I. The Elements of 50th Reunion Giving to Williams College

To foster generosity in giving at this milestone in our lives, Williams College will count contributions in three major buckets toward the total 50th Reunion gift by our Class:

1. Our cumulative Alumni Fund contributions made between July 2014 and June 2024, plus pledges for Alumni Fund gifts to be funded by 2029.

2. A special endowed class-wide 50th Reunion Fund gift aimed at one or more particular purposes. As announced in the accompanying materials and further explained below, our goal is to endow The Class of 1974 Student Opportunity Fund.

3. All other gifts to the college – whether in cash or in kind – made by any members of the Class since July 2014 to support particular purposes of personal interest to the donors (for example, directed scholarships, capital gifts for buildings or programs, etc.), along with pledges of endowment gifts to be funded through 2029, and deferred gifts made through will bequests, trusts and other forms of charitable giving.

II. The ’74 Gift Purpose Committee and the Process of Selecting the Gift Purpose

With reference to the class-wide 50th Reunion Gift Purpose, we sought to bring together interested members of the Class of 1974 to help to shape our gift and recommend its purpose. More than thirty classmates agreed to participate in the “Gift Purpose Committee”, which spent considerable time starting in late 2021 and continuing through the Summer of 2022 in extensive discussions about the purposes and design of our gift. This process included:

- Regular Zoom meetings.
- Review of the college’s Strategic Plan released in 2021.
- Presentations by members of the college administration and faculty including; President Maud Mandel; former Provost Dukes Love; Executive Director of the ’68 Center for Career Exploration Don Kjelleren; Dean of Admissions & Student Financial Services Liz Creighton ’01; former Dean of the College Marlene Sandstrom; Dean of the Faculty Safa Zaki; Provost Eiko Maruko Siniawer ’97; Brown Professor of History Magnus Bernhardsson;
Assistant Professor of Geosciences Jose Constantine; and Class of 1956 Director of the Williams College Museum of Art Pamela Franks.

- Review of our 25th Reunion Gift and its contributions to the college – both tangible and inspirational, through student reports on their experiences and from annual performance summaries.

In this process, we explored a wide variety of gift ideas emanating from both Committee members, other classmates, and the college. From the outset of this process, the following themes resonated throughout our discussions:

- Our gift purpose(s) should be focused on supporting students, not constructing buildings, hiring faculty, etc.
- Our gift purpose(s) should be consistent with initiatives outlined in the college’s Strategic Plan.
- Our gift purpose(s) should be sufficiently broad in purpose, scope and allotment to assure maximum use of available funds each year and to allow efficient use of the gift as circumstances may change over time in the future.
- Our gift purpose(s) should be easy for the college to administer and for us to track results.
- We will ask each classmate to support this class-wide gift purpose and individually-directed giving for those who would prefer to focus their reunion participation in that way, as well as seeking continued support of the college through Alumni Fund giving.

The outcome of this process is the Class of 1974 50th Reunion Gift Purpose: The Class of 1974 Student Opportunity Fund.

III. Building on Our 25th Reunion Class Gift: A Legacy of Success

In 1999, our class-wide 25th Reunion Gift supported Williams and its students by creating a new internship program and providing funding for fellowships and scholarships. (See our 25th Reunion Gift Document accompanying this letter for more background.) A summary of the activity in these three areas appears below.

As a Class, we should take great pride in the forward-thinking and important impact of our 25th Reunion Gift in supporting students with internships, fellowships and scholarships. As a 50th Reunion Class, through The Class of 1974 Student Opportunity Fund, we will promote our legacy of unrestricted support in each area with the intention of emphasizing international learning, community service and multidisciplinary educational opportunities, but always assuring flexibility for the college to make sure that funding is fully deployed each year where most needed and to respond to changes in student interests and needs as they change over time.

a. Internships

Although it was not the largest component of our 1999 Fund, time has proved that the centerpiece of our gift was the Class of 1974 Internship Fund, Williams’ first-ever unrestricted endowment fund established by a class reunion gift to support student internships. Nor did we realize at the time recognize how important this model would become. Our gift has supported the funding of
six interns in each year since 2000, when our internship fund officially came on line. Through Summer 2021, a total of 117 students had received more than $400,000 in internship support from our endowed gift, or roughly $3,400 per student. The overall value of the 1974 Internship Fund as of last summer was $1,000,176.

Students know that they are matched with funds from the Class of 1974 Internship. Each year continue to receive and share the reports on their amazing summer experiences. (A number of recent internship reports accompany this letter.)

Since 1999, internships have become ever more important to students and the college. The financial crisis of 2008 prompted many employers to offer only unpaid internships. In many industries, internships (some paid and some not) became a nearly essential part of career exploration and the post-graduation hiring process. Moreover, in the last 25 years, the nation and the world have seen massive expansion of inequality of income and opportunity, which in turn made internships more and more unaffordable to more and more students who have depended on financial aid.

Little could our “eclectic class” know just how seminal our 1999 gift would prove to be. Don Kjelleren, Director of the college’s ’68 Center for Career Exploration put it this way when the Committee met with him in early 2022:

> Your Class’ 25 years of supporting student success means a lot to me and to the college. Students simply could not have benefited from the number or quality of summer internship experiences without the generosity of your class.

> The foresight was remarkable, and since your 25th [reunion] internships have become “sine qua non” for Williams graduates. Our Center for Career Exploration could not fully support the Career exploration and connection process, now so critical to students, without the engagement of alumni like your Class.

We propose to make support for student internships the centerpiece of our 50th Reunion giving. As in 1999, our gift will be unrestricted so that the college may use it for other internship purposes if, for example, there are not enough candidates in the areas we hope to emphasize, or even for other career exploration-related purposes if internships are someday no longer a needed means to support students. We believe the Class’s support for internships will stand the test of time, as it has for the last quarter-century. As the world evolves, what interns do may change, but the basic need for experiential education will persist.

b. **Fellowships**

Our Fellowship fund functions in a broader manner than internships by supporting the various Williams College summer fellowship programs that rely on unrestricted funds, like ours, to fill in the gaps for budgeted spending. The Summer Science Research Program employs the largest number of students who live on campus (more than 225 students last summer) and work intensively on research projects under the close supervision of Williams faculty members. Other summer fellowship opportunities include the Summer Science Program and Summer Humanities and Social Sciences Program, which provide an intensive experience for pre-frosh from historically underrepresented backgrounds and first-generation college students; summer sustainability fellowships through the Zilkha Center; and collaborative research in all academic areas through the Summer Academic
Program. These programs, and more, are all made possible by substantial support of the college, by external grants, and by a wide array of endowed funds and class reunion funds like ours.

Since 1999, Williams has derived approximately $400,000 from our 25th Reunion Fund for student fellowship support. The overall value of the Class of 1974 Fellowship Fund as of last summer was $983,118. With expanded funding from our 50th Reunion gift, the fellowship students will know that they are matched with funds from the Class of 1974.

c. Scholarships

Scholarship funding has always been a hallmark of the college’s commitment to maximizing the affordability of a Williams education. Continued support of scholarship aid surely advances the goal of giving all students the chance to sit on The Log and enjoy the special experiences of living and learning at Williams.

Our Class of 1974 Scholarship was established as an unrestricted grant with no preference on purpose and no specific assignment to any particular student. Rather, since 1999, nearly $1,000,000 has been applied to the overall body of funds allocated from the endowment in support of student financial aid. The overall value of the Class of 1974 Scholarship Fund as of last summer was $2,576,429.

We propose to combine new scholarship funding with our existing fund, with preferences for support of international learning, community service and multidisciplinary educational opportunities, but with the flexibility to deploy the resources where most needed. With expanded funding from our 50th Reunion gift, the scholarship students would know that they are matched with funds from the Class of 1974.

IV. Conclusion

Our Class was present on the campus at an important time in the growth of Williams, with the evolution of its curriculum, the expansion of its student and faculty bodies, and the creation of experiential learning opportunities whose progeny continue to set the college apart from its peers. By focusing our 50th Reunion class-wide gift on increased support for students through The Class of 1974 Student Opportunity Fund, which will provide unrestricted, flexible funding aimed at the preferences identified above, we will act in the best traditions of Williams’ alumni who have generously supported our alma mater for more than 200 years, and place our trust in educating future generations of Ephs.
25TH REUNION CAPITAL GIFT CAMPAIGN

Our 25th Reunion in June 1999 provides us with an opportunity to renew old friendships and “reconnect” with Williams. This also is a time when we can make a lasting impact on College life by contributing a significant gift in the name of the Class of 1974.

Purpose of Campaign:

In recognition of the important and memorable role Williams College has played in our lives, the Class of 1974, on the occasion of our 25th Reunion, is endeavoring to raise substantial monies to fund meaningful and enduring capital needs of the College, in addition to continuing our annual Alumni Fund support.

Objectives of the 25th Reunion Gift:

Life at Williams revolves around the students and faculty. Many in our Class attended Williams on financial aid because of the generosity of alumni who came before us, and we all benefited from the challenges of a diverse student body and outstanding faculty. We feel it is appropriate in some way to recognize these two fundamental constituencies with gifts that will profoundly affect the lives of future generations at the College.

The class gift survey, several follow-up conversations and a lengthy discussion by the Steering Committee on June 25, 1998, elicited a variety of comments and ideas. A common theme emerged from these discussions: support for the financial aid programs at the College. Specifically, traditional financial aid support for students’ tuition and stipend support for students learning “beyond the classroom” during the summer months. Rather than restricting or designating our gift to specific areas of discipline, such as the arts or sciences, we believe there is a consensus to provide what amounts to a comprehensive financial aid program that will benefit students for the entire calendar year: nine months of academic calendar and three months of summer. Supporting this breadth of experience, intellectual enrichment both in the classroom and out, seems to capture the prevailing spirit of our time on the campus 25 years ago. Therefore, we have the opportunity to present two compelling gifts to Williams in celebration of our 25th Reunion.

1. Class of 1974 Scholarship. Williams prides itself on its diverse, exceptionally talented students. In a time when many colleges are facing intense pressure to change the way they administer financial aid, Williams continues to maintain a truly “need-blind” admissions policy, in pursuit of the strongest classes possible. Excluding the ability to pay as a criterion for admission is central to the College’s mission. However, the cost of maintaining this policy is increasingly expensive, requiring a greater dependence on endowment income. To help put this into perspective, an average annual scholarship grant requires an endowment of approximately $350,000 per student. This is the number one need at the College now and for the foreseeable future. It is our desire to help students of today and to assist the College in preserving this fundamental policy for the next generation.
2. **Class of 1974 Fellowship and Internship Program.** A new and vital component of the Williams experience for growing numbers of students, summer fellowships and internships supplement the students' academic pursuits with firsthand involvement in research initiatives and professional working environments, many of which are either non-profit or community service oriented. Through fellowship assistance, we will permit students to participate in on-campus faculty research initiatives. This will be both student-oriented and faculty-oriented, designed to enhance the students' academic experience beyond the classroom while assisting the faculty's research needs. Internship support will enable student participation in off-campus community service organizations working with professionals in various fields. In supporting these summer programs, our class will be the first to endow both fellowships and internships at Williams. In so doing, we will provide meaningful assistance to students and faculty to enable increased participation in these worthwhile endeavors.

3. **Other Opportunities.** The opportunity exists to target your gift to other objectives that may fit your individual interest more closely. Either of us or the Director of the 25th Reunion program, John Skavlem '84, will be happy to discuss these and other alternatives more specifically with you.

*Thoughts on the 25th Reunion.*

Williams has unique meaning to us—individually and collectively. Our 25th Reunion is a significant milestone. It's a chance to "reconnect" and celebrate, and a chance to reinvest and contribute. We believe that these Class of 1974 gift objectives represent a consensus of class views, capture the spirit of our Class, and are worthy goals to benefit our alma mater. This is our chance to express our appreciation as a Class for what Williams has meant to us over the past 25 years, and what it will continue to mean to us and the College's future students.

Over the course of this academic year, you will hear from a member of our 25th Reunion Fund Committee, most likely a classmate who resides in your hometown or region. He or she will discuss our reunion gift effort with you. Members of the class will be asked to consider a five-year pledge in response to the Class of 1974 25th Reunion Capital Gift Campaign, as well as continuing their annual support of the Alumni Fund.

This will be the only capital gift campaign we will conduct as a class until our 50th Reunion in 2024. Therefore, we hope that each class member will contribute as generously as possible. For those of us who have not given in the past, now is the time to seriously consider reconnecting with the College and the Class.

Thanks for your generosity and continuing support. We hope this letter will start your thinking about how you would like to contribute. Regardless of your level of support, we hope that each of you will become engaged in the Reunion effort in some way and plan to return to Williamstown, June 10-13, 1999.

Jeff Elliott
Ray Henze
McKelden Smith

September 1998