

Reunion 2017  
AR Director remarks

Good Morning and may I add my personal greetings to all of you as we celebrate Reunion 2017. Thank you to the many class officers, reunion committee members, the Alumnae Association Board and greater campus community... who all put forth creativity, effort and outreach to make this weekend a priority. It certainly reminds me of the saying, "***it takes a village***" ... here on campus, we use the phrase, "***One Team, One Goal***" or our Reunion theme, "***Many Paths, One Spirit***".

The common thread, passion for Wilson College.

My questions to each of you

- What do you love about Wilson?
- How would you like to be involved?
- How can I help make that happen for you?
- What barriers stand between us?

Five years ago I stood before you having only been at Wilson for just over two months. I said.... Hi, my name is Marybeth Famulare and I am delighted to be here as your new Alumnae/i Relations Director. I told you that my experiences, personal characteristics and fields of study focused on relationships and process. That I am a believer in story telling... I shared my philosophy about reunion and why I believe we are all here ... to embrace friends, to reminisce, to find similar connections with your extended Wilson family... to share and bear witness to our collective truth... to honor a place that has transformed your lives.

I had no way of knowing what would transpire over these past five years. At that time I used the words "YOUR extended Wilson Family", "a place that transformed YOUR lives".

I stand before you today to correct my language and say, OUR Extended Wilson Family.... To honor a place that has transformed OUR lives.

I have the privilege of getting to know you, listening to your stories, reconnecting you back to campus or assisting in connecting you to each

other. My priorities continue to focus on alumnae/i engagement, collaboration to expand Wilson connections, support for the student experience, to invite and appreciate you as volunteers and donors of your time, talents and treasure. I strive to do my best ... I admit that there may be days my best just is not good enough.

I have the privilege of spending significant time with our current students. I have the pleasure of being the middle person to connect students with you, our alumnae/i, for networking, career connections, the Aunt Sarah and Ring it Forward Program, the blue & silver line, food for finals and so many other activities.

There is no greater disheartening moment for me as when I read an obituary of a Wilson graduate, to learn of her or his life endeavors, only to realize I never had the opportunity to meet or know that individual. My job entails reaching out and getting to know you, reaching out to share information and build relationship, reaching out to build that bridge between the College and the Alumnae Association. I repeat the same statement every year, "I am only as successful as you allow me to be". I need the open communication, the honest dialogue and feedback about barriers, the openness to search and find solutions or compromise.

I work with the 50<sup>th</sup> class on their commemorative yearbook, I spend countless hours emailing or on the phone and reading the profiles. I want you all to look around at the people next to you... the people in a different row or section of this room... what I am reminded day in and day out, we all are surrounded by extraordinary people. Our lives encompass a multitude of life journeys and adventures. No two people are an exact replica. I was in awe at the author's devotion to a life of letters yesterday. This afternoon we will gather to learn from a new exhibit at the Hankey Center, we will honor award recipients, as we have done for decades previously.

Extraordinary people with the common thread, passion for Wilson College.

Our student workers really have no idea of the lives we have all lived, as we will have to wait and see how their lives unfold. I look forward to the years when these students return to celebrate their reunions and share their stories.

Many Paths, One Spirit

It is not about how we got here,

... it IS about what we learned, who we met and why we return.

The common thread, passion for Wilson College.