

Dear Friends of Cowell,

The flurry of spring activities and Commencement are over. Summer classes and visitors are busy but the campus has a more relaxed pace. Life at Cowell feels sweet, and even the drought has abated a bit. It is with joy in our hearts and smiles on our lips that we write to bring you up to date on the past few months and events we look forward to in the near future.

Alumni Weekend 2015

If you attended Alumni Weekend, you experienced first-hand the celebration and joy of reconnecting with friends at UCSC. Over 260 Cowell alumni attended events during the weekend, the best turnout yet. Thanks go to the many Cowell alumni who swelled the ranks of alumni through the postcards they sent to former classmates. And a big thanks to the Alumni Office's tireless staff who welcomed 2,436 visitors (including 1,547 alumni) home to UCSC over the weekend.

On Saturday, April 24, about a hundred folks crowded into the Page Smith Library to attend a panel on "Finding Beauty in the Company of Friends." Ably organized and moderated by Bonita Banducci (Cowell '69), the panel featured Cowell alumni Holly Downing, Eric Thiermann and Richard Russell. These artists and 21 others are currently part of a show at the Eloise Pickard Smith Gallery and the Ann Dizikes Annex. The show runs until June 14 for those of you who live within striking distance of Santa Cruz.

The next morning over 300 guests basked in the sunshine on the Provost's lawn. They came for the traditional bacon-and-eggs Provost's Brunch but stayed chatting and laughing long after the croissant plate had only crumbs.

Right after the brunch came the brilliant exuberant Dizikes Concert. With alumnus Marco Martinez-Galarce at the keyboard, a handful of student and alumni groups sang songs that had been on the hit parade between September 1965 and June 1966. Cowell's a cappella group Acquire served as the backbone of the concert, and by the end of the hour the whole auditorium was on our feet dancing and singing. Even Chancellor Blumenthal was gyrating around more or less in rhythm.

Some Accomplishments

The Cowell Company of Friends continues enhance the collegial experience for our students. Friends have made many contributions -- both practical and financial -- to the intellectual and social life of the college. Here are some highlights from this year.

- Over 50 Friends responded to our request to participate in interviews with students enrolled in a class taught by the provost on Higher Education in the Democratic Society. The students loved their talks with Cowell alumni.
- Local members of the Company of Friends supported “Ears in Action,” a writing support program in which Friends listen, one on one, to students reading aloud their papers. Through this simple intervention of reading papers to a listener, students were able to improve their writing. Company of Friends member Mary Carvalho is working out the details so that we can expand this program next year, and invite participation from Friends outside the local Santa Cruz area.
- A few months ago we received a \$5,000 donation that required an equal match to fund a student-initiated course, “Brain Mind Consciousness.” Did we receive the match? Yes... 10 times over -- raising \$50,000. This generous response will allow us not only to support the Brain Mind Consciousness course but also an interdisciplinary course on the near death experience. Both courses bring together points of view from science, philosophy, and psychology.
- Through the glorious efforts of a volunteer sub-group of the Company of Friends, over \$100,000 was raised for the Endowment for the Arts at Cowell so that the patio outside the Eloise Pickard Smith Gallery and the Ann Dizikes Annex could be named The Coeleen Kiebert Patio and so that the gallery’s finances can become less precarious.
- Finally, in a moment of stunning love and generosity, Pat and Rowland Rebele gave us \$500,000 to augment the endowment of the Cowell Press, sustaining this vital student learning experience.

Opportunities

There are many ways to stay connected to Cowell and to help our work.

1. You can attend events. Our present students love to interact with alumni and other Friends of Cowell. The students are often surprised as well as delighted when an older adult shows interest in them. Starting next Fall, we will try to send you notification of our events. Know that you are welcome to all events if you find yourself in Santa Cruz.
2. If you live nearby, you can volunteer to donate help on campus. You can be a gallery-sitter or book-shelfer at the Page Smith Library. You can join Mary Carvalho’s Ears in Action group. You can help catalogue items in our Cowell Archives. To get involved with any of these projects, please email Faye Crosby at fjcrosby@ucsc.edu.
3. Even at a distance, you can help by assuming a leadership role for one activity or another. For instance, you could be the organizer of the Alumni Weekend Saturday morning lecture (seeking members of the class of 1976...). You could help us raise money. You could also join the telephone-and-skype brigade of the Ears in Action. To get started on either of these two options, email Florence Nelson at cowell72girl@hotmail.com.

4. And, near or far, you could make a financial donation. All parts of UCSC are scrambling for resources. According to one document that our provost Faye Crosby saw, UCSC has one half of the per-student endowment of UC Riverside and one-twelfth of UCSD. Don't even think of comparing us to UCLA or Cal. Donations of any amount and for any cause are needed. If every member of the Company of Friends would pledge to donate \$100 a year to Cowell, the provost would have \$30,000 additional discretionary funds – the same amount that would be yielded by an endowment of \$750,000. But, hey, if you find yourself encumbered by an extra \$750,000, donations up to and exceeding that amount would be most welcome!

Right now through June 30, 2015, you can augment your donation because we have folks who are willing to match your donations.

a. If you give to the Cowell Press, your donations will be matched up to \$1,000.

b. If you give to the endowment for the Miriam Ellis International Playhouse, your donations will be matched up to a total of \$1,500.

c. If you give to the Pioneer Endowment Fund, we can use your donations for student-workers, your donations will be matched up to a total of \$2,000.

To make your financial donation to one of these funds, please click through to our Giving Page.

We welcome your ideas, your thoughts, and wishes on how to engage with the Cowell Community.

BEST WISHES FROM COWELL