

# A Letter from President Meng

May 26, 1964

Mrs. Anna M. Trinsey, President  
Hunter College Alumni Association  
47-49 East 65 Street  
New York 21, New York

Dear Mrs. Trinsey:

One of the more pleasant duties I must perform at the close of this academic year is to send to you and to all the members of the Alumni Association a few heartfelt words of appreciation. We at the College have watched with heightened interest the rapid growth in the number of active members of the Association. This promises well for the future. One of the secrets of successful alumni organization is certainly the sense of individual commitment manifested by actively enrolled alumni.

Your plan for the development of a million-dollar Centennial Fund by 1970 indicates a lively awareness on the part of the Association of the special needs of the College in these days of expanding requirements. During years past the generosity of the City and State of New York in the provision of facilities and basic educational needs of the College has been very great. The general public, however, remains largely unaware of ancillary College needs which are not met by tax-levy appropriations. We have seldom been the beneficiary of large private donations of funds. Private money contributed for use by the College has consisted largely of scholarships, grants-in-aid, and loan funds for needy students. The most consistent support we have had for these purposes has come from the Scholarship and Welfare Fund of the Alumni Association. For this help and for its continuation we are and will remain deeply grateful.

Yet there are many other areas in which the College needs and can use to advantage private contributions of considerable magnitude. An institution such as ours must be in the forefront of educational leadership. We seek not to make money, but to spend money wisely for the good of the community and for the development of sound education. We maintain a variety of activities, including a dynamic program of musical education and public performances financed largely by funds not provided by any public agency. We seek opportunities for our younger teaching staff members to take advantage of sabbatical leaves, which are financed only in part by the operating budget of the College. Many of them need supplementary grants if they are to avail themselves of the leaves which broaden their knowledge and heighten their value to the College. We have no sources of funds

from which supplements may be provided. The George N. Shuster Faculty Fellowship Fund provides modest research support for a few staff members each year, but as the size of the faculty increases, the amounts available for these purposes are woefully inadequate and should be greatly increased. The only source for the increase must be private funds.

Hunter College today suffers from a lack of those amenities which make possible frequent informal student-staff contacts. Building plans now being developed will provide possibilities for a betterment of this situation, but without some independent funds to provide modest maintenance costs of such activities, they cannot become a viable reality.

Our students would benefit by Alumni support of expanded placement and counselling services. The College would benefit by gift funds for visiting professorships and for experimental programs in various areas. There is great need too for additional library funds.

It would be possible to continue at great length with an inventory of desirable activities and facilities which a first-class urban institution should have but which cannot or should not be provided by taxpayers. It is these things that the proposed Centennial Fund can supply. The annual income from an invested initial capital of one million dollars can do much to keep Hunter College among the leading institutions of the nation. The Alumni Association, in proposing this goal for 1970, shows itself aware of the problems of higher education in the complex world of today. It is my hope that there may be established an ongoing corporate foundation with a knowledgeable board of directors charged with the administration of the proceeds of the projected Fund, and with supervisory responsibility for continued efforts to increase its capital assets. Educational needs and priorities change as the years speed by, but the College will always need to have available sizeable amounts of private income with which to make teaching and studying at Hunter a pleasure and a distinction. Whatever the Alumni Association does towards providing for our material needs in this connection will have a real and direct bearing upon the maintenance of educational excellence at Alma Mater.

So, on behalf of the College, I welcome the initiative of the Alumni Association in planning this considerable expansion of our resources. I pledge you and all the members of the Association our cordial support of your efforts. The administrative officials of the College and, I am sure, all College staff members will be prepared to assist your efforts in every proper way.

With cordial regards,

Sincerely yours,

John J. Meng  
PRESIDENT