions are always challenging. They look at things in a whole different way, which forces me to question the way we do things every day. It is a special experience when I can get one of those students to spend a summer interning with me, or for one, spending a summer in my office and two semesters remotely from campus until I finally hired him.

A'ndrea Van Schoick ’96
Agriculture & Life Sciences  
Gainesville, VA

Favorite Cornell Spot: The Stewart Avenue bridge, looking towards the suspension bridge, in the Fall. The combination of the falling water and foliage is gorgeous.  
Favorite Cornell Tradition: The informal a capella concert after Reunion’s Cornelliana night. The alumni come together sounding as polished as if they have been practicing together all year.
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Cornell Volunteer Communities: CALS Alumni Association (Co-VP for Recognition and Regional Director, Washington, DC); Class of 1996 (Co-President); Cornell Club of Washington (President); Cornell University Council (CUC) (Geographic Team Leader for Ambassador program); Sesquicentennial Advisory Board, Washington, DC; Continuous Reunion Club

First CU Volunteer Experience: Beginning in my freshman or sophomore year, I led tours and participated in information sessions for CALS as an undergraduate ambassador.

Most Recent CU Volunteer Experience: Very recently, I was privileged to meet rising freshmen from the Washington, DC area at the regional student send-off reception. What an impressive group of new Big Red family members!

Most Impactful CU Volunteer Experience: I come away hoping I have made a difference and feeling most fulfilled when I meet undergraduate and professional students. They always have good questions for me; I enjoy sharing information about career planning/strategy and opportunities in my field, and helping them navigate their Cornell experience. We have fun swapping Cornell stories and memories.

Kim Wagner ’85
Agriculture & Life Sciences
Marlboro, NY

Favorite Cornell Spot: Mann Library (the old McKay reading room)
Favorite Cornell Tradition: Freshman move-in day
Cornell Volunteer Communities: Cornell University Council (CUC); Atkinson Center Alumni Advisory Board; CALS Dean’s Advisory Committee; Major Gifts Committee; Alumni Career Link; CAAAN; Cornell Cooperative Extension Ulster County

First CU Volunteer Experience: Freshman Orientation Counselor (as a sophomore)

Most Recent CU Volunteer Experience: Conversation with an alum looking to change careers

Most Impactful CU Volunteer Experience: It’s really hard to say because each has a different kind of impact, but they are all worthwhile and I always take away something valuable from each experience.