

THE STATE OF THE COLLEGE



DEAN MINA REES

During the past year, the ALUMNI NEWS has carried accounts of interesting new programs and people at Hunter. In this article, I shall try to give to the Alumni a "State-of-the-College" report about Hunter; where we are, how we have come, and where we hope to go. Our alumni are our most treasured resource. The students need them—the inspiration of their example, their help in finding rewarding careers, their spiritual and financial support during and after college years. The sub-freshmen need them—to direct able youngsters toward the goal of a college education, to give them a glimpse of the rich life they may hope to have as Hunter graduates. The faculty needs them—to provide the zest of vicarious achievement, to recall the proud past of Hunter, and to stimulate constant rededication to the splendid goals of the Hunter program. The administration needs them—to provide the continuing support of a devoted and informed citizenry, identified with the College, and ready always to provide help and encouragement.

The Hunter of today is a complex structure. With a full-time student body of around 5500 (a total of nearly 15,000 when part-time, non-matriculated, and graduate students are included), a two-campus, co-educational operation, a large and varied School of General Studies, and an expanding Graduate Program, the College faces the demands of the approaching years with a dynamic viewpoint, a constantly more impressive faculty, a lively and imaginative development of student life, a well-advanced building program, and a group of student services that old alumni, like me, find a bit overwhelming. Those of us who share responsibility for the total effort are, of course, never satisfied. And we always need help. But the Hunter of 1957 is an exciting place for everyone who works there.

First, let me talk about the effect of the men students on the life of the College. The first most startling effect is the fairly frequent mention of Hunter on the sports pages of the local papers. A retired admiral, with whom I was associated during the post-war years, found this the most confusing aspect of my

return to Hunter. Wasn't this a college for women? But, more significantly, and more deeply affecting the life of the college, are the curricula of special attraction for men: pre-engineering, accounting, and, to a certain extent, the business field specialization; the greater interest in science courses; a new look to extra-curricula life, with dances on the Bronx campus relying on the local supply of men while Park Avenue dances import men from schools that clamor for invitations; differences of opinion among the faculty as to whether it's more fun to teach mixed classes or classes of girls only; worries on the part of administrators as to whether a liberal education is as meaningful to a boy as it is to a girl, and about the observed tendency of many of the freshman men to devote too much time to earning money and too little to earning a degree.

The men have fared well in graduate honors. In our very first class of men, a physics student earned honorable mention in the nationwide competition for National Science Foundation graduate fellowships and was awarded a graduate tuition scholarship at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He reported later that the competition there was hard, but he is making good. Some of this year's outstanding awards to our men graduates include a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship in History at Harvard, a Graduate Assistantship in Classics at the University of North Carolina, a Research Assistantship in Physical Anthropology at Wisconsin, a Graduate Fellowship in Psychology at Yale, a U. S. Public Health grant at Columbia. These are only a few, and they are impressive for a school so new in the production of men graduates. But they are no more impressive than the awards earned by our women graduates: the New York State Fulbright award to study theater arts at the Vienna Academy of Music; Fulbright and student exchange fellowships in Italy, France, Germany; fellowships and teaching fellowships at Cornell, Yale, Chicago, Harvard, Smith, Michigan, Iowa State, Temple University Medical School; and a quite special award of \$2000 and a year's leave, with pay, to study psychology at Fordham, to a woman graduate of Hunter who is a member of the New York Police force. This is, of course, only a partial listing. We do not have complete information about the achievements of our graduates, and this is one area in which we need Alumni help. We are trying to improve our records. On the basis of our incomplete information, we can report, in 1954-1955, awards to 105 students and 6 faculty from 45 institutions; in 1955-1956, 149 awards to 112 students and 8 faculty from 49 institutions; in 1956-1957, 163 awards to 133 students and 6 faculty from 60 institutions. The numbers are undoubtedly larger than this, but these figures may serve to show the very wide recognition that is coming to our graduates.

What about two campus operation? There are headaches. We operate with a single

faculty and a single administration, so that many faculty members teach some years at Park Avenue, and some years at the Bronx. There are many advantages in this kind of operation: the maintenance of the quality of the faculty on both campuses, the preservation of comparable standards, the reduced cost to the City. There are disadvantages, too, particularly in the increase in the administrative load carried by Department Chairmen. On the whole, this has seemed the best way to proceed. It is largely responsible for the ready acceptance of our men graduates by the best graduate schools in the land.

To "old grads" it may be of interest to record that, although English and History hold their places among the most popular majors, two "new" majors, Psychology and Sociology, compete for the largest numbers of students. Luncheon conversations with members of these departments about their research and the contents of courses make it clear that the students in these majors are being introduced to fields that are glimpsing exciting new horizons. But each of the major departments had a proud account of its work to report in the recent self-study that Hunter conducted in preparation for the re-evaluation of our program by the Middle States Association. The Alumni will be interested in the conclusions of the visitors who evaluated our program, "The outcomes of the Hunter College enterprise are rich and full. The College sends annually into the life of city, state, and nation thousands of educated men and women to man its schools, business activities, and other enterprises, and to pursue further study or the active practice of a profession or vocation, or both. . . . There is . . . no question that Hunter College is a highly successful enterprise."

As an old-timer myself, I can safely say that the new members of the faculty are impressive young people, more impressive than we were! They are well-equipped academically, and they are carefully selected for their interest in the special challenges of Hunter's student body as well as for their scholarly prowess. A recent issue of the NEWS gave an account of experiments with an orientation program for new members of the faculty. We will continue to make a special effort to help our new colleagues to become familiar with us and our special problems, and to assume quickly their roles as effective and happy members of the Hunter community.

But the older members of the faculty, too, continue to bring distinction to the College. Among these, two Hunter alumnae have recently been singled out conspicuously: E. Adelaide Hahn was an American delegate to the International Congress of Linguists at Oslo, and was the American selected from about 40 Americans in attendance to speak for the United States at the final session, when representatives of England, France, Italy, and Russia, as well as the United States, addressed the Congress. And Helaine Newstead's Profile in the New Yorker must have been read by

many Hunterites. Of course it would be impossible for me to recount all the achievements of the faculty. An annual Faculty Year Book lists nearly 20 closely printed pages of these. But it may be of special interest to note that Louise Talma is spending her second consecutive year on leave, collaborating on an opera with Thornton Wilder. And it may not be well-known that Professor Livingston Welch, the new chairman of the Department of Psychology, is not only a distinguished psychologist but an accomplished sculptor with several one-man shows to his credit. The one-man shows of the members of the Art Department are, of course, too frequent and too well-known to need mention.

The Alumni, too, are constantly earning new honors. These are reported, when we know about them, in the NEWS. And one of the most exciting functions at Hunter is the annual Ten-Year Homecoming, when members of the ten-year class assemble as guests of the College to compare photographs of their children, to renew old contacts, and to honor a few of their number for outstanding achievements. Then we hear of our doctors, lawyers, scholars, and social workers who, in ten years after college, have won great recognition, and many of whom have also begun to raise their families.

What of the student body? These are the alumni of the future.

For seven years now, the four city colleges have had a common procedure for admitting freshmen. In all that time, Hunter has never had so high an admission requirement as it has this year. And yet we will admit our largest class of recent years—about 1600 Freshmen. This is the first step toward accommodating the multitudes of young people who will be seeking admission to our colleges during the years ahead. Expansion of our faculty and of our physical facilities must accompany this expansion of our student body. The first of these is the outstanding problem of educational institutions today. As to physical expansion our plans are well-advanced. A beautiful new central building has been designed for our Bronx Campus by the distinguished (and somewhat controversial) architect, Marcel Breuer, who designed among others, the new UNESCO Building in Paris, the buildings of St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, and the new American Embassy in the Hague. Our new building will house the Bronx Library, a dire need at present, the administrative offices, some social rooms, and a large number of classrooms. Davis Hall will be re-equipped to take care of expanded science facilities. But the need for a field house and space adequate for a meeting of the whole student body will still be unsatisfied. Plans for the building of an Interfaith House, comparable to Roosevelt House, on the Bronx campus are going forward.

Among student activities, SING still holds its central place. It would be hard for graduates of my vintage who haven't seen it in twenty years to recognize the old SING. Now

it is sophisticated, polished, well-rehearsed, and a great show. I tremble to think how my class would have fared with such competition. Other student activities have evolved, too, to fit the Hunter of today. And there are new ventures afoot this year under the aegis of the Deans of Students: carefully planned Freshman orientation sessions preceding the opening of classes; a Freshman camp held for a week-end at Hudson Guild Farm to give prospective Freshman leaders a chance to meet and talk with upper-class leaders and a few members of the Faculty; an opening Convocation to formalize the year's beginning.

In this varied, lively, modern Hunter, the alumni are playing a part. The officers of the Alumni Association have been alert and diligent in their efforts to contribute increasingly to the welfare of the College. The President of the Association has many opportunities to address the student body, and to meet with groups of students. The Scholarship and Welfare Fund has provided critically needed assistance to many grateful students. The James Picker Lectures, endowed by Evelyn Picker, bring able men and women to the campus. The Louise Draddy Memorial Lectures, established to honor a beloved alumna, will enrich the spiritual life of the student body. And the many alumni gifts and services play an important role in the welfare of the College. But the alumni seek new ways to help, and the College will welcome even greater assistance. Like all colleges, Hunter is particularly proud to welcome to its student body the sons and daughters of its own graduates. But Hunter has a larger role. It must also provide, in a distinctive way, for the education of gifted young people who are first-generation college students. And Hunter's alumni, many of whom are teachers, can participate quite specially in this aspect of the College objective. I can remember very little of my elementary school experience. But one thing I remember clearly. This was the part that one of my teachers, a Hunter graduate, played in opening for me the door that led to a college education, with all the enrichment of my life that it implied. Our graduates, particularly those who are teaching, can, if they will, arouse the enthusiasm and the hope of their gifted pupils, and turn their thoughts toward Hunter even though going to college may seem a strange ambition to them. This is one way in which our graduates can aid us in serving the gifted young people of New York.

Help of a more obvious sort is also needed. There is hardly a college in the land whose alumni do not expect to make an annual gift to the college. Because the basic budget at Hunter is provided by the City and State, the

idea has grown among our students that it is undignified to think of sordid cash as an important feature of alumni loyalty. But we need cash. We need a general alumni fund like that contributed by the alumni of most colleges, to supply money that is not provided by the budget: to enable the Deans of Students to hold Freshman camps and orientation programs; to provide the Dean of Faculty with support for faculty orientation programs, recruiting meetings, and faculty research; to provide fellowship aid and minor endowment support for the graduate program; to permit experimentation with new ideas to enrich the lives of the students, and increase the effectiveness of the faculty. Our graduates should expect, after they have been out five years, to contribute at least five dollars each year to a general alumni fund to be used to enrich the quality of the whole Hunter undertaking. I know that many graduates feel with me that this should be a new alumni undertaking—an alumni fund to which many, many graduates will contribute small amounts, some of these gifts earmarked for special purposes, but many given freely to be used for the welfare of the College. When such funds are freely available, their effect on Hunter life and on the achievement of the College will be a source of profound gratification to the alumni.

I have tried to give you, in this brief space, a sketch of Hunter in 1957. The proud reputation of Hunter rests on the varied achievements of her alumni. If I may name one more way in which we need your help, it is this. Let us know what you are doing, keep informed about what we are doing, and let's continue to do many things together.

MINA REES, Dean of Faculty

IN OUR FILES

The NEWS during the current year published an illustrated series of special articles dealing with new institutions at the College. Extra copies of these issues are not available, but our files may be consulted both at the Alumni Office and in the Hunter Library.

A list of the articles follows.

Louis M. Rabinowitz School of Social Work (Paul Schreiber, Director), by Reva Fine, Coordinator; January.

The Guidance Bureau, by Dorothy M. Barrett, Assistant Director (now Director); February.

Graduate Studies in the Arts and Sciences, by Ruth G. Weintraub, Director; February. Teacher Education Program, by Herbert Schueler, Director; April.

From Our New Dean of Students, by Kathryn Hopwood, Dean; May.

The Ford Seminar in College Teaching, by Harry L. Levy, Director; June.

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