



Innovations

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRANKLIN W. OLIN COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Olin Celebrates Graduating Class in Inaugural Commencement

64 Pioneering Students Receive Bachelor's Degrees



"You have given Olin real life, breathed into it humanity and passion for excellence"

— Lawrence W. Milas

Left: Graduate Bret Richmond gives the "thumbs up" as the Commencement procession approaches the tent. Above: Graduates applaud during the ceremony.

OLIN GRADS HAVE EXCITING PLANS

ON MAY 21, 2006, Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering, the first new free-standing engineering school in the U.S. in nearly 50 years, once again made history, as 64 members of the inaugural class crossed the stage and received their diplomas in an emotion-filled ceremony under a large tent on the campus's Great Lawn.

"All of us at Olin College are so very proud of you," remarked President Richard Miller to the graduates. "Anyone who is pessimistic about America's future simply hasn't had the opportunity to meet you, the Class of 2006."

This inaugural Commencement was just a glimmer in the eye of keynote speaker Lawrence Milas, Chairman of Olin's Board and President of the F. W. Olin Foundation, as the first 30 members of the Class of 2006 arrived on campus five years ago as student "partners" to help build the college and test the curriculum. Milas, who proposed the establishment of the college to the Foundation's Board and led the institution's early development, advised graduates to continue striving for excellence.

"You have given Olin real life, breathed into it humanity and passion for excellence," said Milas. "The extraordinary members of

the Class of 2006 are Olin College's reason for being. The lives you lead, personally, professionally and philanthropically, have the potential to bring further credit to the College, to yourselves and your families, and to humankind generally."

The 33 men and 31 women who helped found a college that was still mostly an idea when they decided to enroll are now off to a number of the nation's top graduate schools, including Harvard Business School, Oxford (UK) and Stanford, as well as companies such as IBM and Raytheon. A few other entrepreneurial graduates will be working at start-up companies they founded during their time at Olin. Two students who participated in Commencement will complete their degree requirements next semester.

In remarks to the graduates, several speakers stressed how important the relationships the class members had formed would be in the future.

"There is only one thing you've acquired in your years at Olin that is possibly more valuable than the education you received—the relationships you have established with your classmates, faculty, and staff," Miller told the graduates. "As the years roll by, you will appreciate this more and more."

(continued on page 3)

IBM, MIT, Stanford, Fulbright—these are just a few of the impressive names showing up in the post-graduate plans of Olin students. The fact that Olin has never graduated a class before seems not to have hindered students from receiving job offers and acceptances at some of the best known companies, graduate schools and fellowship programs.

Among the highlights: two Olin graduates have accepted Fulbright Scholarships for study in Europe, while four students were awarded prestigious NSF fellowships (see article, page 7). Employment offers came from established corporate giants like Raytheon and IBM, as well as young companies like BlueFin Robotics, a maker of autonomous underwater vehicles.

A number of graduates are pursuing their own ventures, like Foam Innovations, which seeks to capitalize on a new foam

(continued on page 7)

CLASS OF 2010	2
PRESIDENT'S LETTER	2
SEMESTER EVENTS	4
CAMPUS BRIEFS	5
SCOPE	6
POST-GRAD PLANS	7

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Olin held its first Commencement Sunday, May 21. This event, long anticipated in the Olin community, was the culmination of a five-year experiment to see if bright students could come together with dedi-

icated faculty and excellent facilities to build a totally new kind of engineering program. I'm happy to report that, gauging by the excitement and enthusiasm on display at Commencement, the experiment was a resounding success.

The excitement was electric in the tent on that Sunday. It was clear that the 66 students preparing to walk across the stage had had a special experience, and one that they were eager to celebrate and communicate. The gray skies could not dampen the inextinguishable fervor. The ceremony was punctuated by frequent applause and cheers as students, faculty, staff, parents and guests came together to mark the incredible journey of the Class of 2006.

The speakers were, by turns, eloquent, inspiring and funny. The ceremony went almost without a hitch. One of the most "Olinesque" features was the reading of brief passages provided by each graduate as he or she crossed the stage. Some were funny. Some were poignant. A few were particularly emblematic of the Olin experience.

"They say careers are filled with uncertainty. I say: Uncertainty? I've got five years of experience," said one student.

"Thank you, board, administration, faculty, staff, students, and my family for a spectacular five years," said another.

"I'm immensely proud of us. Woo woo! Every best wish for the future! Thank you!" said yet another.

And perhaps most emblematic of all, quoting Frost: "I took the road less traveled, and that has made all the difference."

Best of luck and Godspeed, Class of 2006. Thank you for helping to build Olin College, and thanks to all the supporters, both on and off campus, who helped you do it.

Richard K. Miller
President

NEW STUDENTS

OLIN COLLEGE WELCOMES LARGEST CLASS IN HISTORY

89 Extraordinary Students Join Class of 2010

This fall 89 new students (41 women and 48 men) will join the Olin College community. Representing 29 states, the incoming freshmen bring with them a wealth of talent and experience.

This new class of students is as academically gifted as the classes of 2007, 2008 and 2009, with 64 AP Scholars, two US Presidential Scholars, 34 National Merit Finalists, one National Achievement Finalist and five National Hispanic Scholars, as well

The class of 2010 boasts 68 members of academic teams (36 captains), 44 athletes, (11 captains), 21 theater buffs, 58 musicians (vocal and instrumental), 74 involved in community service, 12 entrepreneurs, eight editors of school publications, seven dancers, 10 FIRST Robotics participants and 46 with part-time jobs, as well as several involved in Scouting, Science Olympiad, debate teams and Quiz Bowl.

The class includes many students with unique accomplishments, including a U.S. patent holder, a cancer researcher and brain tumor survivor as well as a senior class president and seven first generation college students.

Adding to the variety of perspectives, nearly 30 percent identify themselves as students of color. Additionally, Olin will welcome its first students from Egypt and Wyoming when the class of 2010 arrives on campus August 26 for orientation activities.

While academic achievement was an important factor in admission decisions, involvement in activities outside the classroom also figured prominently.

as 22 valedictorians and four salutatorians. The average weighted GPA for these incoming freshmen is over 4.3.

While academic achievement was an important factor in admission decisions, involvement in activities outside the classroom also figured prominently.



Candidates for the Class of 2010 work on a design challenge during Candidates' Weekend.



Team members show their invention, a device designed to float and bear weight.

Class of 2010 by the Numbers *

54% Men

46% Women

30% Students of Color

86% Community Service

79% Compete on Academic Teams

74% Recognized by AP Scholar's Program

67% Musicians (instrumental and vocal)

53% Hold Part-Time Jobs

51% Athletes

47% National Merit, National Achievement or National Hispanic Scholar Finalists

27% Involved in Research Projects

26% Valedictorians

24% Drama/Theater

15% Student Government Officers

14% Started a Company

12% FIRST Robotics

*Does not include deferred admissions

OLIN CELEBRATES
FIRST GRADUATION

(continued from page 1)

“Olin provided us with an opportunity—an education. Today we begin to act and give back.”

– Thomas Cecil, Class of 2006

Professor Mark Somerville noted that while technology and even occasional “smoke and mirrors” were important to the college’s development, “long-term success comes from valuing people and from celebrating and building community.”

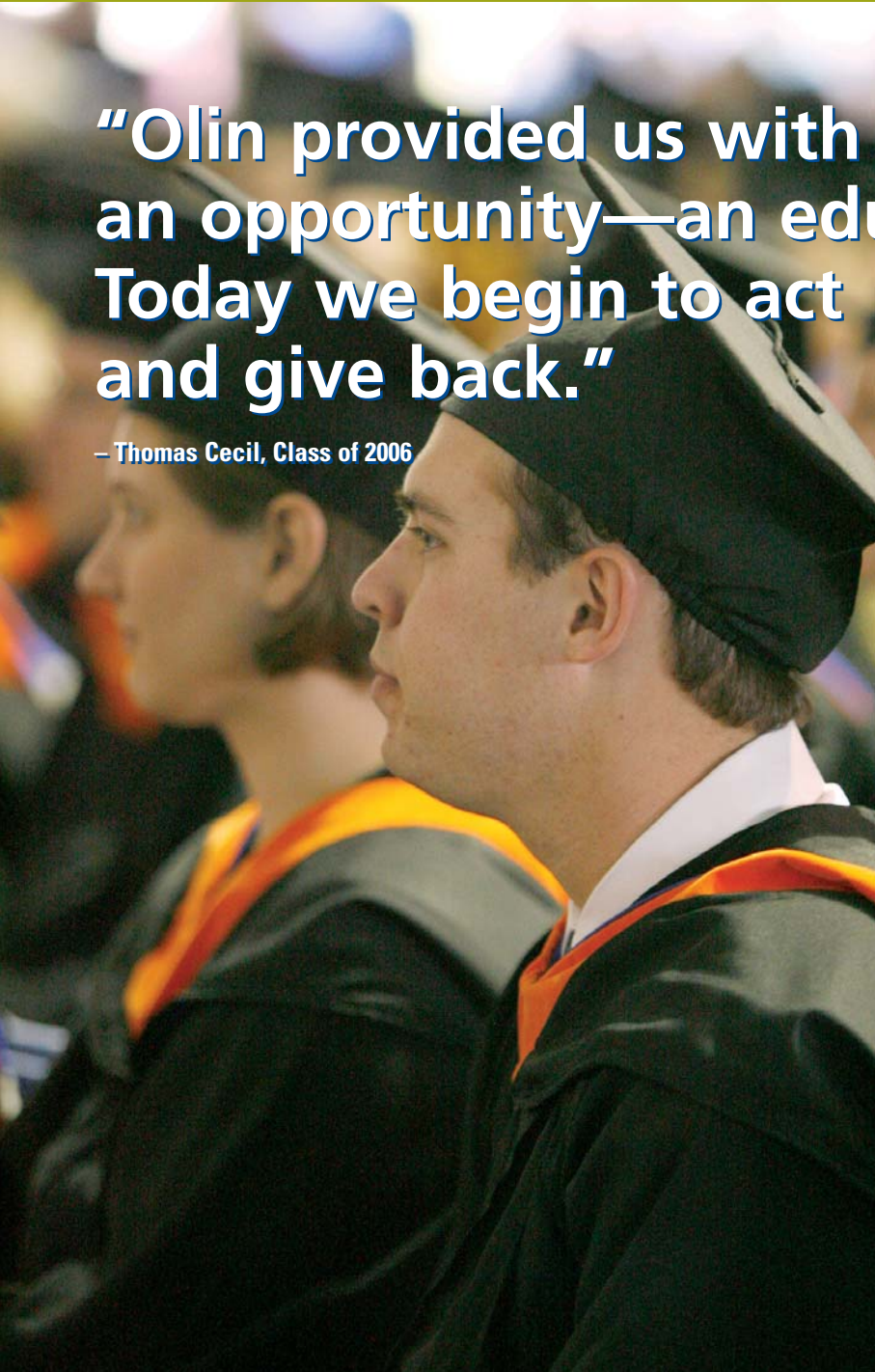
As each graduate crossed the stage to collect their diploma from Provost David V. Kerns, Jr., a 15-word passage supplied by each senior was read aloud. Most graduates took the opportunity to thank their families for supporting their decision to turn down some of the most well-known colleges to attend Olin, as well as to thank the faculty and administration for a one-of-a-kind educational experience.

Acknowledging the tremendous gift the philanthropy of the F. W. Olin Foundation bestowed on the class of 2006, student representative Thomas Cecil noted, “Olin provided us with an opportunity—an education. Today we begin to act and give back.”

Following the distribution of the diplomas, Provost Kerns concluded the ceremony with hearty congratulations and a welcome to the college’s first alumni.

Graduates, families and Olin community members gathered for a reception following the recessional, where many of the newly minted alumni reflected on their status as Olin’s pioneering class.

“My time at Olin has been nothing short of amazing,” remarked Jeff Satwicz ('06).



Above: Graduates Kevin Tostado and Mikell Taylor listen intently to speeches.

Right: Graduate Sarah Zwicker and her family celebrate at the post-Commencement reception.



Above: Provost David Kerns leads the processional as Commencement chief marshal.



Above: Graduates celebrate with some bubble blowing before the ceremonies.

SEPTEMBER
AUGUST
JULY

SEMESTER EVENTS

BUILDING SUPPORT



Class of 2006 representatives present a check for the Summer Book Program to President Miller.

DEAR FRIENDS OF OLIN

With the passing of another Olin College milestone, the inaugural Commencement, our thoughts turn to maintaining all of the wonderful relationships the college has built with students, their parents and extended families. The Class of 2006, under the leadership of CORE President Tom Cecil, provided the college with a five-year pledge to support the Summer Book Program. This program supplies a book, selected by a committee of students, faculty and staff, for all students to read during the summer. The program is capped off by the annual fall book convocation, which brings the community together to discuss issues raised in the book with an invited guest. The class gift sets a wonderful precedent for future classes to follow – both in terms of the program supported and the student participation rate, which was nearly 100 percent.

In conjunction with the first Commencement, the Development Office, with the input of the Development Working Group of the Parents' Advisory Board and the Development Student Working Group (both of which were formed in the last four months), created the C.O.M.E.T.S. (Celebrating Olin's Mentors, Teachers, Educators and Staff) Program. The program seeks to recognize those who make a positive impact on the Olin community and in the lives of students. Community members are recognized by parents and extended families for their contribution to the Olin educational experience. To date more than fifty community members have been recognized in this way. Please contact me if you would like more information on the program.

Thanks to the efforts of all Olin community members, every area of fundraising at the college has shown considerable increases in participation. Currently the alumni and parent participation are at the top of the list when benchmarking with other institutions. Faculty and staff participation currently ranks near the top of the list when compared with other institutions in the middle of a capital campaign. The Board of Trustees and Cabinet both have 100 percent participation.

As always, thank you for your continued support and feel free to contact me with any comments on programs or development opportunities.

Joanne Kossuth
Associate Vice President, Development,
Chief Information Officer
781-292-2431
joanne.kossuth@olin.edu



◀ **Olin Honor Code Speaker Dr. Sheila Widnall**
On February 14, the annual Olin Honor Code Values and Ethics Speaker Series hosted Dr. Sheila Widnall, professor of aeronautics, astronautics and engineering systems at MIT, retired secretary of the Air Force, vice president of the National Academy of Engineering, member of the Columbia accident investigation board, master pilot and prolific writer. During the talk Widnall remarked on the importance of the "do something" component of the Olin Honor Code, noting that she constantly held Air Force members to the highest set of values.



◀ **Cory Doctorow Speaks at Olin**
On February 16, self-described activist, science fiction writer, blogger, public speaker and "techie" Cory Doctorow visited Olin to discuss "How Hollywood Plans on Making the Future Subservient to the Past." During his talk, Doctorow discussed the ways in which entertainment companies have consistently "fought the future" – providing examples with modern technologies such as the phonograph, cable TV, VCRs, DVDs and streaming music.



◀ **Art Gallery Opens**
On February 23, The Olin College Art Gallery held its first show, which included work from local artists. This show ran until March 30. On April 27 through June 2, the spring exhibition took place, which was comprised of art work submitted by students from Babson College, Olin College and Wellesley College. The exhibitions attracted many local residents to the Olin campus, many of whom had not previously visited Olin.



◀ **2006 Graduation /Alumni Party**
The Office of Parent and Alumni Relations held the first alumni event February 27 to celebrate "2006 Hours 'Til Graduation." Members of the class of 2006 showcased their karaoke talents while others enjoyed the entertainment and the raffle. The event helped seniors focus on their impending graduation and take a break from their work as they contemplated "life after Olin."



◀ **Habitat for Humanity Holds Fundraiser**
On April 7, 2006, the second annual Habitat for Humanity Student/Faculty/Staff basketball game took place in the Babson College gym to raise money for the Olin chapter of Habitat for Humanity, which sponsors an annual spring break trip to North Carolina to build houses for the charity. The game was eventful as the faculty and staff came within four points of a win, despite being down 10 points at halftime. In the end the students prevailed, with a final score of 34-30. The result has the faculty/staff team hankering for a rematch in the good-natured competition, which raises money for a good cause.



◀ **Olin's First Sports Team Competes in Ultimate Frisbee Tournament**
Olin's first sports team, the Flying Franks, competed in the UPA New England Ultimate Frisbee Tournament. The Flying Franks put forth a strong first showing, finishing 2-3 in its first ever national tournament. The Flying Franks enjoyed wins over Stonehill College and the Boston College B team.

SCOPE'S FIRST YEAR CALLED BIG SUCCESS

For more information, visit: www.olin.edu/scope

Eleven companies took a chance on an untested program during the first year of SCOPE, Olin's year-long consulting program for seniors. Judging from the comments of the corporate sponsors, Olin students came through with flying colors.

"The work was top-notch. I have nothing but good things to say," said David Johnson, Robotics Systems Engineer at John Deere, where a team of Olin students developed a navigation system for agricultural vehicles. "They came in with a very open mind to tackle the problem, and that made it work well."

In its inaugural year, SCOPE attracted \$750,000 in educational grants and other support from 12 sponsoring companies for a total of 13 projects, including one sponsored by Olin itself. The projects involved everything from high tech fuel cells to new medical devices.

Larry Marturano, director of Motorola's user-centered solutions lab in Schaumburg, Ill., heard about SCOPE from Drew Harry, an Olin student he hired as an intern. Marturano, who calls Harry "probably the best intern we ever had," became intrigued with Olin and the possibility of working with more students like Harry. For Marturano, signing the SCOPE contract was "almost a no brainer."

"The quality of the students is exceptional—better than many of the master's students I work with, and even some of the Ph.D.s," said Marturano. "The students are good at being self-directed and self-motivated." The Olin SCOPE team developed an idea for a cell phone application that enables users to easily access ratings of nearby restaurants and entertainment venues.

SCOPE Director David Barrett was also pleased with the results of the program's inaugural year. "SCOPE succeeded beyond all our hopes and aspirations," said Barrett. "Companies took a huge gamble on an untested program, and our students performed phenomenally. This is a great indicator that the Olin education works." Barrett noted that the majority of the first-year sponsors want to come back for a second year.

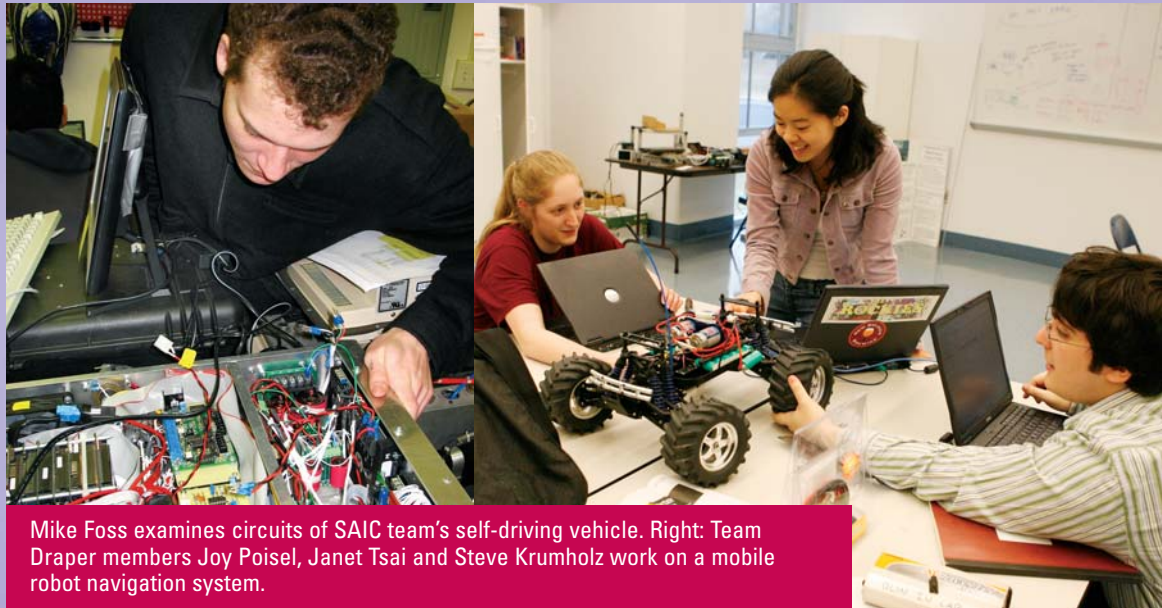
Several sponsors said the Olin students seemed well prepared for the challenges and ambiguity of a large-scale, open ended project.

"I'm very pleased with the work of the Olin team," said Bryan L. Aivazian, president of ROCONA (formerly Vision Agribotics), an organic grower on the West Coast for whom the Oliners developed a self-guiding tractor. "We set out objectives we knew would be unrealistic. This project captured the enthusiasm of students who didn't know this couldn't be done. Olin attracts the brightest and best, but also students who thrive in this kind of active learning environment."

Another pleased sponsor was William J. Poleatewich, Jr., President and COO of Dawn Solar, a New Hampshire company that charged the Olin team with improving its signature solar heating systems

"We're very happy with the team and its work. Their challenge was to come up with improvements to our product that didn't increase costs by more than 15 percent. They met the challenge, suggesting three specific improvements we are considering implementing."

Barrett said the program will expand to fifteen projects next year. He believes the success of the first year will attract more high-profile companies to the program.



Mike Foss examines circuits of SAIC team's self-driving vehicle. Right: Team Draper members Joy Poisel, Janet Tsai and Steve Krumholz work on a mobile robot navigation system.



Left: Nortel Team members (from left) James Krejcarek, Jerzy Wieczorek, Luis Cabezas and Steve Shannon discuss their project at a team meeting.



Above: Students meet with SCOPE Director David Barrett (seated, front).



Below: ROCONA (formerly Vision Agribotics) team members (standing, from left) Adam Horton, Kate Blazek, Julie Connelly, Chris Cicchitelli, and (kneeling) Katie Rivard and Sarah Oliver with their autonomous tractor.



Left: Team John Deere—Tom Cecil, Ann Marie Rynning, Chris Murphy and Dan Lindquist—at the SCOPE Expo presentation.

POST-GRAD PLANS

(continued from page 1)

manufacturing technology. The most popular graduate school destinations are MIT and Stanford, each of which will have three students from Olin next fall (see sample placements, below). Four students will be completing the M.S. in Technological Entrepreneurship at Babson, a program they began while at Olin.

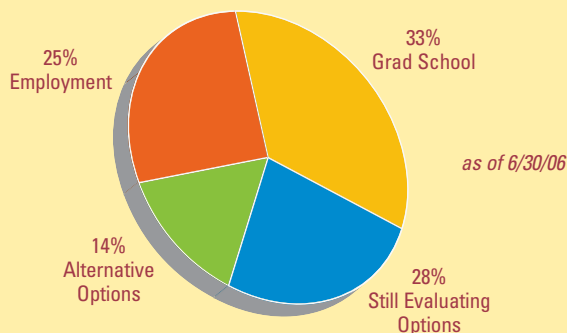
“We’re extremely pleased at the exciting post-graduate plans of our first class of students,” said Olin President Richard Miller. “The prestigious offers our graduates are receiving exceed our expectations—and our expectations were high.”

The Office of Post Graduate Planning (PGP) has been periodically updating its files since Commencement with new information about Olin graduates’ plans. PGP plans to undertake a comprehensive survey and report on the Class of 2006 in the fall.

As *Innovations* went to press in late June, PGP reported that 33 percent of the class was bound for graduate school, 25 percent were heading to full-time employment in engineering or related fields, and 14 percent were pursuing a range of other options from starting their own companies, to service in the Peace Corps, to an acting career, to extended internships with the United States Antarctic Program. The remaining 28 percent are still evaluating offers and options (see pie chart).



NSF Fellowship recipients and honorable mentions (from left): Susan Fredholm, Polina Segalova, Chris Murphy, Que Anh Nguyen, Sean Munson, Mike Curtis and Kate Blazek.



Sample Post-Grad Plans:

Graduate School

- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (3)
Joint Program, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute Media Lab Technology and Policy Program
- Stanford University (3)
Mechanical Engineering Department
- Oxford University (UK)
Atomic and Laser Physics Department
- Harvard Business School (2)

Employment

- Boston Scientific
R&D Endoscopy Unit
- IBM Almaden Lab
Materials Science Research
- iRobot
Mechanical Engineering
- Raytheon Corporation
Systems Architecture Design and Integration Directorate

Entrepreneurship

- Foam Innovations
President and Co-Founder
- Salubriion, LLC.
President and Founder

Graduates Receive Prestigious Scholarships

Rising handily over the potential obstacle presented by their status as Olin’s first graduates, members of the Class of 2006 have received scholarships and fellowships from some of the most prestigious programs in the country.

Olin College graduates Jay Gantz and Joy Poisel will travel abroad for the 2006-2007 academic year through the Fulbright program. Gantz will spend next year in Switzerland studying bioengineering and bone regeneration while Poisel heads to Denmark to study engineering and user-oriented design. A third Olin student, Jerzy Wiczorek, was named an alternate for the Fulbright.

Four Olin graduates are recipients of National Science Foundation (NSF) graduate research fellowships. Three additional Olin students received honorable mentions from the program. The prestigious fellowship program provides three years of guaranteed external funding for students who are pursuing graduate study in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Fewer than 1,000 NSF Fellowships are awarded each year.

The fellowship recipients are: Kate Blazek, Susan Fredholm, Que Anh Nguyen and Polina Segalova. Receiving honorable mentions were Michael Curtis, Sean Munson and Christopher Murphy.

Fredholm will join MIT’s Technology and Policy Program this fall. Segalova and Blazek plan on studying at Stanford’s Mechanical Engineering Department, while Nguyen intends to pursue a Ph.D. in materials science from UC Berkeley.

One Olin student was a finalist in the Rhodes Scholarship program, and one received an offer of a Draper Fellowship from Draper Laboratory in Cambridge, Mass.

“It seems not to have mattered to these programs that Olin is a new, untested institution,” said Leslie Larocca, director of post graduate planning, who worked with a faculty committee to shepherd students through the complex application process for the scholarships. “I think the quality of our students shone through and allayed any concerns they may have had about the fact that this is our first graduating class.”

CAMPUS VOICE



Will Clayton ('06) and Susan Fredholm, ('06) with the Alumni and Parent Relations director Kristina Raposa during Commencement Weekend.

Alumni Reps Named

The Olin Bubble has burst. My classmates and I have completed our Olin educations and are now spreading out all over the world. Personally, I’ll be nearby as a graduate student at MIT, but most of my classmates are headed farther away. Although we’re no longer all living together in East Hall, we have no intentions of losing contact with each other. The friendships we’ve developed are too strong to let that happen.

Will Clayton ('06) and I were elected the Class of 2006 alumni representatives and have already begun working with Kristina Raposa in the Office of Alumni Relations to develop alumni communications. We’re currently creating an online alumni directory, and new electronic mailing lists. We’re responsible for planning our formal five year reunion, but in the meantime we intend to facilitate several smaller get-togethers around the country. As the first graduates of Olin College, we have a lot of work to do determining what events and services will best serve our alumni. Whether it be through networking, finances, or other means, we’re also interested in determining how we can best continue to serve Olin College. We’re always open to suggestions, so if you have any, please let us know!

– Susan Fredholm, Class of 2006

EXPANDING HORIZONS



Expo Features Best of Olin

Olin College celebrated another great year of project-based learning May 15-17 during the Olin Exposition. On May 15 presentation and poster sessions took place throughout the day. The year-long Senior Consulting Program for Engineering (SCOPE) culminated in the first-ever SCOPE Day on Tuesday, May 16, as part of Expo. This day featured poster sessions, presentations and an orientation meeting for juniors entering the program next year. During the evening the Student Activities Committee (SAC) held ExpOresso, featuring the talents of the Olin student body. Expo finished up on Wednesday, May 17, with musical performances in the Academic Center, informal presentations around the Oval and Campus Center, including the Mini Baja and Human Powered Vehicle teams, as well as Advising Family Lunches. Informational meetings also took place for Olin Self Study, Independent Study, and Research. The day ended with the SAC Carnival. Expo provides an opportunity for Olin students to highlight the projects and activities they are most proud of from the preceding semester.



Joseph Roskowski ('08) and Avery Anderson ('08) play a duet during ExpOresso.

BIG CONVERSATIONS



Students and staff discuss human rights as part of Big Conversations.

Olin Students for Awesome, SERV and the Big Conversations Committee sponsored the spring 2006 Big Conversations April 5 focusing on human rights. The keynote speaker was Mardi Seng, a survivor of the genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge regime. Seng immigrated to the U.S. in 1980 with his grandmother and his siblings after his parents were killed by the Khmer Rouge. He is currently an auditor and compliance officer for First Marblehead, a Boston educational loan company. He is also the founder and president of Plant Hope In Cambodia, a nonprofit that assists locals with farming, clean water access, emergency relief and education in Cambodia.

Mr. Seng's morning remarks were followed by a panel of human rights activists and human rights abuse survivors. The panel discussed the Big Conversations theme of "What's Important," and included Ibrahima Bah from Guinea, journalist Angela Nicoara, producer of a documentary on Rwanda, and Elizabeth Goldberg, assistant professor of English and Postcolonial Literatures at Babson.

After the morning session and lunch, the Olin community partook in a series of discussions and projects focusing on human rights. Discussions took place on many topics, including, "Human Rights and the War on Terror" and "Achieving Justice Afterwards." Projects included making creative posters about human rights and knitting and crocheting for orphans and refugees.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

August 6, 2006
Women's Open House

August 26, 2006
Arrival Day for Class of 2010

August 31, 2006
First day of classes

October 5, 2006
Career Initiatives Day

October 13-15, 2006
Family Weekend

October 29, 2006
Admission Open House

November 20-24, 2006
Thanksgiving recess

Innovations

©2006 Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering

Office of Communication:
Joseph Hunter
781-292-2261

e-mail: communication@olin.edu

Photography:
Michael Maloney

Design:
Vergara Design

Intern:
Jessica Donovan

VISIT US ONLINE @ WWW.OLIN.EDU

