



# ON THE VINE

THE IVY CLUB NEWSLETTER

Spring 2020

## Graduate President's Report



[above] Dominic Moross '90

As I write, we are in the eye of the COVID19 storm. At the directive of the University, which has adopted a virtual educational platform, we, together with the rest of the Street, have closed until further notice. I hope that, by the time you receive

our newsletter, things might have calmed down. While the situation remains fluid, I want to acknowledge and commend Betty, our officers and my fellow Governors for the professional manner in which they have managed this discombobulating moment in all of our lives. As leaders and crucial members of our community, as a team, they have risen to the occasion in a multitude of ways, providing direction, support, friendship and comfort. I want to acknowledge our new undergraduate President, Claire Guthrie '21, who has served as a helpful set of eyes and ears on the ground, proactively answering questions of her peers and easing the transition to this brave new world. Needless to say, we hope that things will return to normal as soon as possible and that our members and club employees can return to Ivy. Until then, we are keeping a careful eye on the situation, respecting social distancing, the surest way to minimize the impact of this virus.

In the past few weeks, you will have received our announcement that, after over 2 years of negotiation, we reached an agreement to sell our parking lot to the University. The decision,

unanimously approved by our Board of Governors, was not made lightly. We weighed the pros and cons carefully and over a long period of time, concluding that the sale will be transformational for the Club. We will be able to ensure financial security for generations to come; accommodate the University to our benefit as it embarks on this project with or without us; make necessary and long overdue renovations to modernize our historic building; and landscape and beautify our back yard. I have no doubt that this important step will serve to ensure that we remain one of the most desirable clubs on the street.

The Annual Dinner in commemoration of our 140th anniversary took place on Dec 5th, 2019. The night, held at New York's Racquet & Tennis Club, will live long in all our memories. A full house, with members from all generations attended, including 25 from the class of 2020. Bringing together members of different ages and observing the warmth and familiarity with which they converse, sharing mutual Ivy experiences, is a tonic and what makes our club unique. Our dinner was capped by a wonderful keynote speech by Lt. General Chris Cavoli '87, current Commander of the US Army in Europe. Dressed in his splendid uniform, Chris gave us all reason to feel such pride, not only due to his stature but also for the decidedly real and human nature of his talk, relating the importance of Ivy to him, both as a student and in his career. No pontification, no judgment, no advice, Chris simply and successfully conveyed a comforting feeling about his time at Ivy which is not easily expressed in words.

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## Interview with Serena Alagappan '20, Rhodes Scholar



[above] Serena Alagappan '20

In a recent interview with the Princetonian, you shared that you were raised in a bicultural family, with your mother being raised in an Orthodox Jewish home, and your father being raised in a traditional Hindu home. What do you think religious narratives have to offer us today? Which themes and motifs have you found to be connective/corroborative, if any?

Religious narratives can ground and animate our current experience with enduring stories from the past. Sometimes, these narratives even offer us the opportunity to grow into (not out of) them with age, promoting lifelong exploration and discovery. My grandfather used to tell me that God dwells in human beings. Kindness to others is like praying at their temple. These figurative and loving implications are the parts of religious narratives that I find most compelling and emotionally resonant.

**What does being a member of Ivy mean to you? What initially drew you to the Club, and how do you imagine you will remember it as you move on from Princeton?**

I was initially drawn to the Club because my sister had earlier been a member and I always looked up to her and her friends. . . I will remember the Club as a fun place to dance after a long week and a lovely place to study. I will remember the great bands that have come to lawn parties. I will definitely remember the French toast (it's delicious!). When I reflect on my time at Princeton, I am extraordinarily grateful for the beautiful set of meals I have had with friends around tables--some with, and some without, white cloth and candelabras. To me, being a member of Ivy means sharing the club with as many friends from around campus as I can. Ultimately, I am most thankful for the wide array of conversations I engaged in at Princeton—with club members as well as

individuals from different clubs, backgrounds, and perspectives.

**What do you think is a human being's most powerful mode of story-telling? How might we strengthen that mode (or preserve it)?**

For one person, it might be film, for another painting, for another theater, and yet another, poetry. Someone might find the most compelling stories emerge from data gathered in a science lab, while someone else might search for meaning in historical archives. Regrettably, I do think storytelling, whether spoken, written, or signed, is often relegated to something less rigorous or meaningful than other academic subjects. We often hear about how the humanities are under siege, and I think that's a shame! I believe one way we might strengthen and preserve any mode of storytelling is by recognizing two things. First, stories engender empathy. We study literature because it helps us live. Stories help us develop compassion for people who are and are not like us. Well told stories transcend difference. Second, stories are sanctuaries for culture. They shelter the religious ideals, political realities, technological innovations and artistic impulses and creations of a society. We can preserve stories by prioritizing humanistic inquiry, and recognizing the inextricable connection between literature and life.

**What would you say is your greatest motivation?**

My greatest motivation is love. Love for my family, love for my friends and community, love for languages, love for the characters I encounter in stories.. I am motivated to be a good friend, to be loyal and dependable to the people I have in my life. I love Princeton, and am extremely grateful to Comparative Literature. The Department gave me the liberty to exercise my creative passions and explore wide-ranging academic interests, from French, Latin, and German works in translation, to Modernist English Literature and American Sign Language.

*This interview was conducted prior to the coronavirus outbreak. Travel plans are currently indeterminate.*

## Graduate President's Report

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Our undergraduate members continue to impress. I would like to congratulate two seniors, Serena Alagappan '20 and Nate Levit '20 who have been awarded, respectively, Rhodes and Schwartzman Scholarships. I hope you enjoy their interviews which were conducted by Alanna Boudreau, our Director of Member Services. I would like to thank our outgoing officers, led by Undergraduate President, David Babikian, for their steadfast commitment

and service to our club and welcome our incoming officers who have already proved themselves in the throes of the current crisis.

These are, indeed, unsettling times but I have no doubt that pragmatism and the resilience of humanity will prevail. Once we are able to reopen our doors, we shall move forward stronger than before with the same values and sense of purpose which have characterized our club and given us pride for the last 140 years.



Some of Club members requested an African Lunch. Chef Nestor, Cynthia and our steward Betty Rascher met with some of our members who are African and asked for suggestions and recipes. Kwame Amaning, whose family is from Ghana and now live in London, was a great help. As it turned out, his mom was in Princeton for a visit and she joined Nestor and Cynthia in the kitchen and helped them prepare an authentic African meal. This lunch was well received by the membership.



On Sunday, November 24th, Ivy hosted the Princeton Disabilities Awareness Carnival, an event that drew around 30 children with disabilities from families in the Princeton area. This event represented an ongoing effort by the student-led Princeton Disabilities Awareness committee to host inclusive community events on Princeton's campus. A large range of abilities, ages, and



backgrounds were represented. For three hours, volunteers (including members of The Ivy Club) and their 'buddies' enjoyed arts and crafts, snacks, and games, as well as two acapella performances and a dance show. The event was a big success, with a larger volunteer turnout than ever before, and was only made possible with Ivy's generous cooperation!

## News from the Vine



[above] Classes of '87-'91 in attendance – 140th Anniversary Celebration Dinner December 2019



[above] Current and former Ivy rowers (including 2 World Champions, Doug Burden & undergrad on left in U19 Championships for Germany).



[above] Michael Murphy '95, Justin Sulger '96 and Bryan Cho '95. The three of them enjoyed a day at Buckholdt in Hampshire this past October and decided the event warranted them all wearing their Ivy ties.





## Interview with Nate Levit '20, Schwarzman Scholar

*This interview was conducted prior to the coronavirus outbreak. Travel plans are currently indeterminate.*

Nate, warm congratulations on being awarded the Schwarzman scholarship. What does this opportunity mean to you?

It's an incredible honor. I'm excited to use the opportunity to spend a year studying China's poverty mitigation policies. 800 million Chinese citizens have been lifted out of extreme poverty in the last few decades. However, this progress has come with remarkable costs. I look forward to using the scholarship as a springboard to continue pursuing policies that ensure no one is held responsible for the circumstances of their own birth.

You will be studying economics and business, international studies, and public policy at Tsinghua University in Beijing, starting this August. Which of these areas of study are you most interested in, and how have you gained knowledge of it via concrete experiences?

The great benefit of being from Green Country, in Oklahoma is that I've seen the power of a small group of dedicated people in the policy process. With that being said, I look forward to expanding my knowledge base past public policy by taking courses in economics and business. Through this, I hope to further understand the push-and-pull between public regulation and private innovation.

You have an interest in creating effective public policy to improve social outcomes. What is your earliest memory of desiring to create a more equitable society? In your opinion, how might one turn the scales toward fairness and justice in their day-to-day life, and what does this look like for you?

The reality of inequality crystallized for me at my high school, Booker T. Washington High, where most people received free and reduced lunch. The people I went to high school with were just as smart, intellectually curious, and dedicated as anyone I've met at Princeton, yet because of circumstances beyond their own control they often were unable to continue their education.

As for your next question, I'm not convinced that I, or anyone, have the perfect answer for balancing the scales of grotesque inequality. What I do know is this: our public discourse constantly substitutes applause lines about inequality for actual proven solutions.

We should probably talk about free pre-k rather than free college; we should hear debate responses about child poverty rather than manufactured controversies over out-of-context quotes; we should see headlines about massive cuts to social safety net programs rather than ad-hominem attacks or bumper-sticker solutions. I'm worried that when it comes to the basic function of our government—to ensure that everyone in America has equality of opportunity—we have lost the forest for the trees.

One of your areas of study is journalism. What's a topic that you feel is underrepresented in mainstream news and media?

I am concerned about the future of local news. Newspapers have lost half of their employees in the last decade, and 1,300 localities have lost news coverage. This creates real problems like no reporter checking in on the county commissioners meeting or no investigations into local governments, important tasks that no Twitter account can fully replace. Rumors go unconfirmed, crimes go unreported, acts of corruption go uninvestigated. I also think that newspapers closing has the downstream effect of nationalizing politics: elections become less about a problem in the community and more about some vague conception of ideology.

Outside of academics, what enlivens you and gives meaning to your life?

As any of my friends can attest, I'm very easily entertained. I'm fortunate enough to enjoy very simple things, whether it's an Oklahoma Sooners football game or a well-written piece of creative nonfiction. And, of course, I love nothing more than spending my weekends with friends and family.

Any plans to explore while you are abroad? What do you want to see and experience?

I've never visited China, I don't know the language, and I've never taken a class focused solely on the country. I can only imagine that walking through the streets of Beijing for the first time will be a breathtaking experience. I plan to explore the entire continent, finding a new destination each passing weekend, and immerse myself as holistically as possible. I'm most excited to just learn by osmosis, taking in every sight, participating in every activity, talking to every person.

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## Greetings from Ivy's New President



Hi everyone, I'm Claire Guthrie. I was elected Undergraduate President of the Club in late February. I am a junior from New York City and am studying computer science. Needless to say, the world quickly turned upside down in these past couple of weeks for all of

us and we have each been working to make the best of the situation.

The first weeks of the spring semester were obviously incredibly challenging ones. As the University made decisions to help mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on the Princeton community, here at Ivy, we grappled with our own challenges in our efforts to keep our members safe while also maintaining the home and the community that makes our club so special. It started with late night ICC meetings with administrators, countless emails to the Graduate Board, and many conversations with the members. We had to make a lot of hard decisions, and eventually had no other option but to close the Club. In our last days together, we did our best to give our seniors a proper send-off, bring together all our members, while keeping everyone safe and healthy. Our "Last Supper" was full of a lot of laughter, tears, music, dancing, and a few too many hugs (social distancing is hard when you're saying goodbye).

I am so proud and grateful to have worked with an incredible group of officers as well as the group

of the outgoing officers to lean on throughout. We are so thankful to David, Tasha, Couty, Nate, and Shehab for all of their support, as well as for their incredible leadership throughout this past year. I am very excited to introduce the new group of diverse, talented, and passionate Ivy leaders: Sydney Maple (Vice President), Alexander Jacobson (Social Chair), Edward Mowinckel (Treasurer), and Sasha Culley (House Manager/Bicker Chair). I cannot wait to work, live, and learn so much from and with all of them next year.

The rest of this semester will undoubtedly be different from what we were expecting this spring, but we are doing our best to try to keep the Ivy community strong. Although 43 Prospect Ave may be empty, we are in the process of planning some fun virtual ways to connect with each other and keep our traditions alive. We are even planning our first Zoom members night!

Despite all of the challenges, I am really excited to announce that we admitted a great new sophomore class this spring. I know I am speaking for all upperclassmen when I say I cannot wait to get to know each and every one of them better when we return to campus next fall. I really do believe that this unprecedented time is bringing us closer not only as an Ivy community, but also as a Princeton community. Even though this spring has been challenging, I am confident that we will look back on even these memories fondly. In the end it is all about our relationships and the experiences we share together. One thing is for sure, we will never forget this one! I encourage you all to come back to Princeton and visit Ivy sometime next year, and hope that I get the opportunity to meet many of you soon.



[above] Ivy Club Class of 2020



## COVID19 appeal

If not already done, please pay your dues and consider giving a voluntary donation to the club. Your help has never been more needed than now to help support our devoted staff. You can easily do so by clicking on the link below.

[PLEASE CLICK HERE TO GO DIRECTLY TO OUR PAYMENT PAGE](#)

### Ivy Club Staff:

**Nestor Pacheco - 20 years- Head Chef**  
**Sergio Candel - 19 years - Maintenance/Housekeeping**  
**Cynthia Hernandez Cruz - 10 years - Breakfast/lunch chef**  
**Victor Cruz - 10 years - Maintenance/Housekeeping Supervisor**  
**Rasheed Williams - 9 years - Dishwasher**  
**Lorena Ruiz - 9 years - Dining Room Server**  
**Carmen Minera - 4 years - Dining Room Server**  
**Jose Pelaez - 5 years - Kitchen Helper**  
**Alex Baltazar - 2 years - Dinner Chef**  
**Antonia Davila - 2 years - Dining Room Server**  
**Miriam Solares Chojon - 2 years - Dining Room Server**  
**James Edwards - 2 years - Weekend Chef**  
**Lateshia Johnson - 1 year - Dining Room Server**  
**Carlos Bariones - 1 year - Prep Cook**  
**Oscar Reyes - Maintenance/Housekeeping**  
**Elisa Rivera - Dining Room Server**  
**Edwin Gonzales - Weekend Dishwasher**  
**Marvin Carrillo - Dining Room Captain**  
**Nathaniel Booker - Kitchen Helper/Dining Room Server**

## Nate Levit '20

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**Finally, can you share with us your favorite memory of Ivy, and/or what the Club has meant to you?**

Ivy has been a highlight of my Princeton experience. The class above me welcomed me with open arms, and I've thoroughly enjoyed getting to know those in my section and those in the year below. I'll cherish the friendships I've made at 43 Prospect Avenue forever, whether it was hatched playing games on the foyer couches, dancing in the tap room, or sitting down in the dining hall. I know that I will look back on my years in Ivy as a time where I really could be myself.

**The Ivy Club, Board of Governors***William J. B. Brady III '87**Allison Sewell Bridges '96**Peter L. Briger, Jr. '86**James M. Buck III '81**Leonard S. Coleman, Jr. '71**Robert A. Engel '86 (Secretary)**George L. K. Frelinghuysen '73**Benjamin H. Griswold IV '62**J. Regan Kerney '68 (House Chair)**George C. Knight '89**John C. MacMurray '61**Kevin McGowan '95**Corbin R. Miller '71 (Treasurer)**Dominic H. R. Moross '90 (President)**Moyin Opeyemi '19**Shea Owens '94**Folasade Runcie '18**Ryan M. Salvatore '02**Marco A. Tablada '93**Antony L. Taylor '01**William C. Ughetta Jr. '82**John L. Zacharias '11***Ivy 1879 Foundation, Board of Trustees***Erik M. W. Caspersen '92**Alexander D. Evans '90 (Secretary)**Gregory L. Guyett '85**Frances P. Jain '97**Wyatt G. Rockefeller '07**Caroline R. Shifke '12**Alexander T. van Hoek '08 (Treasurer)**Holly Sanderson Garrett '91 (President)**T. Randolph Harris '72 (Counsel)***Staff***Steward**Betty Rascher**steward@theivyclub.net**(609) 924-2236**Director of Member Services**Alanna Boudreau**alanna.boudeau@theivyclub.net**(607) 597-9242***Donations**

The Ivy 1879 Foundation supports the preservation of Ivy's historic Clubhouse, educational initiatives including Leadership and Roundtable programs, and financial aid to help Ivy students maintain their membership in the Club.

Tax-deductible donations to the Foundation can be made by check or online at [theivyclub.org](http://theivyclub.org)  
**Thank you!**

