

Good Morning!

My name is Marybeth Famulare and I am the Director of Alumnae/i Relations.

It is always my pleasure to coordinate the planning for this weekend and welcome you back to campus. As we started so many months ago, I found myself getting excited about this being my 5<sup>th</sup> Wilson Reunion. I could go as far as saying that I was even boastful of finally making it full cycle through all the class years. However, as most of you in this room knew long before I, my logic and math were completely incorrect. I had made a mistake.

Mary Cramer – did you hear me.... I was wrong.

The truth is, that most of you in this room, the classes ending in 1 and 6, are new to me. I welcome you. I do hope you will stop and introduce yourself. Please know that I am very accessible to you by phone, email, a visit to campus or even my coming to you. I welcome your inquiries and feedback. I need your participation and support.

I share a special affection with the 50<sup>th</sup> class, as I myself celebrate a milestone connected to the year, 1966.

This year I was fortunate to gain an Alumnae/i Relations Associate position so I hope you will help me thank Jessika Dockery, class of 2015, for all her assistance to you and me throughout this year. CLAP CLAP!

We have used this year to experiment with our outreach including a series of coffee hours, lunch or dinner programs and happy hours. Our main goal is to re-connect and continually ask, what can we do to better serve you? To serve your class?

We strive for increased communication in a multitude of ways to attempt to reach a diversity of alumnae/i spanning decades. I utilize the monthly e-news and Facebook (search for me as AR Wilson .... short for alumnae/i relations) to share needs for campus connections as well as to share a variety of updates. I am also known to post seasonal or random campus pictures to bring parts of my everyday Wilson experience to you wherever life finds you. Those that follow me know that I love those blue chairs around campus. On a warm day, they are filled with students. When empty, I like to imagine our alumnae/i who have gone before us, resting and finding peace watching our campus.

As always, I continue to place emphasis on connecting with current students and building campus awareness of the variety of activities, programs and supported traditions offered between the alumnae/i relations office and those of the alumnae association. Many of these activities are a direct connection to you, our alumnae/i, providing suggestions, creativity, time and treasure.

Alumnae/i volunteers are well over 400 when you consider class officers, the Aunt Sarah Program, career networking and this group of volunteers seated up next to me. The alumnae/i on your board of directors give of their time and talent all year. Please help me thank them for their service. CLAP CLAP CLAP

This weekend is also a great time for you to meet some of our current students who assist our efforts in tending to details of the schedule and meeting your needs. Hop on a golf cart and share a story or two.

- I have the privilege in the fall of greeting every car that comes onto campus for orientation welcoming our incoming students. Even though they have many other things on their minds, I want them (and their families) to know that they are a part of a strong network that begins when they first step foot on campus and does not end until the sands of life are run. Plus Vice President Mary Beth Williams and I like to have a little fun with our names... I think we are funny enough that they do remember us.
- We continue to co-host a variety of campus events for women's history month, career development, late night food for finals, as well as, participate in activities for senior research day and commencement weekend. Just to name a few.
- If you have yet to see or experience the Blue & Silver line at Commencement, I urge you to consider how meaningful it is to have alumnae spanning years of the 1940's and through the 2000's honoring and welcoming the newest graduates. I would be delighted to have more of you participate.

Some of you have heard me tell the story of my very first day of work at Wilson College. I had been here about two hours when they came to tell me I had visitors. I wondered how this could be true, I did not know anyone and quite frankly, at that point, I knew very little about Wilson or the AAWC. My visitors identified themselves as Nancy Besch, Joan Edwards and Carol Tschop. We chatted for a lengthy time and after they left, I made a joke about them being the "scouts". Little did I know just how true that assessment was. A few days later I attempted to introduce myself to Anne Lehman. In only the way Anne can speak, she replied, "Oh honey, I know who you are and they said that you are ok".

For my first two years I spent a great deal of time with my first Wilson friends... who I happen to call "My rebel archive ladies" and Dearest Wilson Mentors.

I share this memory with you because this year at bacculaureate and commencement, as I listened to the class of 2016 president Katelyn Wingerd speak....

Tears came to my eyes as I realized that at those moments, Katelyn was wearing the Wilson ring of Carol Tschop.

Yes, there is no place like Wilson.... I believe that to be true.

Yet, for me, and what I hear over and over from all of you, it is the people... the connections to classmates, sister classes, bigs and littles, the faculty and staff, the Aunt Sarah's and those that have forged the way before us...

This reunion theme of "Many Paths, One Spirit" is fitting in so many ways. Our spirits, our flames of passion for Wilson College. As Phoenix we rise ... and we will continue to do so. The flame within us... is greater than any test of fire around us.

I repeat each year, I am only as successful as you all allow me to be.

Please keep your contact information updated so I may connect with you. Please open and read the electronic monthly newsletter, the Wilson Magazine or other mailings you receive. Look for updates online. Call or email me. Please come out to our activities and programs to reconnect with each other, with current students and the greater Wilson community. Give as you are able.

Please enjoy this time of friendship and reminiscing.

Thank you.

Marybeth "Mb" Famulare