Dear Friends and Supporters of Trinity College:

In an article in *The American Scholar* in 1998, renowned environmental historian William Cronon noted that a liberal arts education “is about gaining the power and the wisdom, the generosity and the freedom to connect.” Your generosity in providing endowed funding to support academic excellence at Trinity College makes such connections possible. The vibrancy and engagement of both our students and faculty attest to the power of a liberal arts education to connect ideas, people, and places to one another. Your support is integral to the work we do and the ways in which we do it — from collaborative student research and curricular innovation to groundbreaking scholarship and applied learning. Indeed, our academic activities and accomplishments since fall 2014, which we share below, speak to the distinctive ways in which a Trinity liberal arts education connects students to each other and the world around them.

We are especially proud of our students who received prestigious national grants last year. Particularly notable were two seniors, both of them Posse Foundation Scholars, who were awarded Fulbright grants. Yanique Anderson, an international student majoring in theater and dance and human rights, received a Fulbright research award to Norway. Her project on restorative justice and incarceration was inspired by an interdisciplinary course she took at Trinity, combining performance and community-based learning. After Norway, she is headed to graduate school at Columbia University where she has already been accepted. William Schreiber-Stainthorp, a neuroscience major from Chicago, received a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship grant to Malaysia; he plans to apply the cultural competency he gains to a career in medicine.

Among the faculty, it was another stellar year in terms of scholarly recognition, including awards from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and one Guggenheim Fellowship. Zayde Antrim, Associate Professor of History and International Studies, received an NEH grant for her project on *Mapping the Middle East*. Christopher Hager, associate professor of English, was named Public Scholar by a new NEH-funded program. In the social sciences, Reitemeyer Professor of Political Science Kevin McMahon received the Erwin Griswold Prize by the Supreme Court Historical Society for his book *Nixon’s Court*. As part of the honor, Professor McMahon delivered a lecture in the chamber of the Supreme Court and was introduced by one of the justices. Studio arts Professor Pablo Delano’s exhibit “Hartford Seen” was in turn showcased by the Connecticut Historical Society and featured in *The New York Times*.

Our faculty in STEM fields also had a very productive year, recognized by agencies like the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Institutes of Health. An NSF grant, for example, is supporting chemistry professor Timothy Curran’s research into new methods of creating protein shapes, a project providing invaluable research experience to multiple undergraduates and with implications for understanding Alzheimer’s disease. Trinity was also the recipient of an innovative NSF grant, in partnership with several other institutions, funding summer STEM teaching experience for undergraduates.
In addition to these grants, students continued to conduct in-depth research alongside faculty members who published countless peer-reviewed books and articles, often with the assistance of or in collaboration with their students. About 100 students participated in summer research (in labs and archives, locally and abroad), with a fifth of these also presenting their work at academic conferences, while hundreds of others undertook independent studies, senior theses, team projects, and other synthesizing research as part of their capstone experiences. Though featured publications by our faculty members are too many to list here, it is worth noting that David Rosen, Professor and Chair of the English Department, won the prestigious James Russell Lowell Prize for his co-authored book, *The Watchman in Pieces: Surveillance, Literature, and Liberal Personhood*. It was only the second time in more than 40 years that the honor went to a faculty member from a liberal arts college. Likewise, our distinguished Charles Northam Professor of History Samuel Kassow ’66 is having his acclaimed book *Who Will Write Our History?* turned into a major documentary film.

We are also proudly celebrating 25 years of Neuroscience at Trinity as well as the 20th anniversary of our outstanding Community Learning Initiative, at the same time that a new music recital hall is slated to open this spring. The Neuroscience Program’s kickoff event was a lecture by President Joanne Berger-Sweeney, College professor of neuroscience. A year-long series of events will highlight the breadth of a robust interdisciplinary program that actively includes faculty from psychology, biology, chemistry, philosophy, and engineering — all rather remarkable for a liberal arts college. The Community Learning Initiative, in turn, encompasses the entire College, consisting of over 40 courses per year in which students learn by collaborating with community partners in Hartford. Over half of the student body has participated in this successful initiative, which spans academic fields and connects the campus to our city. The new music recital hall provides student artists with access to a recording studio and our entire community with a performance space that can bring together an array of audiences.

The quality of our teaching is a point of pride, and Trinity faculty are consistently experimenting and engaging in self-reflection and assessment. The Center for Teaching and Learning supported a cohort of faculty fellows to spend the year honing pedagogical techniques, including projects that display quantitative data in the classroom and apply case methods from professional schools to urban engagement in Hartford. Some faculty undertook collaborative teaching experiments, including three historians who created a popular course that explored the natural world and human history, sharing a syllabus and meeting jointly one day a week in a town hall setting. Public displays of student learning, whether in presenting econometrics projects to the campus, mounting original performances and exhibits, or competing in Mock Trial, the Fed Challenge, or our own International Robotics Contest, all speak to the broad-based skills offered by a liberal arts education.

Trinity’s curriculum and learning experiences depend fundamentally on the talents and dedication of our faculty; and we are very fortunate this year to have added six tenure track members to our faculty in American studies, anthropology and religion, economics, mathematics, psychology, and public policy and law. The curriculum itself has undergone a few changes, including creating a new five-year joint BA/MA in American studies and recasting our longstanding Guided Studies Program into a more general gateway to the humanities. The second year of our pilot January Term was even more successful than the first, enrolling over 60 students across several courses. Students from all majors also continue engaging in experiential credit bearing work, from participating in internship seminars to producing digital portfolios of their work. As part of our broader commitment to enhancing local access to higher education, students from the neighboring Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy are now enrolling in some of our courses. On the global front, a team of Trinity faculty and students traveled over the summer to China and Myanmar, studying river cities and sustainable development in the field, while an expanded partnership with Fudan University will now facilitate a formal faculty exchange program with one of China’s top-ranked universities.
Experimenting with technology is of course vitally relevant. Last year, we joined other selective liberal arts colleges in a partnership with edX. Our first courses have already launched this fall, including Computer Science Professor Ralph Morelli’s very popular course on Mobile Computing with App Inventor. Likewise, leveraging our telepresence technology, we completed the first year of a grant from the Council of Independent Colleges focused on online humanities instruction. Our project connects Russian Studies classrooms on Trinity’s campus synchronously with those at Connecticut College. Also at the forefront of digital innovation, several members of our faculty and staff produced a book this year with the University of Michigan Press on *Web Writing: Why and How for Liberal Arts Teaching and Learning*.

We also continue strengthening our administrative academic structures so we might better support the educational experiences of all students. In particular, we are in the midst of reaccreditation by the New England Association of Colleges and Universities, with an external review visit scheduled for March 2017. A set of committees has been engaging in critical and thoughtful self-assessment, in the same way that our academic departments are now defining learning goals and assessment plans. This year has also seen the restructuring of the dean of faculty’s office, intended to provide more direct access to the deans and enhance our capacity for longer term academic planning.

The announced departure of Thomas Mitzel, to assume the presidency of Dickinson State University in North Dakota, represents a wonderful opportunity for Tom. The College has now initiated a national search for his replacement, and a new dean of the faculty/vice president for academic affairs is expected to begin in July 2016. In the meantime, we will work to ensure ongoing academic excellence, energized by President Berger-Sweeney’s call to “Go Boldly and Be Engaged.”

Reflecting on the past year, one of the most exciting developments at the College has been the creation of the Bantam Network, a unique student-designed mentoring initiative that connects curricular and co-curricular learning for first-year students and prepares them for success. This is the power of a liberal arts college at its best, creating multiple reinforcing opportunities — in and out of the classroom — for students *learning to connect*, to each other and the world around them. You make those transformative learning experiences possible. On behalf of our students, faculty, and staff, we thank you, wholeheartedly so, for your impressive generosity and commitment to Trinity College.

Sincerely yours,

Sonia Cardenas  Melanie Stein
Interim Dean of the Faculty  Interim Dean of the Faculty
Professor of Political Science  Professor of Mathematics