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May 19, 2023

This fundraising appeal letter will be President Sue Darlington's last, as she is retiring after three years at the head of Deep Springs College. Andy Zink will take over the role on July 1, 2023, and the College looks forward to welcoming him!

When Sue Darlington arrived to be the first woman president at Deep Springs College the Covid pandemic was in full swing, vaccines were not yet available, and academic institutions around the world faced an uncertain future. The global challenges facing Deep Springs were plentiful. Sue soon realized that the College had its own unique challenges and was very capable of creating new ones, which required flexibility, creativity, and a sense of humor.

In addition to the ever-changing requirements and safety concerns posed by the pandemic, the past several years have seen a large amount of staff and faculty turnover. Over the course of her tenure, Sue was tasked with replacing Padraic and Shelby MacLeish, who embodied decades of institutional knowledge and filled numerous critical roles including the Director of Operations, Chief Financial Officer, Mechanic, Garden Manager, and Associate Dean of Student Development. Additionally, Sue's time in the Valley involved hiring a new Dean, Development Director, BH Manager, Farm Manager (twice), Maintenance Manager, and Office Manager, among other staff, plus new long-term and short-term faculty.

These circumstances could be read as a litany of woes. Instead, the College's response has been one of resilience and resourcefulness. Unsurprisingly, the students led the way, not only keeping the College operational, but pursuing new projects and demonstrating a willingness to embrace new roles on campus and afterwards. A few examples include:

- Rory O'Hollaren DS18 served as the first female returning cowboy in summer 2021, then returned as the SumSem writing tutor for 2022 and again in 2023.
- Milo Vella DS19 developed a relationship with the Paiute in Big Pine, working with them on food sovereignty issues as part of his studies at Cornell. He currently serves as Garden Manager for the Big Pine Paiute Tribe.
- Members of DS20 (last year Declan Rexer, this year Alice Owen and Nathan Becker) helped create a farm hand position for recent grads to help weather the challenges of not having a permanent farmer on staff.
- Lana Mahbouba DS21, as student trustee, served a critical role on the presidential search committee.
- Clara Geraghty and Maccabee Armstrong, both DS22, served as consecutive LCs during a trying winter and spring. The college faced a major snowstorm and labor shortage with both staff and SB, but Clara and Mac ensured the successful management of essential tasks.
- Graduates continue to transfer to excellent schools, including Chicago, Columbia, Brown, Swarthmore, Yale, and Reed, among others. Aubryn Kaine DS19 will be the first Deep Springer

to attend a women's college when she arrives at Mount Holyoke this fall (after completing farrier school at Cornell this spring).

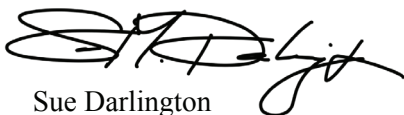
While students engaged with the Three Pillars and pursued Nunn's mission of preparing for lives of service, the staff and faculty made their own contributions. Ryan Derby-Talbot, as Dean, and Ciarán Willis, as Operations Manager, are poised to build upon the successes of the past few years. Tim Gipson continues his solid leadership as Ranch Manager and the addition of Ben Holgate as Garden Manager has been a boon to food production and crop stewardship. The long-term faculty situation is as strong as it has ever been with Antón Barba-Kay and Anna Feuer filling the Robert Aird Chair of Humanities and the Julian Steward Chair of Social Science, respectively. Brian Hill is the Herbert Reich Chair of Natural Science, and Ryan Derby-Talbot teaches mathematics. In addition to the stellar group of long-term faculty, short-term academic opportunities have expanded across the curriculum.

As Sue leaves the Valley, two massive construction projects—by far the largest at the College in over two decades—are wrapping up. Despite the pandemic, supply chain issues, weather events, and other setbacks, the new faculty triplex and boardinghouse are scheduled to be completed *under budget*. A within-budget construction project on this scale is noteworthy during normal times, never mind the circumstances that have existed over the past few years. Sue worked with architect Christian Stayner DS00, general contractor Ken Carpenter, Padraic MacLeish DS99, the TDS Board, and numerous others to manage costs and keep things moving forward despite repeated setbacks. BH Manager Brian Shulse and Assistant Lori Collins-Delhez are already hard at work with the BH team to make the new building an exciting place to eat and work.

The financial situation of Deep Springs has remained stable thanks to steady leadership across the years that prepared the school for economic downturns and unforeseen circumstances. Additionally, Sue and the Board have availed themselves of federal resources designed to provide support in the form of the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) and Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERC) program. While the college has faced numerous unexpected expenses this year (from the snowstorms, aging vehicles, damaged infrastructure, and increased operating expenses), the staff has worked hard to stay within their budgets and keep the college running well.

The Valley will welcome new President Andy Zink on July 1, which is also the beginning of the next fiscal year. Please give what you can to keep Deep Springs financially stable and able to continue to withstand economic challenges. In addition, please consider kicking in some extra to celebrate Sue's tenure and to get Andy's leadership off to a good start. As always, supporting our students on their paths towards service to humanity is a strong investment in the future.

Thank you for your generosity!



Sue Darlington
President



Koll Jensen
Development Director