Dear Waltham Group Member,

Our first semester as co-presidents was certainly a whirlwind. The Waltham Group’s 50th anniversary weekend was a truly special celebration. Hearing from the founders at the Saturday night gala continues to empower us and our fellow coordinators every day to sustain the organization’s amazing legacy of service.

We have continued implementing a new committees structure, began a structural reorganization of the Waltham Group office, and completed the merger between Clubs in Service and Community Connections. We have many more ideas to implement, but the core structure of programs working to improve the lives of residents of Waltham and beyond stays the same. We hope you will read the newsletter to learn about some of the other work the Waltham Group has completed this year.
Thank you for all that you did as students and continue to do as alumni. Having such an extensive network of individuals who are passionate about service is amazing!

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Mitchell Beers ’17 and Krishna Narayanan ’17

**Waltham Group 50th Anniversary Celebration**

On Oct. 8-9, 2016, students and alumni celebrated the Waltham Group’s 50th anniversary.

On Saturday morning, volunteers participated in service projects with Prospect Hill, Waltham Community Day Center, More Than Words, Leland Home, Waltham Fields Community Farm and Lemberg Garden. Participants later enjoyed family fun at a carnival, which featured food trucks, a petting zoo, pumpkin painting and inflatables.

In the evening, about 200 students, alumni, community partners and friends gathered for a gala, where guests enjoyed a delicious meal, reflected on the Waltham Group’s history and listened to several speakers. Among the speakers were the Waltham Group’s three founders: Barbara Marin ’68, Stephen Rose ’61, Heller PhD’70, and Howard Winant ’68.

During the gala, attendees participated in a silent auction to support the Waltham Group’s 50K for the 50th fundraising campaign. So far, we have raised about $15,000 from more than 100 donors, a good start on our goals of $50,000 and 250 donors.

[Click here](#) to make your gift, which will help us continue to provide critical services to the local community and ensure that each year hundreds of students will gain hands-on experience in making the world a better place.

Check out the [Waltham Group timeline](#) that chronicles some historic moments over the past 50 years.

[Click here](#) to purchase a limited edition Waltham Group 50th anniversary T-shirt, designed by Heather Gitler ’18, from the Brandeis Bookstore. Five dollars from each purchase will benefit the 50K for the 50th fundraiser.
Panel Discussion: Educational Access Issues in Waltham
Panelists addressed issues of educational access and how Brandeis volunteers can better support the children with whom they work. The panel included Sarah McLaughlin, an elementary school principal in Lawrence, Massachusetts; and Rachel Theodorou, the faculty leader for the Brandeis Education Program’s elementary school concentration.

The Immigrant Experience
Marci McPhee, director of campus programs at the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life at Brandeis, and current students led a discussion on the experience of immigrants in Waltham. The event encouraged student volunteers to consider the perspective of immigrants, the challenges they face, assets they bring to our city and how Brandeis programs can be supportive.

Supporting Adolescents and Adults with Developmental Disabilities
Led by Michael Plansky, founder and CEO of You’re With Us, this discussion focused on how we can better value and support adolescents and adults with developmental disabilities.

Mindfulness Workshop
Matt Carriker, the Protestant chaplain at Brandeis, led students in mindfulness and meditation exercises and gave them resources to support their volunteers during stressful times in the semester.
**Spring 2017 Speaker Series**
The series will include discussions on sustainability and mental health support, as well as a unique case challenge featuring representatives from nationally recognized social justice organizations.

---

### Alumni Spotlight

**Caryn Finley ’97**

**Q: What was your position in Waltham Group?**

**A:** I was the fundraising coordinator for the Waltham Group in 1995-1997. My primary responsibility was the yearly auction to raise the majority of our operating funds. I also participated in the tutoring program with a Waltham elementary school student and the blood drive.

**Q: How did the Waltham Group impact your professional career?**

**A:** The Waltham Group and Brandeis propelled me to pursue employment that was grounded in community service. I have spent my entire career as a federal prosecutor. While government service is in and of itself service-oriented, my particular genre of prosecution is white-collar crime, specifically tax crimes. One might not think of criminal prosecution as related to the work at Waltham Group, but I look at my job as quite literally “doing justice.” The Waltham Group taught me about the impact you can have on your community. Holding people criminally accountable for their willful conduct in violating the nation’s tax laws furthers our country’s mission, since taxes are one of the prices we pay for a free society. Certainly, my fundraising experience with the Waltham Group showed me the direct correlation between budgets and what any organization or entity can then do with its funds. I also learned a lot about working collaboratively, which has served me well out in the “real world.”

**Q: Do you have any tips for current Waltham Group coordinators?**

**A:** Make the most of your time at Brandeis and treasure the connections you make, especially at the Waltham Group. Many of you, along with your friends and classmates, will go on to be tomorrow’s leaders. The skills and values you learn at Brandeis and the Waltham Group will serve as the bedrock for your future careers. It is not an understatement to say that these connections are lifelong.

**Q: What was your best Waltham Group memory?**

**A:** Other than the friends I made, some of my best Waltham Group memories are the auctions themselves. We would always have a couple of “hot ticket” items such as extra Commencement tickets or Celtics tickets. We had a professional auctioneer, and it was always exciting to see how quickly the bids on these items grew. One of my other treasured memories from Waltham Group was meeting and speaking with Eli Segal ’64, who served as the first CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service. He came to speak at a Waltham Group event and I was able to escort him around campus. I cannot understate the impact this limited meeting had on me, as he
really drove home how you could incorporate community service ideals into a successful career.

**Waltham Group Program Spotlights**

**Hunger and Homelessness**
Hunger and Homelessness serves those experiencing food and housing insecurity in Waltham and the Greater Boston area by serving meals weekly, donating food and personal care items, and engaging in community advocacy. For our Halloween for the Hungry Food Drive, we collected about 3,500 nonperishable food items to donate to the Middlesex Human Services Agency. We also serve lunch weekly at the Waltham Community Day Center, contributing about 50 meals per week for the entire school year as part of our Food for Thought program. In late November, Hunger and Homelessness hosted a “car sit-in” to raise awareness about homelessness in the Waltham area by encouraging passers-by to sign a petition to pass the Homeless Bill of Rights in the Massachusetts legislature.

**Companions to Elders**
Companions to Elders is an intergenerational community service club that matches volunteers with elderly residents in the Waltham community. Our goal is to foster a strong and lasting relationship between our volunteers and their companions. We volunteer weekly at two assisted-living homes, Maristhill and Leland. Volunteers are matched with an elderly companion at the beginning of the semester and then spend the rest of the semester visiting with their companion for an hour each week. Volunteers also have the option to participate in Memory Café, a monthly opportunity that takes place on the first Friday of every month. Volunteers are connected with individuals diagnosed with a spectrum of cognitive impairments. They participate in a creative activity together that encourages participants to engage and strengthen underused areas of the brain.

**Student Profile**

**Megan Boateng ’17 | Tutoring in Public Schools (TIPS) Coordinator**
I have been a coordinator for TIPS since spring 2015. I was inspired to work with TIPS because of the prospect of being a positive influence in the lives of elementary school students. When I was in elementary school, there were students older than me who would come into my class and help. They became people who I looked up to, and later came to know more as I transitioned into middle and high school. TIPS was the perfect program to give me the opportunity to have an impact on students in the way that those students impacted me. Being able to connect with different students has been the most rewarding part of volunteering and coordinating for me. I have a lot of faith in the
students I work with, and every week when I go into the Early Literacy Program, I can see the growth in them. Embrace the experience that you have, because the students really do appreciate your presence. As a volunteer, you may be faced with situations that you were not expecting, but you will learn so much from those experiences, and the students you work with will learn a lot from you, too!

New Graduate Assistants

Simon Miller ’11
Simon is serving as the graduate assistant for Alternative Spring Breaks and Programming. Since graduating, he served as an AmeriCorp City Year Corps member and team leader in Philadelphia, and was a Peace Corps volunteer in Ethiopia as an English language improvement adviser at a primary school and a volunteer leader in the capital, Addis Ababa. Simon holds a bachelor’s degree in American Studies and is currently pursuing his master’s degree in Sustainable International Development from the Heller School for Social Policy and Management. In his spare time, Simon enjoys being a foodie, watching NBA games and playing piano.

Orláith Duggan
Orláith Duggan is the graduate assistant for Waltham Group Assessment and Advocacy as she works toward her master’s degree in Sustainable International Development from the Heller School for Social Policy and Management. Orláith is from Seattle, where she earned her BA in International Studies from the University of Washington. Before coming to Brandeis, she served as a team leader in AmeriCorps’ National Civilian Community Corps in the Midwest. Through this experience, she found one of her passions was helping with disaster relief, leading her to volunteer with NECHAMA Jewish Response to Disaster. Orláith then decided to pursue a second year of service as an AmeriCorps VISTA at Boston Cares. During her free time, Orláith enjoys dancing, painting and exploring new places.

Goodbye and Hello

It is with mixed emotions that we share with you the news that two members of the Department of Community Service team will soon be leaving Brandeis.

Kelly Whiffen, senior department coordinator for student activities and community service, joined the department in 2010 and has been an invaluable team member during her time at Brandeis. She has supported the Community Service and Student Activities teams and served on the Kindness Day committee. In 2014, she received the Louis and Helen Zirkel Staff Award, an honor presented annually to a member of the Brandeis support staff in recognition of their outstanding work. Kelly will be leaving us on Jan. 20 to begin a position at Encounter Church, a new church in the Dedham/Westwood area. She has been deeply involved as a volunteer during the church’s first year of existence and will be moving into a staff position to help launch new initiatives.
Brian Quigley, community service specialist, has worked effectively to further our partnership with the City of Waltham over the past 2 1/2 years. Especially in this 50th anniversary year, Brian has fostered a strong commitment to social justice in our Waltham Group students. Brian will leave at the end of the month to become associate director of student engagement at the Wentworth Institute of Technology. In his new role, Brian will oversee new student summer orientation and welcome week; manage the Student Union’s info booth; and provide campus engagement opportunities for commuter, transfer and veteran students.

We extend a heartfelt thank you to both Kelly and Brian for their passion, commitment and support of the Waltham Group. We will miss them, but they have certainly left a mark on our community.

We would appreciate your support in spreading the word about these two positions. Please check out the Brandeis Human Resources page to see both position postings and reach out to Lucas Malo if you have any questions.

**Upcoming Events**

**Social Justice Case Competition | Monday, Feb. 13**
Students will be presented with real-world challenges and have the opportunity to showcase their critical-thinking skills to the organization’s judges. Winners will receive funding to bring their ideas to life. Sponsored by the Waltham Group and the Hiatt Career Center, in partnership with national non-profit organizations.

**Waltham Group Blood Drive | Tuesday, Feb. 14-Thursday, Feb. 16**
The Brandeis community has been donating blood for more than 30 years.

**Camp Sunshine | February Break Trip**
Service Without Borders (formerly Volunteer Vacations) is sending a team to serve children with life-threatening illnesses and their families.

**Camphill Village Kimberton Hills | February Break Trip**
Camphill Village Kimberton Hills is a vibrant farming and handcrafting community that includes adults with developmental disabilities.

**Spring Wellness Drive | Sunday, March 26**
Door-to-door collection of food, clothing and personal care items for those experiencing poverty in the Waltham area, sponsored by Waltham Group’s Hunger and Homelessness program.

**We Need Your Help!**
Dania Khandaker, the department coordinator for the Brandeis National Committee, is undergoing dialysis and requires a kidney transplant to sustain her in her fight against lupus nephritis. Dania, 26, is on the national kidney donor list, but the average waiting period for a good match for her is seven years. Although family members often provide the best match, her parents and siblings were rejected from becoming donors because of their age and health.

Dania has worked at Brandeis since August 2014, quickly becoming an integral part of the Institutional Advancement team. She earned her bachelor’s degree in international development and social change from Clark University in 2012, and received her master’s in public administration from the school a year later. An ardent traveler, Dania enjoys visiting new locations and trying food from around the world. A loving wife, daughter, sister and friend, Dania has had to put her life on hold as she undergoes treatment.

Anyone interested in donating is urged to reach out to Dania (danianeedsakidney@gmail.com). Those who wish to remain anonymous should contact the hospital directly (617-643-7193) and be tested for a match for Dania. Prospective donors who are not a direct match may still be able to help through a paired kidney exchange, a donation program in which one incompatible donor/recipient pair is matched with another in the same situation, in turn helping to save two patients’ lives. The transplant surgery would be performed at Massachusetts General Hospital at no cost to the donor. For more information, please visit Dania's website.

**Connect with Us**

Click here to connect with the Waltham Group Alumni LinkedIn. This is a perfect way to connect with old friends and other Waltham Group alumni through sharing your resumes and networking. Many people have found that the group has helped them foster connections with people with whom they may have otherwise lost touch. Post on the page about an upcoming event. Learn about others and their careers. Stay connected with volunteering and community service. Expand your networks and challenge yourself to new opportunities.

Like the Brandeis University Waltham Group on Facebook. Stay connected with us as we share updates on Waltham Group initiatives, programs and volunteers.

**Contact Us**

We are so excited to share all of these Waltham Group updates with you. If you have any feedback, please reach out to Lucas Malo, director of the Department of Community Service (781-736-3237).

Stay connected with the Waltham Group:
Stay connected with Brandeis Community Service: