

*J. Michael Murphy  
11042 Lake Butler Blvd.  
Windermere, FL 34786*

April 1, 2008

Dear fellow Dartmouth alumnus or alumna,

My colleagues and I are the independent, pro-parity, petition slate of candidates for the Executive Committee of the Association of Alumni of Dartmouth College. A second slate, nominated by the Nominating Committee, will also be on the ballot.

**This is one of the most important elections in the 239-year history of Dartmouth.** The election begins on April 28 and ends on June 5. You will be able to vote by ballot or on-line.

And we ask for your vote.

**We are guided solely by our deep love for Dartmouth and the knowledge that the warm and intense alumni participation that has made Dartmouth great must not be lost. We remember being taught by extraordinary, accessible teachers in small classes; this is the Dartmouth that must be preserved.**

On September 8, 2007, after losses in four consecutive trustee elections and the constitution referendum, the Board of Trustees in a divided vote approved a plan to marginalize alumni, by doubling the number of unelected trustees. Under this plan, trustees elected by alumni would be outnumbered on the Board by a margin of two to one. And that's not all – Chairman Haldeman said future Boards might be diluted further. With this action, the Board has attempted to discard its 1891 Agreement with alumni which has guaranteed for 117 years that Dartmouth alumni select 50% of the Board.

After the Trustees rebuffed repeated attempts to negotiate in good faith, the current Executive Committee of the Association filed a court action to preserve the 1891 Agreement and to keep the Trustees' board-packing plan from taking effect. In the letter recently sent by that Executive Committee majority, you have seen that their action has stopped the Trustees' plan – dead in its tracks.

Had the present Executive Committee not had the courage to act, alumni parity would already be gone at Dartmouth, and we alumni relegated to a diminished role.

Parity is a critical principle. We believe that Dartmouth's rise from 19<sup>th</sup> century near-obscurity to later greatness came about from the unusual level of alumni support that developed from the historic 1891 Agreement. The cornerstone of that Agreement was the Trustees' commitment to allow alumni to nominate 50% of the non ex-officio members of the Board. Before 1891, Dartmouth's very existence was in crisis; once parity was established and President William Jewett Tucker engaged the alumni as a genuine partner in the enterprise, a century of intense alumni support followed, and Dartmouth began its steady climb to prominence.

**We, the eleven members of the pro-parity, alumni democracy slate, believe that diminishing the role that alumni play in the life of Dartmouth College will harm the College and are therefore determined to do our best to prevent this.**

The two slates agree on what is central in the contest. We say it is about continuing to honor a 117-year-old Agreement – one that ensures parity between appointed and alumni-elected trustees on the Board and has given Dartmouth its distinctive character. Our opponents say it is the lawsuit, and they promise that if they

win control of the Executive Committee, they will immediately dismiss our attorneys and abandon the court action. These are two sides of the same coin.

Our opponents have been clear. The head of their slate, John Mathias, wrote on November 16, 2007, "I do not think parity is a good idea at all..." Apparently, he and his slate believe that a self-perpetuating board, shepherded by an administration moved by its own interest, should be unchecked, answerable only to itself.

Desperate to win at any cost, our opponents, supported by significant administration resources, have claimed that the lawsuit is promoted by "outside interests" with "hidden agendas." These are the same irresponsible charges, made by some of the same people, in previous elections. It is no more true now than then. The lawsuit was the last available option, reluctantly pursued after the Board would not even acknowledge efforts to explore resolution of our differences, and after our bids for mediation were ignored. At no time was the court action instigated, encouraged, guided, advised, or influenced by non-Dartmouth individuals or groups. Even the Association's lawyers are Dartmouth graduates. The fact that our opponents assert such connections is typical; they can't seem to bring themselves to talk about the issues.

Does this mean, then, that we are in for long, drawn out litigation? We hope not.

If your vote helps elect our slate to continue the work of the current Executive Committee, the Trustees may finally realize that we are not, as the other side describes us, "a handful of misguided alumni." Rather, we will have been shown to represent, as a recent survey confirmed, a clear majority of Dartmouth's alumni body, a majority that is committed to retaining alumni rights. In such an environment, there is always the possibility that the court action could be honorably resolved.

Our slate pledges to remain open at all times to any serious efforts to resolve the issues through negotiation. Five of our eleven candidates have law degrees, and we are confident we would be equal to this option, if the opportunity is presented.

**In no election in Dartmouth's history have the issues been so clear and the consequences so important.**

Please take a minute to get to know us. You'll find information on our service to Dartmouth, our personal and professional qualifications, and a more detailed explanation of why alumni parity is so important to Dartmouth's future at: [www.DartmouthParity.com](http://www.DartmouthParity.com)

Because the Executive Committee operates by majority vote, **we ask that you vote for our full roster of independent, pro-parity petition candidates** so that we may prevail in defending your interests. Please see the enclosed SAMPLE ballot with our names highlighted.

Sincerely yours,

**J. Michael Murphy '61  
Marjory Ross '81  
Richard Roberts '83**

**Bert Boles '80  
Charles J. Urstadt '49  
Alex Mooney '93**

**Paul Mirengoff '71  
Zach Hafer '99  
Frank Gado '58**

**Marian Chambers '76  
John Steel '54**