

FRANKLY SPEAKING

Olin's unofficial,
student-run news
source.

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 8

MAY 2016

FREE, AS IN BEER

Pampered

Anonymous
Contributor

I came to Olin to be a part of a curricular experiment - and with it I accepted the fact that not every classroom experience I would have would be perfect, that my resulting knowledge about technical concepts might not be bullet-proof, and that explaining my education to friends or future employers might be tough. I've enjoyed co-designing courses with professors here and engaging in conversations about Olin's future - and thankfully, many of my initial fears did not come to light. I feel just as competent, technically, as any of my close friends graduating from other universities and without a lot of the jadedness to boot.

It hurts my heart, however, to see friends and peers who actively detest the curricular development piece of the Olin experience. I can't blame them - as someone who is looking for an untraditional, quality, engineering education, they were presented with only a handful of choices marketed to them in high school. At Candidates Weekend, the idea of experimenting is sold to us as mere-

ly a supplement to a main course of superior education. The Princeton Review rankings reflect the quality of the education, not the creativity of the institution.

When we arrive, it becomes immediately clear, however, of our role as "hamsters." From Design Nature teaming assignments to the Linearities; from iSIM to 6 Microbes; the ever-evolving nature of our curriculum is clear and students get front-row seats to it all. For anyone arriving at Olin expecting a top-notch education, they will receive it with a healthy dose of struggle and frustration if they aren't willing to embrace or accept being an active participant in curricular development.

At Olin, we have a lot to be thankful for: professors that actually care about us and our future, a student affairs team that actually knows our names, dorms that are extremely livable, plenty of hands-on experiences, a club for most passions, frequent student events, an admissions process we can be involved in... Perhaps it is our high standard of living, the relative luxury of our lives, that allows for a culture of saltiness with regards

Hamsters

to our experience in courses which challenge us to be active participants in our learning. We are extremely pampered - deadlines are flexible, grades are flexible, everyone is respectful to the point of passive - and this creates a feeling of "deserving." Just as in our day-to-day life, we want to get all of the goodness of curricular experimentation without being a part of the process of actually making it good. We deserve a frustration-free curriculum. We deserve a registration period that fits our expectations every semester. We deserve to walk into interviews and have the people on the other side of the table recognize all of our course titles. We deserve perfection.

This is dangerous. Olin and its quality only exists because of the mission to constantly evolve the curriculum and experiment with engineering education. The classes we love best are only the result of students like us struggling a few years prior and offering feedback to the professors. The new courses like Chemistry in Context and QEA only exist because our institution supports these initiatives. Olin's acclaim

continued on next page

only exists because of the people it has attracted and the willingness for faculty and students to participate in it. If our dissatisfaction with our courses stays dining hall banter or complaint-party fodder, then we are no better than other privileged communities in which a culture of complaining and coddling allows for a stagnation of innovation and ignorance of our differences.

We should be forced to evaluate our learning, to question concepts, to be co-conspirators in our own academic lives. If we don't prac-

tice challenging the values, perspectives, and knowledge of others, how can we be effective at it in actual, real life? Being a college student in some ways puts us in a fabricated society in which we are afforded a lot of protection in order to experiment with our lifestyles and identities, to learn about the world, and to practice being activists for our passions. Olin is an extremely safe environment that actually creates this opportunity directly within our courses. The door is open - but we lament about the draft rather than look to

see what lies beyond.

At Olin, we will become competent engineers, but that's not the reason Olin exists - it is just a fortunate side effect. I hope that we, in our capacity as pampered hamsters while at Olin, are more willing in the future to sacrifice a bit of our comfort in order to create something amazing for others. After graduation, I hope that, in our capacity as extremely privileged individuals, we are looking forward to experiencing frustration in order to make change in our society.

Out of the Ashes

Leon Lam
Contributor

[WHAT WILL YOU DO?]

"Is that a direct order, my lord?" you ask after a moment.

Lord Anselm gives you an unreadable look. "Does it have to be?"

"No, my lord," you reply softly. "I understand."

"Good," he says. "Come - the sooner we get this done, the better."

~

Adrian is putting the final stitches on the Penitent's chest as the two of you enter his room. Lord Anselm coughs quietly, and your colleague looks up from his patient.

"Oh, no," he says. "No, no, no."

"Good stitching," Lord Anselm says. "But a regrettable waste of effort. Forty-Seven, if you would be so kind?"

You sit down at the head of the bed and place your hand on the Penitent's face. His breath is shallow and ragged, little puffs of air against your palm.

So fragile, you think to yourself. *Just-*

"*STOP*," Adrian growls. The room shudders under the weight of his Influence, air and wood shivering and warping in defiance of all natural laws. You rise from the bed, curling your hand into a fist.

"Don't do this, Adrian," you say. "We both know what will happen."

"*I know*. But I can't just stand by and watch..." Adrian takes in a shuddering breath. "Watch you *kill* him."

You look to Lord Anselm, but he remains cruelly silent.

"He's... broken." The words are bitter in your mouth as you repeat your superior's argument. "There's nothing we can do. It might

be a mercy--"

"He *smiled*," Adrian interrupts, eyes raw with anger and pain. "When I cleaned his wounds and started stitching him up, he *smiled*. You pulled him out from his own personal Hell and gave him hope, and now you're TAKING IT AWAY?"

"The world is a cruel place," Lord Anselm murmurs. "But we cannot afford to defy Imperial justice, and I would rather not see this poor soul back under the torturer's knife. If he were in any shape to talk, I am certain he would ask for death."

Then the Penitent's head twitches ever so slightly.

Slowly, with great effort, the broken prisoner - traitor to the Imperial Court, bargaining chip in a high-stakes game between empires, victim of unspeakable torment - shakes his head.

~

"My Lord!" Adrian cries

out, and both of you turn to look at Lord Anselm.

"This changes nothing," your superior replies. "His survival will cost us too much. The negotiations are far too important to be jeopardized by... this."

"Might there..." you say tentatively, and Lord Anselm turns his gaze on you. "Might there be some way to use the Penitent to our advantage, my lord?"

"Hm." Your superior frowns for a moment. "Such as?"

"Perhaps he knows something we could use, my lord." Adrian suggests. "Or someone who could give us an edge in the negotiations."

"Unlikely," Lord Anselm says. "I would rather not take the risk—"

"There will be none, my lord," you say quickly. "Give us until evening. If his survival is of no use to us by then... I will do what is necessary. We will be none the worse off for the delay."

A moment of tense silence.

Then Lord Anselm sighs. "Very well. Evening, and not a moment longer. Until then, I will be in the study."

"Your will be done, my lord," you say.

~

As soon as Lord Anselm leaves, the two of you leap into action. Adrian snatches up a brush and paper from the table, and you grind an ink stick into a dish of water.

"Can you write?" you ask.

After a short while, the Penitent nods.

"Great," Adrian says.

"We'll try to get you out of this, but we can't do it without your help. Will you answer our questions?"

The Penitent nods again, more quickly this time. His eyes, previously glazed and vacant, wander warily around the room before focusing on your colleague.

"Are you in pain? Do you need anything? Food? Water?"

The Penitent shakes his head.

"Who are you, then?" Adrian asks, dipping the brush in ink and handing it over.

The Penitent stares at the brush for a long while. Then he lowers his hand shakily to the table, and begins to write. His handwriting is clumsy and slow, like a child's first foray into calligraphy.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. From the bottom of my heart, this unworthy one thanks you. His tears fall freely, soaking into the paper and smudging the ink, but the words are still legible.

The Penitent takes a deep breath, composing himself, and continues.

My name is Li Qingshan. I was a captain in the Crown Princess' army when she and her brother waged war...

As he writes, his hand becomes steadier, each stroke of the brush surer and more certain than the last.

We fought and killed and died for months, painting Reshan with soldiers' blood. Brown soil, green fields, blue rivers...

All red.

Then the Princess fought her brother. I was there

when Dragon dueled Phoenix, splitting the heavens and shaking the earth. I still remember the moment he struck her down. The world held its breath as she fell and fell and fell...

I ran. So did my men. We split up and laid low, hoping to make it out of the Empire. But my luck ran out. They found me. And the rest...

Li shrugs and looks up from his writing. *The rest is as you know it.*

"I'm sorry," Adrian says.

Li smiles weakly. *Don't be, he writes. I still live, and...*

His gaze flickers down to the brush for a moment. Then he shakes his head. *It is of no consequence. Is there anything else you would like to know?*

"Forgive my bluntness, but do you know anything... important?" you ask. "Our lord is an ambassador from Imvarr-Across-the-Sea. He desires something that will aid him in his negotiations with the Imperial Court."

Li furrows his brow for a long while, then shakes his head. *Only rumors and superstition from my time hiding in the countryside,* he writes. *Some believe that the Emperor had his mother murdered before she could crown his sister. Others believe that the Crown Princess still lives, and that the droughts are a result of the Dragon's absence.*

The head of the brush dances faster and faster, almost a blur on the parchment as he writes like a man possessed. *They believe that one day she will march on the*

Capital at the head of a new army, and the downtrodden and the oppressed will rise to overthrow the Court's opulence.

He lets out a soundless chuckle, finishing off the last character with a theatrical flourish.

A fool's hope. But there is nothing else for us, now.

“We need to find something,” Adrian whispers as Li rises unsteadily from the table to pour himself a cup of water. You offered to help, but the former captain was insistent in doing this himself. “I don’t think Li knows anything important.”

“I have my duty,” you reply. “If he is of no use to Lord Anselm by evening, I will kill him.” It will not be the first time you’ve taken a life to prevent further suffering. It will likely not be the last, either.

Adrian makes a hopeless noise. Then he frowns. “Wait. Why did Li shake his head?”

I shook my head, Li writes a while later in response to your query, because...

He stares at the brush again.

“Because?” Adrian prompts gently.

Xiaoque, Li writes. My little sparrow. I— we— were married, and she was with child when the Empress was killed. When the war broke out, she packed her things fled to East Mountain. Far away from the fighting. I don't know whether she made it. But...

I don't care what happens

to me, he writes, and the tears begin to fall again. But — just once more before I die — I want to see them again.

Please.

“I promise—”

“We’ll help,” Adrian says.

“—nothing.” You finish, giving Adrian a disapproving look. “You heard my lord earlier, Li. If we have nothing to give him by evening...”

Li nods. *I know. A swift death. It will be an honor to die at your hand.*

You shake your head. “There is no honor in death.”

Perhaps you are right, Li writes. Perhaps not. Still, it will be far preferable to the alternative — five more months of torture as they acclimatize my body to the biomanacy. Then the transformation into a war-creature, mad with pain and flesh-hunger...

“What?” Adrian says, leaning closer to read the words. “You can’t be serious.” The warbeasts of Reshan and their means of production have been a jealously guarded secret for years.

I am, Li writes. Those who could not endure the... rigors... of the knife were fed to the beasts, and we were made to watch. I envied the end to their suffering. We all did.

Adrian looks up, hope in his eyes. “Good enough for you?” he asks.

“Absolutely,” you reply.

“Interesting,” Lord Anselm says in the study. “Obtaining the location of Li’s prison will present a... unique opportunity. Finding out how the warbeasts

are made far outweighs the drawbacks of keeping him alive.”

“It’s not a certainty, my lord,” you remind him. Adrian narrows his eyes at you.

“Nothing in life is certain,” Lord Anselm replies. “But this is good enough. Good work. If we find out where the warbeasts are held or made...” he trails off.

“Of course, my lord.” You answer his unspoken question.

“Excellent. Now, listen carefully: I will need Li to write a letter...”

Li’s eyes widen when you return to the room and convey Lord Anselm’s instructions. *A thousand thanks, he writes with a shaky hand. I... have not dared to dream since I was captured. But now...*

He looks up, and you see gratitude and joy and determination in his gaze. Now I have hope. Thank you.

“I suppose you found your answer in the end,” you say to Adrian a while later. Li is in the next room, working on Lord Anselm’s letter — through the wall, you hear the shuffling of paper and the grinding of inks against stone.

“I suppose I did,” your colleague murmurs. “So much for being a dutiful soldier.”

You shrug. “Kindness is rarer than obedience. More valuable, too.”

He frowns. “Really? I’m not sure if I agree.”

“I think your actions spoke loudly enough,” you

say.

“Yours, too,” Adrian replies, and you blink in surprise.

“Oh?”

He grins at you. “For all your talk about duty, you have a softer heart than you let on.”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about,” you say, hiding a smile. “Every member of my Order is forged in the crucibles of the Golden Tower. Our bones and flesh are cast from tempered steel, our skin and hair spun from bright copper, our eyes carved from the finest of gemstones...”

Your colleague rolls his

* Trigger Warning

Victoria Preston

Contributor

Hi team,

Inevitably, graduation is upon us and another group of Oliners will be ushered out and on their heels a new group, hopeful and eager, will be welcomed in. I feel so lucky that I’ve had the chance to get to know you all, and the three classes that graduated before me during my stint as a student here. I am fortunate to have had a family that accepted the fact I called infrequently, randomly, and on “college time” instead of normal time. I am grateful to the number of hours spent in camaraderie, finishing projects in the AC, Library, or Dorms. The levity that my friends brought to each day won’t soon be forgotten. The opportunity

eyes. “And what happens when you pull on your leg, like you’re pulling mine right now?”

“It comes right off,” you lie. “Screws and bolts everywhere. An absolutely dreadful mess.”

He lets out a bark of laughter, and you go on: “In all seriousness, I don’t know if you meant that as a compliment. But... thank you.”

“Any time,” Adrian says. “You know, some of my fellow mages believed the Knights were...” he trails off.

“Were?” you prompt.

“Inhuman,” he mutters.

“And what do you think?”

you ask softly.

Adrian looks you in the eye. “I think my colleagues were wrong.”

~

ARE THEY?

1. [YES. Regardless of the procedure that made you a Knight, you are still human.]

2. [NOT ENTIRELY. You were once like any other. You are something else, now – something simultaneously greater and lesser than a mortal man. But that doesn’t change the way you think or the way you feel...]

to NINJA a variety of classes was extremely impactful for me too.

As I prepare to leave, however, I’m asked often about whether I have any regrets - anything that I wished I had done while a student, or perhaps, that I wished I hadn’t done as a student.

Oh absolutely.

The sheer volume of late-night snacks is a bit embarrassing. The number of all-nighters was a bit more than I like to admit. I really wish I had studied away, or taken a leave of absence - for all the reasons you might expect (taking a break from Olin, seeing some of the world, learning a new language, getting more specialized technical depth in something, etc). I also wish I could have done more things - different clubs, different hobbies, different campuses, more traveling,

etc. These are all mostly wistful thoughts though. Alternatively, I wish that I could have put more energy into the things that I did do.

But above all, I regret not being an outspoken advocate for the things I care most about. On sustainability, I wish I could have been involved with GrOW more, that I went to more talks, that I pursued the information I hungered for, that I was brave enough to have an opinion and express it openly.

On diversity, I wish that I could have made more people care and that I could have become a better amplifier for movements like BlackLivesMatter, for persons of color on our campus seeking to hold cultural conversations, and for the plethora of social events that happened outside our bubble across the United States during our time at

Olin.

On sexual respect there is so much more that needs to be done at Olin that I wish I could have spent time doing. I wish I had the confidence to be a better bystander in light conversation that turns sexually inappropriate. I wish I had the audacity to demand more in terms of the response of the College to our Title IX procedures. I wish that I knew how to be a survivor because I've been struggling with victimhood since well before arriving to Olin. I wish I knew how to better support my sibling as their identity struggles to flourish in fear-soaked soil hundreds of miles away from me.

On mental health, I wish I had taken the time to encourage conversation about it on campus, and develop it for myself. I felt, and often still feel, that my time is best spent on others and not myself. Though I know logically that no sleep, that infrequent meals, that my sometimes crushing depression does not make me a better engineer - engineering is the only thing I know how to do.

Imposter syndrome is rooted in my mind and I only allow it to flower. Times in which I consoled friends and peers with fears similar to my own and suggested they seek help, brought forward the hypocrite inside of me which is suspicious of those with even the best of intentions. Wavering in the gray zone of passively suicidal in the early years of my Olin career, I sought often to be alone and to pour every ounce of my strength into being busy. When people laugh about not seeing folks around campus too much, I wonder if those folks are intentionally hiding behind their work, like me. Though today I stand taller and I think happier, I regret not learning to love myself sooner.

As I prepare to graduate, I want to make sure that people know that we need, as a community, to take notice of our collective well-being. Mental health is not something that can be read off of a person's face, but can only be felt through active compassion. That sexual respect can only become the

norm if we accept that it happens here and that we can do something about it. That diversity at Olin starts with checking our own privilege. That sustainability at Olin can only happen if we care enough about it to impact our lifestyles.

I certainly leave with regrets, but I will have the rest of my life to work towards fulfillment, as I define it - and so will you.

My advice, though, for those still asking how to get through Olin without regrets: Don't be afraid to offend, if you're ready to receive criticism. Be open to reflecting with others. Take advantage of the opportunities to shape your own learning. Strive to take care of yourself and take pride in your hours of sleep, the number of meals you've eaten, and the hobbies that you spend time enjoying. Feel free to leave the campus for a semester, or two. Be yourself. And know that everyone wants you to succeed --- and that you will.

Looking forward,
Victoria

Volunteer at Refugee Camps

Kelsey Breseman
Alumnus Contributor

I'm Kelsey, Olin '13. I recently spent several weeks volunteering in refugee camps in Greece. I recommend the experience, both for your own learning and for the impact you can have.

Before I went to volunteer with the refugee crisis, I thought it would be a huge

commitment to go and do. It's not. I was amazed how easy it was to just show up, with no particular pre-planning, and participate.

If you want to come, here are some useful roles:

- Teachers of English as a second language for adults and children - whether or not you have any particular certification

- People who speak Arabic, Kurdish, or Faarsi
- People who speak Greek
- People who are good with kids
- People who are construction savvy or otherwise handy
- People willing to lend a hand with whatever is needed
- Good listeners who can write

If you are creative, this work can use all of your skills.

Camps are mapped online, and there is typically an informative (if messy) Facebook group you can find for up-to-date information on each. You can show up on site and find other volunteers, ask them about useful work.

If you can cover the airfare, the rest can be pretty cheap. Specifically for Ritsona (the camp I volunteered at), you can get to Chalkida on a fast train from Athens and share rides to the camp with fellow volunteers. The hotel we went to, the nicest in town, had us for 35 a night with decent Wifi and a beautiful breakfast you could pack for lunch. Greece is in a recession, so groceries are inexpensive.

It is common to come for just a week. This was a huge surprise to me. Longer is better, but a week is all that many people can manage away from their regular lives. A month is better, but one week in this job feels much longer than it is.

I went as an "independent volunteer", as opposed to with a program or organization. If you prefer to join an organization, they might make the logistics easier, and will tell you what tasks to do - and where and when. As an independent, I figured out where to go, and came up with my own ideas for where I could help. Different ways of volunteering appeal to different people.

Figuring out what to do was hard, sometimes.

There's a lot of day-after-day work that will be there tomorrow whether or not you do it today. Things like playing with the kids. Picking up litter. Collecting firewood. Making food. I did all of these things, with varying levels of success. I also used my tech skills to get internet in the camp and help people (displaced Syrians and volunteers alike) figure out how to be effective with their phones. Sometimes, the most useful I could be in a moment was to sing American songs for a family, or juggle to distract the kids.

In a lot of ways, the most important thing to do is be present and helpful. The people I met were frustrated; they felt abandoned, and not without cause. Being there helps, a little.

The most important thing: being there, you can befriend the people who are in this situation. You can talk to these displaced people. You can learn from them.

When I left on the trip, I felt selfish. I worried about being a "white savior". I've read that it's more effective to send money than go yourself to do humanitarian aid. But I wanted to see what our politics looked like on the ground, and to get a sense of perspective, so I went anyway.

Here's the thing: I'm glad I went, and in retrospect I think it was better to go than to just send money. Money helps with humanitarian aid. But this isn't, at heart, a humanitarian issue; it's fundamentally political. It's a war, combined with widespread

xenophobia. The thousands of people trapped in Greece are a byproduct of political climates that don't treat humans like humans. I was useful because I could meet refugees and talk to them just as people.

Sending money is good. It goes to food, and shoes, garbage bags, adult diapers, and all the little things that need fixing in the refugee camps. But the political problem is bigger than the physical one: the humanitarian problem would go away if the people in these camps had someplace to go. And this is what they're asking for: don't fix our tents, just open the borders.

You and me, we're just people. We can't change the course of politics single-handedly. But we can tell stories, and we can burst bubbles. We can remind people who are here that lives are being held on pause there. We can be loud in our democracy. And human to human, that's a start.

The United States has pledged to take in 10,000 people, which is not very much. We can ask for an Act of Congress to pledge more. You can find your Senators' contact information at this link: <http://www.senate.gov/senators/contact/> and your Representative's contact information by typing in your zip code in the top right corner on this website: <http://www.house.gov/>. An email can be as simple as saying "I support resettling Syrian refugees in the United States."

I spent time receiving ref-

ugees on the island of Chios (now most infamous as the location of the Vial detainment camp) and also in the longer-term Ritsona camp.

If you'd like to read more about my experiences, start here: <http://meaninglite.tumblr.com/post/141297929454/%CF%87%CE%AF%CE%>

BF%CF%85

If you want more information about volunteering, email me! ifoundthemeanin-goflife@gmail.com

Horoscopes By Drunk Editors

Taurus (April 20 – May 20): What do you mean you don't have anything to do? How do you *not* have piles upon mountains upon plateaus of work? Did you forget a class?

Gemini (May 21 – June 20): Non, Rien de rien. Non, Je ne regrette rien. Ni le bien qu'on m'a fait. Ni le mal tout ça m'est bien égal. Non, Rien de rien. Non, Je ne regrette rien.

Cancer (June 21 – July 22): So long as you survive this next week with all your limbs and digits attached, and you don't have any more/fewer injuries than you did last week, I'd say you're doing ok.

Leo (July 23 – Aug. 22): Unemployment is always an option, though the benefits aren't great. Walmart is another option, but I'm told that the benefits are even worse. Consider your options wisely.

Virgo (Aug. 23 – Sept. 22): Yes, you *do* have time to binge watch all of *The Vampire Diaries* on Netflix (not that there aren't a million other, *better*, shows that you could procrastinate on, but I don't know your life).

Libra (Sept. 23 – Oct. 22): Once every 25 years, it is rumored that the mystical homework fairy emerges and completes all the outstanding work and projects

of good college students. This is not that year.

Scorpio (Oct. 23 – Nov. 21): You know what would be really funny? If all your finals happened to be scheduled on the same day. And you spent the whole night cramming and doing last minute analysis and then the poster printers all decided to stop working. So you borrowed a friend's car to get Staples to print it for you at 7AM. And then you realized you forgot your pants as you ran in for your first presentation. But then all of your professors sent out emails saying they were cancelling their respective finals. And you were left standing at the classroom door in your boxers. *That* would be funny.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22 – Dec. 21): Actually, you know what would be even funnier than what's going to happen to Scorpio? If the car was out of gas. So you had to take a GO Bike. But then the chain broke and you had to run to Staples, only to find that they didn't open until 9AM. So you decided to just take the zero on the poster. And you trudged back to Olin, still ended up in class in your underwear. But then you did actually have to stand up and give a presentation. And then later, you realized the poster

printers were fine, and you were just on OLIN GUEST.

Capricorn (Dec. 22 – Jan. 19): Yes, making up data is bad. Like, definitely getting a zero on your paper, possible suspension, borderline illegal if we were out in the real world *bad*. That doesn't mean I'm telling you not to do it. But like Leo, you should consider your options.

Aquarius (Jan. 20 – Feb. 18): Feel like everything is falling to pieces? I've felt like that too. Expect they were just end mills. It was 304 stainless steel though, so I have an excuse. What's yours?

Pisces (Feb. 19 – March 20): Have you seen the rings under your eyes? There's this new concept that people are trying. It's called *getting enough sleep*. We're provided with beds, and things vaguely resembling mattresses. You could stand to use yours a little more often.

Aries (March 21 – April 19): Oh, you're graduating? Con-grad-ulations, *wink wink*. So what are you doing after graduation? Where are you working? Are you with someone? When are you gonna get married? Are you gonna have kids? How many? Thought about any names? Have you signed up for preschool yet?

Divesting Olin

Aaron Greiner and Izzy Harrison on behalf of GROW

Contributors

So, What is Divestment?

According to Wikipedia, “Divesting is the act of removing stocks from a portfolio based on mainly ethical, non-financial objections to certain business activities of a corporation.” One of the first times that divestment was used as a means to promote a social change was during apartheid, the extreme system of racial segregation, in South Africa. Companies, universities, organizations, local governments, and individuals took their money out of apartheid-affiliated businesses and are partially credited with helping to dismantle the system.

Today, there is a new divestment movement. Five hundred and seven institutions and 3.4 trillion dollars have been divested from the oil and gas industries. The goal of this movement is to put financial pressure on the largest contributors to climate change and other environmental disasters in an effort to get them to behave in a more socially and environmentally responsible manner. Sixty-one colleges have already divested in some meaningful way, and we hope Olin will join the movement.

Why Should Olin Divest?

Olin was founded on the principle of making the world

a better place. Fossil fuels are unsustainable (they will run out), and are the single greatest contributors to climate change, so we believe it is against Olin’s founding principles to support fossil fuel companies. We believe that continuing to profit from the destruction of the environment through knowingly investing our money in companies that are accelerating the pace of climate change is fundamentally against Olin’s core values.

The scientific consensus is clear and overwhelming; we cannot safely burn even half of global fossil fuel reserves without dangerously warming the planet with disastrous effects. Furthermore, as the market inevitably shifts towards more renewable energy sources, we believe an innovative institution such as Olin should be on the forefront of this change.

We believe progressive action towards divestment will be a sound decision for the wellbeing of Olin’s alumni and current and future students. We deserve the opportunity to graduate with a future unimpaired by climate chaos.

What Have We Done so Far?

A little over a year ago, we started meeting with our CFO Patty Gallagher and Chair of the Investment Committee Doug Kahn to explore what it might look like if Olin were to divest. They

were incredibly receptive, and we formed a close partnership. Over the past year, we have had many meetings and are making positive progress towards a solution that we can all get behind. In addition, we had a meeting with the investment firm that manages Olin’s money to get a sense from them about what divestment could look like while, of course, keeping the best financial interests of the school in mind.

We are very fortunate that we are at a place like Olin where we can have meetings like this, and our collaborative approach has had positive results. The Investment Committee has begun to have discussions about the topic of divestment. We will continue to work with Doug and Patty to advance the conversation towards a mutually acceptable resolution.

Before we move forward, we want to be confident that this is something that Faculty, Staff, Board Members, and Students, can all get behind. We are looking forward to continuing the progress in the fall and hope to keep the community updated.

Want to get Involved, or have Questions/Concerns?

Shoot us an Email!

Izzy@students.olin.edu

Aaron.Greiner@students.olin.edu

Make Friends from Scratch

Trevor Hooton

Alumnus Contributor

What do you do when you move to a city and you don't know anybody? If you find a job in an unfamiliar city, or an internship opportunity takes you halfway across the country? In addition to the turmoil of moving and finding your feet in a new workplace, you have to figure out your social life as well. It's not an easy situation, but with some conscious effort, you can carve out a niche.

While at Olin, I moved to cities where I knew at most one person on three occasions. In the last two years, I've done it four more times: spending six months in California, England, China and France. I've gotten pretty good at speeding past the lonely days, skipping to the fun part where I'm integrated into local communities. It's not always straightforward, so I want to share the methods I use. Maybe they'll help you settle into your new home a bit faster this summer/after graduation.

When you move somewhere, think intentionally about how you want to spend your time, and with whom. This is your opportunity to create the life you want to lead. Investing in new friends is worth the effort even if you only stay for a few months. You're moving, not dying. You can build a worldwide friend network. Who knows when your paths will cross again?

The first step is to feel comfortable on your own in your new environment. You have to get out of the house. Go for a walk in your local area. Visit a nearby neighborhood. Drop by that cool café, bookstore, arcade, market, gallery – whatever. If you're going to lounge around all day, at least do it in a park. Read up on upcoming events. Sniff out the happening spots. Become knowledgeable about the place where you live. Act like the locals until you area local.

Note: Having just one or two friends at the start can be risky. Make sure that you push each other to be your best selves, rather than settling for spending your time closed in on yourselves.

Also, remember this: you are an interesting person. You're worth knowing. If you met you at a party, you'd both have a great evening. Be confident in this, so you can make the most of your social opportunities.

Step 2: meet people. Social media sites like Meetup and Couchsurfing are the easiest approach, providing instant connection with low barriers to entry – the people on these sites are there because they are open to making new friends. Use these websites to find people and events in your area. Try online dating sites and apps – even if you aren't looking for romance. Anyone using these services wants to make new connections.

Leverage your networks.

Meet friends of friends back home. Get to know a “connector” – someone who seems to know everyone – and befriend the people they introduce you to. Follow up with everyone – it doesn't matter how you met someone if you get along well with them!

The technique I've had the most success with is to pick a social activity and stick with it. Find a group of people that does a thing you enjoy, or a thing you'd like to try, and just show up. At first, you'll see each other once or twice a week and you'll bond around the sport or game or event that you share. Soon you'll start to recognize the regulars. Then you'll be a regular too! Bam: you're a part of the community.

This is a great start, but the real impact comes with step 3, when you start to drive your social circles.

Would you love for your new friends, colleagues and acquaintances to invite you to go to a concert or water-skiing or road tripping? It's a symmetrical argument: they could be waiting for you. Don't wait for them to reach out. Somebody has got to do the organizing. You're the one with the most to gain, and nothing to lose... So it'll have to be you.

Invite the people whose company you enjoy to do something besides the activity you have in common. Start low-key: propose a group meal or drink before or after your thing. Hit

them up for a parallel activity, or even something completely unrelated. Leverage your research about upcoming events around town. You'll be the one with the plan and with local knowledge, and people will come to you. Soon you can do all the things you want to do in your new city, and with new friends!

Invite friends from different social circles, or individuals you've met, to join activities with other groups. I personally find great satisfaction in blending friend

groups. And you multiply the value that you generate. Your friends will want to return it to you. The effort you invest will pay itself back in kind, and people will invite you to their activities as well.

This all may sound very mechanical and forced – but I think of it as self-aware and deliberate. Yes, be analytic while planning a life for yourself. But be authentic while you live it. Choose the relationships you want to foster, then be yourself and allow them to develop.

Celebrate every success.

I try to do something worthwhile every day. Then, I write it on a slip of paper and fill up a jar over the course of a few months. Don't compare yourself to others. If you're proud of something, it's a success! Write it down and put it in the jar. Challenge yourself to keep things interesting. Even if you have habits, find the uniqueness in each day's activities or encounters.

The world is rich with social opportunities. I hope you can find ones that make you happy in your new home.

SERV Updates at Olin

Kelly Brennan
Contributor

BARCC Walk for Change: Peer Advocates and Maire Keene

The Babson-Olin Team successfully piled onto a bus on April 10th to raise funds and show their support at the Annual BARCC Walk For Change, with the 7 Olin student team members' registration funded by SERV. The event was a great success, with beautiful weather, a lovely walk by the river, and several inspiring speakers and powerful BARCC projects on display.

Peer Advocates: Welcoming new PAs to the team: Michael Costello, Emily Engel, Kaitlyn Keil, Louise Nielsen, and Taylor Sheneman! They'll be trained in the Fall, right before New Student Orientation. Also, the Climate Survey results are out, and Alison Black will be hosting two talks about the

results next week (May 2nd and 5th).

The Daily Table: Led by Emily Yeh

Volunteer at Daily Table in Dorchester! A group from Olin will volunteer over the summer (date and time to be determined, based on volunteering availabilities). Look for an email soon to sign up (tinyurl.com/OlinDailyTable). If you have any questions, please contact Emily!

The Food Recovery Network: Led by Mackenzie Frackleton with GROW

FRN will continue over the summer, and Mackenzie and Isaac NEED volunteers! Contact Isaac if you're interested, or if you have a car and are willing to drive between Framingham and Olin (20 minutes each way). Olin van and zipcar drivers are also welcome, FRN just can't happen without drivers!

Youth CITIES: Andrew Holmes

Andrew has been mentor-

ing for the Youth CITIES March to May Bootcamp every week, helping teach students how to leverage their local resources and define a business idea based around a specific problem they face in their community. Andrew has advised and helped specific students prepare for their final presentation and competition on May 7th in front of venture capitalists and entrepreneurs.

Big Brother Big Sister College Campus Program: The BBBS program spent the first half of April preparing for and executing on a lemonade stand at Babson to raise money and teach the Littles about entrepreneurship. Then, last week, the program at Olin and Babson came to a close for this year with an end-of-year party which Littles' parents and BBBS's associates at Babson came to. Justin Kunimune and Max Wei will reunite with their respective Littles next fall.

So Long, Farewell

Jayce Chow
Editor in Chief

Welcome to Finals Week.

I'll start this one the same way I did last year: "In two short weeks, the Class of 2016 will be graduating, leaving Olin to join the real world."

A few others (myself included) will be leaving for a little to a very long while, to broaden their horizons, take a stab at a job before graduating, or for personal reasons.

Regardless of who you are and whether or not you plan to spend the whole summer on campus or only visit once in a blue moon, I have one request for you: write, and write often.

Last November, I received a post card from David Pudlo '15. It was a picture of the Golden Gate Bridge with a hand drawn bicycle on it.

The back contained a Frankly Speaking article with advice to first years, and Oliners in general.

This was not the first

alumnus contributor Frankly Speaking has ever had, but it was the first time (for me, at least) to have received an article in a format other than Google Doc, Word, or email.

Everyone at this school knows how to write. We all had to take an AHS foundation class, after all.

I'm not asking for 1000 words in the middle of finals week (although I will note that this is the largest issue of the year, even during one of the busiest times).

If you have five minutes during your commute this summer, jot some words down on your phone.

If you're sitting through another meeting that has run long over its time box, pretend like you're attentively taking notes and write a short story.

If you're waiting to meet someone for coffee and they haven't shown up yet, write a mini article on the napkin.

I try to write as little as possible for this paper, because that way it acts as a venue for people in this

community to voice their thoughts and opinions. I can't do that without articles.

So whether that's a Google Doc at 3AM or a postcard from the city you're living in or a snap shot of that cafe napkin, I'm happy to publish what you write.

Now, onto the fun nitty gritty details.

As I said earlier, I'm not going to be here next Fall. Frankly Speaking has two wonderful distributors, Mitch Cieminski and Justin Kuni-mune, who will be printing, folding, and handing out the paper on the night preceding the first weekday of the month.

Because I would love for them both to *not* want to quit after the first month, articles are going to be due a bit earlier this semester (I will send out a schedule in the email).

There you have it. Good luck outside of Olin, even if it's for the few short weeks until the dorms reopen. And again, write.

Want to write for Frankly Speaking?

Send us your articles at

JAYCE.CHOW@STUDENTS.OLIN.EDU

Or check out the website at

[HTTP://FRANKLYSPEAKINGNEWS.COM](http://FRANKLYSPEAKINGNEWS.COM)

Olin College of Engineering does not endorse and is not affiliated with Frankly Speaking.

Editor-in-Chief: Jayce Shea Chow

Distributors: Mitch Cieminski, Justin Kuni-mune

Contributors: Kelly Brennan, Kelsey Breseman, Aaron Greiner, Izzy Harrison, Trevor Hooton, Leon Lam, Victoria Preston