

## Meet Debra O'Neal (LC'87), Dedicated Rutgers Alumni Leader



Debra O'Neal, LC'87, vice president of the Livingston Alumni Association, joined the Rutgers University Alumni Association's Board of Directors in July 2013.


She has served as the Class of 1987 vice president, as the first vice president of the LAA, as chair of the RUAA Regional Clubs Committee, and as past president of the National Association of Social Workers, reach alumni who want to stay engaged but who live far away from Rutgers and may find it difficult to connect.

"Being a board member provides me with a direct opportunity to actually shape our vision for Rutgers alumni and help propel it forward," Debra says.

*Photo courtesy of Rutgers University Alumni Association.  
Originally posted November 21, 2013*

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## Recognizing LAA

 The Rutgers University Alumni Federation (RUAF) (predecessor to the current Rutgers University Alumni Association, or RUAA) and Rutgers' Alumni Relations Department have honored the Livingston Alumni Association with these awards:

- 2000, 2002, 2007: William P. Garrison RC 1910 Award for the Alumni Association with the Greatest Increase in Annual Membership.
- 2003: Ernest E. McMahon RC'30 Award for Program Excellence.

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## 2003-04 Executive Board and Council

### **2003-04 Executive Board and Council**



#### *Executive Council Officers*

President: Yash V. Dalal  
1st Vice President: Michael Dimond  
2nd Vice President: Jason Goldstein  
Treasurer: Jeff Isaacs  
Secretary: Mark Weller  
Federation Rep. 2001-04: Michele Ostrowski  
Federation Rep. 2003-06: William Bauer  
Alternate Fed. Rep.: Robert Uhrik

*Additional Executive Council Members:* Michael Beachem, Alexis Birdsall Griffiths, Michael L. Canavan, Mario Pedro, Katie Perry, Marty Siederer.

#### **Committees**

- Budget and Finance: Jeff Isaacs
- Election and Nominations: Mike Dimond
- Membership: Yash V. Dalal
- Reunion and Class: Alexis Birdsall Griffiths
- Programming and Events: Mike Dimond
- Public Relations: Jason Goldstein
- Young Alumni: Katie Perry

*Sourced from Livingston Alumni News, Winter/Spring 2004 (page 7).*

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## 2005-06 Executive Board and Council

### **2005-06 Executive Board and Council**

#### *Officers*

President: Yash V. Dalal  
1st Vice President: Marty Siederer  
2nd Vice President: Jason Goldstein

Treasurer: Jeff Isaacs  
Secretary: Kate Perry  
Federation Rep. 2003-06: William Bauer  
Alternate Fed. Rep.: Mike Beachem

*Committees*

**2005-06 Executive Board and Council**

*Officers*

President: Yash V. Dalal  
1st Vice President: Marty Siederer  
2nd Vice President: Jason Goldstein  
Treasurer: Jeff Isaacs  
Secretary: Kate Perry  
Federation Rep. 2003-06: William Bauer  
Alternate Fed. Rep.: Mike Beachem

*Committees*

Budget and Finance: Jeff Isaacs  
Election and Nominations: Mike Beachem  
Membership: Yash V. Dalal  
Reunion and Class: Karen Kanu  
Programming and Events: William Bauer  
Public Relations: Jason Goldstein  
Young Alumni: Kate Perry

*Additional Executive Council Members*

- Maria "Lynn" Astorga
- Rob Bertrand
- Michael Canavan
- Harsh Dutia
- Karen Kanu
- Stephanie Ledgin-Toskos
- Walter O'Brien
- Tiffany Torpey
- Robert Uhrík
- Lilliana Vendra

*Revised December 28, 2015*

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# 2004-05 Executive Board and Council

## **2004-05 Executive Board and Council**

President: Yash V. Dalal

## **2004-05 Executive Board and Council**

President: Yash V. Dalal

1st Vice President: Katie Perry

2nd Vice President: Jason Goldstein

Treasurer: Jeff Isaacs

Secretary: Rob Bertrand

## LAA Executive Council

- |                      |                           |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| - Lynn Astorga       | - Harsh Dutia             | - Michele Ostrowski |
| - William Bauer      | - Karen Kanu              | - Marty Siederer    |
| - Michael Beachem    | - Stephanie Ledgin-Toskos | - Robert Uhrik      |
| - Michael L. Canavan | - Giovanni Lucero         | - Tiffany Torpey    |
| - Cordon Daley       | - Walter O'Brien          | - Lilliana Vendra   |
| - Michael Dimond     |                           |                     |

Federation Rep. 2003-06: William Bauer

Federation Rep. 2004-07: Robert Uhrik

Alternate Fed. Rep.: Cordon Daley

## Standing Committees

- Budget and Finance: Jeff Isaacs
- Election and Nominations: Michael Beachem
- Membership: Marty Siederer
- Reunion and Class: Michele Ostrowski
- Programming and Events: William Bauer
- Public Relations: Jason Goldstein
- Young Alumni: Katie Perry

*Sourced from Livingston Alumni News, Summer/Fall 2004 (page 7), via the Internet Archive Wayback Machine.*

*Revised March 1, 2016*

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# Livingston College's First Alumni Association President Reveals His Inspirations – and the Holy Grail of LC Alumni History

By Leonard M. Klepner, LC'72



*[Read more Livingston College Students' Memories.]*

I am a 1972 LC graduate. I was there almost at the very beginning as a transfer student from Temple University in Philadelphia. The extensive mud that then still characterized the rudimentary campus on the Piscataway plains of the late Camp Kilmer became “Fango,” the campus newspaper’s initial name.

My early mentors in the political science department included the late, monumental Wilson Carey McWilliams and his wife, Nancy. I retain a personally dedicated copy of Carey’s “The Idea of Fraternity in America.” As possessions go, it’s probably my most cherished. Both Carey and Nancy took an ongoing interest in my well-being, and I spent time at their Highland Park home. I house-sat for them on occasion before their daughters were born. During those times, my principal duties involved keeping company with their marmoset and huge parrot. The formidable parrot had a pedestal perch so substantial that it had its own room in the house. The other relic I have from this early era is an oil painting by an artist friend of the McWilliamses visiting from California. Signed as “RDG 74,” the piece is a rendering of the Albany Street Bridge and the town of New Brunswick from the Highland Park shore of the Raritan. The piece captures a remarkable scene of the bridge and the town as they were 40 years ago.

Of importance to me during this time were other political science professors, Henry Plotkin, Dennis Bathory and Gerald Pomper. Henry was the first faculty member with whom I met when I visited the Livingston Campus prior to making my decision to transfer to Livingston in 1970. About 25 years later, Henry and I had occasion to be in contact professionally in his capacity with the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission. Dennis was one of the kindest and brightest people that I ever met. Beyond the academics, however, the greatest of experiences was the Sunday pick-up softball game in Raritan Park. Students, teachers, friends and their children were welcomed players. I believe I remember a then-very young son of Professor Pomper’s joining the game eventually.

Another fellow student, graduate and alumnus most deserving of recognition for his inspiration to me both during and after my association with Livingston College and as a Rutgers graduate student is the late Amos Danube. Amos was already in his mid-20s when he left Budapest in the wake of the Soviet repression of 1956. When I came to Livingston, Amos seemed ancient, but less so as I came to know him and likewise grew ancient. His many contributions to the Livingston and Rutgers communities are well known. I had the privilege of continuing contact with Amos into his all too brief retirement to Florida. Our friendship became and was at its strongest when he passed away suddenly a number of years ago. I made contact with his daughter and conveyed to her a compilation of email that Amos and I exchanged during his retirement to offer her, if she wished, a glimpse of her father's life that may otherwise have escaped her.

Most significantly for the historical documentation of the origin of the existing alumni group of Livingston College, is a copy of what is the Holy Grail of Livingston alumni history. The first of the membership ID card displayed with this article is indeed the very first card, No. 00001A, Valid 1975-1976, issued by the Livingston College Association of Graduates (the LCAG), the very first organization formed to represent, advance and benefit those few who had then graduated from Livingston and all thereafter until the present that the Alumni Association has served.

LCAG ID No. 00001A is rarer (as baseball card collectors would know) even than the multimillion-dollar Honus Wagner T206. It is special, and I knew it would be because it represented the earliest graduates that Livingston had to offer. Even then, Livingston graduates understood that the special nature and intention of Livingston required nurturing, maintenance and perpetuation. As LCAG 00001A indicates, I had the distinction of being elected the first president of the LCAG.

Imagine if George Washington were still alive to witness the unfolding of the promise for which he struggled. There is room for argument either way on the question of whether or not Washington would be pleased with the course that our country has taken. However, as the George Washington of Livingston alumni, I have been fortunate and pleased for more than 40 years now to have witnessed the unfolding and establishment of the good to which the LAA has devoted itself and achieved. Ever may it continue to be so.



Photo at top: LCAG membership card 00001A; bottom: LAA membership cards from the early 1990s.

*Leonard M. Klepner is a 1972 graduate of Livingston College at Rutgers University.*

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## LAA Supported Camden Campus as Integral to Rutgers in 2012

Rutgers and Rowan universities, along with New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and the State Legislature, in 2012 discussed plans that reportedly would have advanced both Rutgers-Camden and higher education in Southern New Jersey.

The discussions followed a controversial proposal, introduced in January 2012, that would have integrated the Rutgers-Camden campus into Rowan University, as part of a larger restructuring initially focused on medical education. The Rutgers Board of Trustees on May 3, 2012, overwhelmingly approved a resolution reaffirming Rutgers-Camden's place as a crucial part of the university, and opposing the severance of the campus from Rutgers.

The Rutgers School of Law-Camden Alumni Association and the Rutgers University-Camden Alumni Association have strongly opposed the merger of the Camden campus into Rowan.

The Livingston Alumni Association, and Rutgers Alumni Association (which represents graduates of the former Rutgers College and other colleges on the New Brunswick-Piscataway campus), also opposed the initial Camden-Rowan proposal. *LAA's resolution, modeled on an earlier resolution from RAA, is online.*

Rutgers University Alumni Association Chair Christine Tiritilli wrote an open letter encouraging alumni participation in the conversation and providing links to resources on the issue.

On Jan. 25, 2012, Gov. Christie released and endorsed the final report of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) Advisory Committee, chaired by Dr. Sol Barer. This final report expands upon the committee's interim report issued Sept. 20, 2011. Taken together, these two documents make three significant recommendations that have the potential to transform Rutgers:

- Integrate the UMDNJ Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, the Cancer Institute of New Jersey, and the UMDNJ School of Public Health with Rutgers University.
- Develop a formalized research consortium among Rutgers and the other public research universities in Newark.
- Create a broader, expanded research university in southern New Jersey that integrates the Rutgers-Camden Campus into Rowan University.

As of 2021 Rutgers continues to maintain a website which explains the eventual

2013 New Jersey Medical and Health Sciences Education Restructuring Act. Ultimately, Rutgers-Camden remained intact.

The following organizations are among those that have issued statements or resolutions opposing the initial Camden proposal:

- Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters
  - Rutgers University Senate
  - New Jersey State Bar Association
  - Camden County Bar Association
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## 2014-15 Executive Board and Council



### **2014-2015 Officers**



### **2014-2015 Officers**

- Jason Goldstein, President
- Mindy Hoffman, Vice President for Public Relations
- Debra O'Neal, Vice President for Outreach
- Eric Schwarz, Vice President for Internal Affairs
- Jeff Isaacs, Treasurer



## **LAA Executive Council**

- Rosemary Agrista
- Carla Alexander-Reilly
- Jeffrey Armus
- Michael Beachem
- Joseph Capo
- Jason Goldstein
- Mindy Hoffman
- Jeff Isaacs
- Michelle Jackson
- Debra O'Neal
- Eric Schwarz
- Marty Siederer
- Stephen Yanick
- Derek Young

## **2014-2015 Committee Chairs**

- Budget and Finance – Jeff Isaacs
- Community Service – Jeffrey Armus
- Election and Nominations – Vacant
- Membership – Vacant
- Programming and Events – Rosemary Agrista
- Public Relations – Mindy Hoffman
- Reunion and Class – Derek Young

*Revised April 8, 2015*

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## **1999-2000 Officers**

### **LAA Officers: 1999-2000**

President: Jeffrey Isaacs '84  
First Vice President: Mark Weller '85  
Second Vice President: Bill Bauer '86  
Secretary: Bob Uhrik '78  
Treasurer: Michele Ostrowski '88

### **LAA Officers: 1999-2000**

President: Jeffrey Isaacs '84  
First Vice President: Mark Weller '85

Second Vice President: Bill Bauer '86  
Secretary: Bob Uhrík '78  
Treasurer: Michele Ostrowski '88

*(Sourced from the Internet Archive Wayback Machine. Updated February 7, 2015.)*

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## **2006-07 Executive Board and Council**

### **2006-07 Executive Board and Council**

- President: Marty Siederer
- 1st Vice President: Jason Goldstein
- 2nd Vice President: Michael Beachem
- Treasurer: Jeff Isaacs
- Secretary: Harsh Dutia

### *LAA Executive Council:*

- Carla Alexander
- Lynn Astorga
- William Bauer
- Rob Bertrand
- Joseph Capo
- Yash Dalal
- Jason Goldstein
- Jeff Isaacs
- Ava Johnson
- Karen Kanu
- Stephanie Ledgin-Toskos
- Iris Martinez-Campbell
- Walter O'Brien
- Tiffany Ross
- Robert Uhrík
- Lilliana Vendra
- Philip Wang

- Federation Rep. 2006-09: William Bauer
- Federation Rep. 2004-07: Robert Uhrík
- Alternate Fed. Rep.: Ava Johnson

### *2006-2007 Standing Committees*

- Budget and Finance: Jeff Isaacs

- Election and Nominations: Carla Alexander and Lynn Astorga, Co-Chairs
- Membership: Yash Dalal
- Reunion and Class: Karen Kanu
- Programming and Events: William Bauer
- Public Relations: Jason Goldstein
- Young Alumni: Tiffany Ross

*(Sourced from the Internet Archive Wayback Machine. Updated February 7, 2015.)*