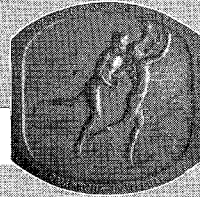


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## Why an Alumni Association

By ALLAN L. LAWS

**A**N ALUMNI Association, if it is to live, grow, and prosper, and be other than a name, must fulfill some function which is not fulfilled by any other organization or by any other means at the disposal of us qualified to belong. It should not provide merely a means of making inspection trips or of periodically meeting other alumni in the immediate vicinity for dinner and listening to a speaker. The Institute is now 25 years old, and its predecessor, Throop, dates back to the turn of the century. Most graduates, therefore, have reached the age where they belong to service clubs, professional societies, trade associations, or other groups which can adequately satisfy the need for meeting with others engaged in the same kind of work or with others of similar background or interests.

Why then an Association? Inasmuch as a qualification for membership is that a member at sometime in his life must have been a student on the Tech campus, perhaps to answer our question we should review the years when we were Tech students. Those years were among the most impressionable of our entire lives. We were led during that time to appreciate the works of the great, both dead and living; we were taught to think clearly; we founded friendships which will last during our lifetime; and we were admonished that "The Truth shall make you free." President Hyde of Bowdoin College gave a broader expression to this thought as follows: "To be at home in all lands and all ages; to count nature a familiar acquaintance and art an intimate friend; to gain a standard for the appreciation of other men's work and the criticism of one's own; to carry the keys of the world's library in one's pocket, and feel its resources behind one in whatever task he undertakes; to make hosts of friends among the men of one's own age who are to be leaders in all walks of life; to lose one's self in generous enthusiasms and cooperate with others for common ends; to learn manners from students who are gentlemen, and to form character under professors who are Christians—these are the returns of a college for the best four years of one's life."

As the years have passed, we who are Tech Alumni have become increasingly conscious of the influence that Tech has had on our lives, and with that reali-

zation comes a feeling of attachment and desire to maintain some connection with the Institute and with our former fellow students. This feeling of attachment is hard to define and place. It must be found in the realm of subtle feeling. It is as hard to define as is the feeling of a daughter or a son for his family or a soldier for his country. In many respects the emotions are similar.

Our Alumni Association satisfies this urge to remain a part of an institution which has had on us such a great influence by providing a connecting link with the Institute and a means of associating with other alumni. Associated with that desire for closeness is the hope that in some way we can repay a portion of the obligation that we owe our college. Again an association offers the desired medium in one very concrete manner by assisting the Institute in maintaining a Placement Service. This Placement Service is a real obligation, for the Institute, having given the graduate a degree and so approved him as an alumnus, turns over to the alumni from that time on a large share of the responsibility for that new graduate. Dr. Millikan expressed the close relationship between the Institute and the alumni in his Introduction to *Engineering and Science* when he said, "The alumni are by far the best representatives of the Institute's ideals, training and accomplishments, and through their contacts can exercise a vital influence on the future place of C.I.T. in American life. Reciprocally the prestige of the Institute is an invaluable asset to every alumnus."

To those who live too far from Pasadena and Los Angeles to attend meetings and renew acquaintances both with former friends and with once familiar surroundings, the Association magazine, *Engineering and Science*, serves as a tie. It conveys to our distant alumni news of other graduates and the policies and "pulse" of the Institute itself.

We can now answer our question of "Why an Alumni Association?" by saying that such an association provides the only means for fulfilling a deep-seated need of the alumnus for retaining a connection with both his alma mater and his former associates, and it offers the alumnus a vehicle for discharging in part his obligation to his college.