

Carolyn A. Pelzel
Trinity College Class of 1974
Doctor of Humane Letters

You were a member of the second class of women at Trinity, a trailblazer who thrived. You majored in both French and religion, served as a teaching assistant in the French Department, sang in the Concert Choir, and participated as an early member of the varsity women's squash team. You have said that your "undergraduate experience was truly transformative, leaving you with an enduring passion for education and the desire to make similar experiences possible for all students."

That passion and desire have guided your career in advancement and higher education, most recently when you returned to the College in 2023 to shepherd the All In campaign after then-Vice President for Advancement Michael Casey tragically passed away. You first stepped into the role of executive director of the campaign after serving as a consultant and adviser. Your intimate knowledge of—and round-the-clock commitment to—Trinity's goals and strategic objectives helped you guide the historic effort to success. The College also benefited from your vast experience through your expert leadership of the Advancement Division, from which you retired last year as interim vice president. During your brief tenure, Trinity raised the highest level of annual philanthropic support in its history.

Your professional journey includes 15 years at Dartmouth College, where you served as senior vice president for advancement and led the \$1.3 billion Campaign for the Dartmouth Experience through the Great Recession to its successful December 2009 completion. Before Dartmouth, you spent more than a decade at Harvard University, where you served as associate director of university development and director of external relations. There you helped plan the launch of Harvard's \$2.3 billion campaign, an effort that was completed successfully in 1999. Prior to Harvard, you served as executive vice president of The Williamson Group, a start-up providing computing systems for nonprofits. You also held leadership roles at the National Association of Independent Schools and at your high school alma mater, Northfield Mount Hermon.

Since retiring from Trinity, you have turned your attention to Women's Lunch Place (WLP) in Boston, a nonprofit that works with more than 2,300 women a year to eliminate hunger, homelessness, and poverty. A WLP board member, you are supporting the organization as it enters a major strategic planning phase and an expansion of its services and philanthropic capacity.

At Trinity, your unwavering dedication is indisputable. You serve as a member of the Presidential Advisers, a group of alumni distinguished by significant, sustained service to Trinity. You have been a member of the Board of Trustees and the Board of Fellows, as well as a Long Walk Societies volunteer, a class agent, and a member of your Reunion Gift Committee. In 2024, you served as your class's Reunion Gift Chair and led the Class of 1974 to set a 50th Reunion record for Trinity.

Your valued involvement throughout the years has not gone unnoticed. The College honored you in 1999 with the 175th Anniversary Award, given to those who exemplify the College's mission and uphold its proud tradition of scholarship, leadership, and innovation, and in 1989 with the Alumni Medal for Excellence, awarded annually to alumni who have made significant contributions to their professions, to their communities, and to Trinity.

In recognition of your enormous contributions in the realm of higher education and advancement and of your unflagging commitment to Trinity College and its future, I have the honor of presenting you, Carolyn A. Pelzel, for the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*.