Letter from the Editors

Hello ‘11s,

We’re back! We’ve been too busy at all of your weddings and engagement parties to put anything cohesive together for awhile. And by your weddings we really just mean our stalking of your whitty Instagram hashtags with a glass of wine. Minor details.

As always, your classmates are up to some pretty incredible things! In this issue you'll hear about world travels, art (!) and the most mediocre of superpowers. And for the rest of you out there, please send in your stories, from the mundane to the life-changing! Let us (and everyone else!) know what you're up to - we’re nothing but ears.

As always, we are looking forward to hearing from you!

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Class of 2011 Newsletter Editors
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Hanover Update: Photo Edition

Occom Pond on a nice fall day in late September.

A timber framing project gets underway, with Athena Aicher and Chelsea Liddell representing 2011 on the crew.

A drone records footage of Dartmouth’s Homecoming festivities on October 17, 2014. For more, check out the video on YouTube: http://youtu.be/alMZEKqehjA
I decided it was time to quit my job when my co-workers officially gave me the nickname "Origami".

One glance at my desk and it was apparent why this call sign was appropriate. Lining the three walls of my cube was the greatest oeuvre/clusterfuck of office supply art you've ever seen- invoices and IOs folded into ninja stars, doodles of characters spotted on my commute, my HR orientation packet covered with hi-lighter patterns, monochromatic white-out paintings, receipts from lunch pleated into elaborate fans, a mosaic of artist cards from galleries in the neighborhood, and a series of tattooed chopsticks sat in my pen cup with an array of sharpies.

I swear I did my job.

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As some of you might know, I was an art history major at Dartmouth, so I tried my hand at the museum world after I graduated. And didn't like it. Shit.

The work you do while you procrastinate is probably the work you should be doing for the rest of your life.

So I did the either the stupidest or the smartest thing I've ever done in my life, and I quit. I took a refreshing roadtrip around Maine and New Hampshire this summer, and now I'm back at it in the city, in the studio. This is scary as hell and I'm not 100% sure what I'm doing, but I'm finally experiencing what it's like to be happy for days on end and to be so excited about my work that I forget to eat. It's strange to go back to square one, after three years of commitment to another career, but I have never been so confident in a life decision.

"The work you do while you procrastinate is probably the work you should be doing for the rest of your life."

www.jeanmasonPRINT.com

25% of the Class of 2011 has signed up to be alumni interviewers, but we’re still losing to the Class of 2012 (29%) in the Young Alumni of Dartmouth contest! Change that at http://www.dartmouth.edu/~interviewers/.
I entered Dartmouth in the fall of 2007 with little sense of what would bring me joy and fulfillment, but wandering into Andrew Garrod’s ED 20 sophomore fall changed that in a heartbeat. I was soon going to take an underprivileged high school by storm and inspire legions of students. I quickly signed up for the Teacher Education Program in Secondary Social Studies and thought I had my future all figured out.

Signing up to teach on an atoll in the Marshall Islands junior winter with Prof. Garrod was a no-brainer for an off-term to travel and get real teaching exposure. I taught English writing to (mostly) delightful 8th-graders for a brief 10 weeks, and I returned to Dartmouth with my worldview expanded, a ukulele in tow, and my teaching aspirations still intact.

After graduating, I returned to Hanover for a fifth-fall to student-teach at Lebanon High School and struggled teaching two classes of 11th-grade U.S. Government. I did a poor job planning interesting lessons and getting students to think critically. I got cursed off a few times; I was stressed, exhausted, and not sleeping enough. I was disheartened and having a hard time imagining a lifetime of that work (especially with more than double the course load). Observing other student-teachers’ whom I was assigned to co-teach with. To make a not-so-long story short, a few post-class conversations, a bunch of texts, a dinner, and a late-night motorbike ride later, I went in for a kiss on the cheek while karaoke-singing Bruce Springsteen’s “Dancing in the Dark.” After a couple more coffee dates, I had bumbled into my first relationship.

In the classroom, things were going just as well. I was in some kind of teacher heaven where I could instruct students to turn to their partners to discuss something, say “Go!” and my ears would actually be met with dozens of focused voices. Classes were flying by rather than dragging on, and I never could have guessed how much fun conversation and pronunciation practice could be. This was my first experience with full classrooms of energized, motivated, and responsive students, and it was magical.

After a few weeks, my seniors touchingly invited me two hours by motorbike to one of their houses in the countryside for a big feast. I had found a home.

After a year of teaching here, I still enjoy being in the classroom. I asked the English Department whether they could hire me for this year, and they offered me a temporary spot on the faculty (doesn’t hurt to be with the deputy-head of the department). I went home for the summer, and when I returned to Vietnam I took a trip to the beautiful northern mountains, covered in terraced rice fields, where I proposed to my girlfriend (she said yes). There’s no wedding planned yet, but we’ve bought a plot of land (5 meters wide!) near the university for a future house. Thus, for the foreseeable future, I’ll be teaching English here and putting down roots. I like the small delta city where I’m living, the job feels like an ideal fit for my personality, and hopefully I can provide a needed service and do a bit of good.

If you’re struggling somewhere or you feel like what you’re doing does not mesh well with your personality, make a change! The world is huge, and you might not be suited to what your current job has to offer you. It is easy to find work around the world as an English teacher, so if you have an inkling that you might enjoy living somewhere else (teaching or whatever else), do it. Apply for a Fulbright. Join the Peace Corps. Sign up for WorldTeach or Volunteers in Asia. There are plenty of non-profits that take care of all the logistics, so all you have to do is apply and show up. If you want a higher salary, look for private schools or independent English centers in major cities.

Even if you don’t end up settling in for the long haul, maybe a year or two apart from the States could give you much needed space and perspective.

I have been fortunate to find myself in places that have nourished my soul, but it took a few attempts to find a job that was a great fit for me, and I’ll keep doing it for as long as it feels right. I am not following through with my initial career dreams, but I think I’m happier for it and wiser than I was when those aspirations first formed during sophomore year. The world needs people doing what they love, and, just as importantly, what they are well suited for. If you haven’t found that yet, don’t worry. Explore, and see where whims may take you.
Two summers ago, I co-produced an independent feature film that I also wrote, titled, "I'm Obsessed With You (but you've got to leave me alone)." I set the story largely at Dartmouth, and based it on my experiences as a member of the wild and crazy improv group Casual Thursday.... (In retrospect I think subconsciously part of my intention in setting out to make this movie, was to get back home to the hills of Hanover...and the booths of Lou's...) Set on a rural ivy league college campus, New York City, and the beaches of Long Island, the characters of 'I'm Obsessed With You' (four collegiate comedians and one magnetic movie star), grapple with addiction, anxiety disorders, love, and fleeting fame. The project began as stage play I wrote for my thesis with the incomparable Donald Pease. The two act ensemble comedy enjoyed a sold out run at the crumbling Gene Frankel Theater February 2012 - my first February in four years that wasn't marked by idyllic late afternoon sledding sessions on the golf course...instead it was spent doubting myself in an unheated basement in the east village.

After the success of the play, we decided to try and make it a movie, so more people than we were able to crowd into the dilapidated black box on Bond street, could see it. I was lucky to be allowed to act in the film adaptation, alongside an exceptional cast: Manish Dayal (the star of the Steven Spielberg and Oprah Winfrey's summer foodie blockbuster "The 100 Foot Journey"), Thomas McDonell (an actor, musician, writer, visual artist and all around renaissance man currently starring on CW's "The 100"), Rachel Brosnahan (of "House of Cards" fame), and Jason Ralph (a young theater star likened to James Dean by the NY Times' Ben Brantley).

The creative team behind I'm Obsessed With You is as tribal and diverse a group as the characters in the movie itself: Jon Goracy, former actor turned promising first time director and my producing partner, acclaimed casting director Avy Kaufman and her associate Leeba Zakharov (the team behind LINCOLN, Life of Pi and Prometheus), young Polish cinematographer Bartosz Nalazek (apprentice to Oscar Winner Janus Kaminski), and Dartmouth born band, Filligar, who bring the story to life with their signature indie-rock-folk sound.

Not quite romantic comedy, not quite coming of age drama, 'I'm Obsessed With You' is a movie for anyone whose ever fallen in love with their friends, for those of us who've pursued an unconventional life; those of us who recognize that our individual creations are simply the sum of the people who fascinate us.

'I'm Obsessed With You' premiered at The Sonoma International Film Festival this past April to enthusiastic and appreciative audiences, Jon and I attended the Cannes Film Festival to work on getting a sales deal for the film. (While there, I attended the premiere of the supernatural French drama 'Bird People,' I acted in, which was a memorable, surreal experience in and of itself. The film opened at IFC. Go see it!) So one tired night in a crowded hotel lobby, after a day of wandering the Marche Du Film aimlessly, we got to talking to John Sloss, entertainment lawyer, sales agent, distributor, producer (basically an indie film superhero) who recommended we partner with his company Film Buff to distribute our film digitally – it's a new age, and this is the new way. We'll see.

'I'm Obsessed With You' is available on iTunes, Amazon and VOD everywhere right now! So invite your friends over, dust off the old flirt trunk, and be transported back to a simpler? more thrilling, maybe? time - college. And not just any college... our dear old Dartmouth.
Dylan’s Vintage Minute
by Dylan Leavitt ’11

Deep breath, lock in your eyes with camera, smile, and go, I thought to myself. Standing amongst vintage and antique dealers setting up their wares at Randolph Street Market in Chicago’s West Loop, anonymous glances occasionally darting over to me and my camera setup, I began to describe the adorable wicker cross-body bag I’d uncovered, chatting to the camera like it was one of my girlfriends out shopping with me. This was fun.

I’m in the midst of launching my pilot YouTube series for WGBH-TV & ANTIQUES ROADSHOW called “Dylan’s Vintage Minute,” a show I’m producing and starting in where I illuminate my favorite affordable vintage trends, give a sprinkling of history, and ask my viewers what they think. I have a combination of episode styles: some are in-studio (Check out my cool ice bucket! Why are mason jars EVERYWHERE), while others, like the Randolph Street Market one, are shot in the field. I’m so thrilled to be making this show, as I have been fascinated by the topic of vintage items and nostalgia for years. But as a digital field producer at a company whose YouTube efforts are nascent, I’m jumping into unmapped territory creating this series. I’m constantly learning more about the massive community of YouTube-land and all its endearing, wacky, jump-cut attention deficits. My content is familiar to me, while my format is something new and exciting.

Whether I’m talking about a vintage Polaroid camera or the heritage of a bolo tie in Albuquerque, my show is about making vintage style accessible and engaging with a dash of irreverence, all in a watchable minute-long clip. I’m excited to keep writing scripts and brainstorming my favorite trends for more episodes. Feel free to check out my channel to watch the first few episodes!

SURVEY SAYS

Check out where fellow ’11s would move tomorrow, if they could!

MEDIOCRE SUPERPOWERS

We asked and you answered! Here are some mediocre superpowers that your classmates would opt to have.

“Ctrl+F function on my eyes.”

“The ability to magically arrive on the subway platform just as the train pulls in (every time).”

“The power to make myself forget the entire last season of True Blood.”

“Able to taste foods at the supermarket without having to buy them.”

“Making all the traffic lights in my way green.”

“Never make any grammatical errors.”

“Being asleep on the inside while appearing awake on the outside.”

“Ability to draw perfect circles.”

“Not feel intimidated by the accomplishments of others in the Dartmouth Alumni Magazine.”

“Making flowers appear instantly. Simple but wonderful.”

“Ability to uncook things just a little bit.”

“Facebook Resistance.”

“Ability to speak with my cats! They always look so annoyed, if only I could figure out their problem...”
SPOTLIGHT ON: OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS
Four ‘11s who celebrated a birthday in the last month weigh in with their thoughts!

VERGIN APRAHAMIAN ’11
In no more than 10 words, tell us what you’re up to these days.
Defending Massachusetts working at the Attorney General’s Office. And biking.
What is your favorite Homecoming memory?
Seeing all the older alums and feeling a part of something bigger.
What is the best tip you’ve learned since graduating?
Learning how to ride a bike at age 24 is a great idea.
What are you most looking forward to this fall?
That my favorite color orange is finally in fashion again.
Write a haiku about fall in Hanover.
There’s no better place
For leaf peeping and facetime
Than Collis in Fall!

ALEX REEDER ’11
In no more than 10 words, tell us what you’re up to these days.
Working at Alarm.com in Virginia. Getting married in October at Dartmouth.
What is your favorite Homecoming memory?
Running around the bonfire was a once-in-a-lifetime experience.
What is the best tip you’ve learned since graduating?
Always keep learning.
What are you most looking forward to this fall?
Getting married to Casey O’Connor ’10 on Occom Pond.
Write a haiku about fall in Hanover.
Crisp air from the north
burnt orange, red, and yellow.
The palette of fall.

JOYCE NJORGE ’11
In no more than 10 words, tell us what you’re up to these days.
Started my third year of medical school at Case Western.
What is your favorite Homecoming memory?
Beating Columbia football freshman year
What is the best tip you’ve learned since graduating?
If you’re going to do something, do it right... and don’t tinder in a small city, it gets real awkward real quick.
What are you most looking forward to this fall?
Surviving my Ob/Gyn rotation... sooo many pregnant women.
Write a haiku about fall in Hanover.
Leaves are changing colors,
The smell of crisp, fresh, fall air.
Aw f** is that snow??

CRAIG MCCONNELL ’11
In no more than 10 words, tell us what you’re up to these days.
I live in Salem, NH and working in automotive engineering.
What is your favorite Homecoming memory?
Running around the bonfire.
What is the best tip you’ve learned since graduating?
Living in a small town can be just as fun as the big city.
What are you most looking forward to this fall?
A trip to Lake George with classmates.
Write a haiku about fall in Hanover.
The leaves are turning,
The Patriots are losing,
It’s time for boozing.
Life After College

Officer Berg

by Mike Lewis ’11

Mike joined the professional squash tour (PSA) in June 2014 and posts regularly on his blog: www.couchsurfingthetour.com

The last time I saw Isaiah Berg was as my classmate three years ago on a hill outside Hanover, New Hampshire, struggling to keep up to his bike on a ride just a few days before we graduated college. When a message from Isaiah flicked up on my phone the other week, "hey, are you still in Sydney?", I knew I was in for a treat. Isaiah hails from a farm in Starkweather, North Dakota, population 100. If you want a good time in Starkweather, you drive 30 miles to the nearest city lights (or nearest traffic lights, for that matter) of Devils Lake, population 7,141. The Berg family farm is big on barley. If you've ever had a Budweiser, chances are some of those hops came from Starkweather, picked by a Berg. Growing up, Isaiah's family hosted exchange students from all over the world. We laughed to think what the teenage student from Sao Paolo, Brazil, must have thought when he pulled up to a North Dakota farm in the dead of winter, -20 degrees.

We hadn't spoke much since graduation, but that would have been tricky; soon after our ride, Isaiah stayed on his bike and along with his two brothers, began pedaling south from Anchorage, Alaska. Down the western side of Canada, all of US Highway 1 from the Pacific Northwest and California, through the baja peninsula of Mexico and the rest of coastal Central America, and alongside the west coast of South America and the mountains of Patagonia, ending twelve months and 16,000 miles later in Ushuaia, Argentina, the southernmost point of the continent.

After that, the real adventure began- Isaiah accepted his commission as an officer in the United States Marine Corps. Two years later on a beach in Sydney, I had the good luck of meeting up for burritos with Second Lieutenant Isaiah Berg, 1st Platoon Commander, Cherokee Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, US Marine Corps.

We revealed in our new paths since our ride a few years ago. Isaiah is now a rifle platoon commander, leading a group of thirty Marines on an eight month assignment in the rural dirt and dust of the northern Australia bush, training daily in ninety degree heat, fifty percent humidity, preparing at all times for the call for combat. For his next tour in January, Isaiah could be sent anywhere in case of war - the Middle East, Ukraine - where he would serve as a rifle company executive officer, the second-in-command, for a unit of one hundred and thirty Marines. One hundred and thirty lives under his watch.

Isaiah told me the key to the Marines’ successful training is getting comfortable oscillating between low fidelity and high fidelity situations- teaching yourself how to go from 0 to 60 (both physically and mentally) in just seconds, and then back down to 0. One must deal with uncertainty and chaos while looking to win- how to be calm and lead when everything imaginable goes wrong.

I asked Isaiah how he could ever go to a desk job after his experience in the operating forces. I've been in some tricky situations out here. If I end up in a corporate job, and being in a climate controlled, air conditioned office for a few hours a day is the most terrible thing I have to deal with...well I guess I've found myself in worse situations, and it definitely beats being shot at.”

His life sounded both incredibly admirable and really hard to relate to or even imagine. It felt bizarre to go from stories of life and death to stories of...winning or losing a sporting match.

Isaiah asked me what I've taken away from my tour so far. I told him it's given me the ability to get comfortable with the uncomfortable. Arriving alone in a foreign place with nothing familiar and with no plan or instructions to follow but my own best guess, starting from scratch. Then slowly moving through the transition from unknown to known, from uncomfortable to comfortable, before repeating it all again. The repetition makes me feel I can tackle any new unknowns.

Isaiah paused from his burrito, “You know, what we're each doing may have more in common than you think.”
~2011 CLASS DUES~

The 2011 Executive Committee is excited to help keep our great Class of 2011 strong and connected, but we still need your support to continue ‘11-centric class activities and benefits at big weekends and beyond! Funds from our annual class dues go toward Homecoming reunions, regional reunions, class newsletters, the Dartmouth Alumni Magazine subscription, class projects, and much more. We hope that each member will dedicate $35 for the 2013-2014 year, easily accessible through our Class of 2011 Paypal account via the link on our Facebook fan page / class website or returning the dues slip previously mailed out. We appreciate all of your generosity and consideration and hope to see you in Hanover or at a mini-reunion soon!

~NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS~

Life After College is only as good as your submissions! Please keep sending us content, whether you’ve submitted many times, or never before, such as...

Life updates!

Vicarious life updates! (re: fellow ‘11s)
Pictures of you & other ‘11s hanging out!
Survey responses!
Artwork or comics!

This is a great non-monetary way to contribute towards your class, and feel free to reach out to us directly with any ideas or submissions!

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FOLLOW the Dartmouth Class of 2011 for the latest updates on your classmates, news from Hanover, and alumni events!

And visit our website: www.dartmouth.org/classes/2011