Dear Waltham Group Member,

What a year it has been! It was an honor to celebrate the Waltham Group’s 50th anniversary with you. We were fortunate to have 383 students, alumni, and campus/community partners participate in Waltham Group 50th anniversary events and appreciate many of you contributing to our fundraising campaign as well. The Waltham Group had a number of other successes throughout the year, including, Tutoring in Public Schools (T.I.P.S.) changing its name to Teaching Assistants in Public Schools (T.A.P.S.) and celebrating its 20th anniversary and Kids Connection being named a Very Important Program at the local Boys and Girls Club. This summer, Lee Wilson ’18 and Marissa Lazaroff ’18, have already started to lead the Waltham Group as our new co-presidents. We look forward to seeing how they will leave their legacy on the Waltham Group and continue the organization’s long history of engaging with the community.

As the 50th anniversary concludes, we hope that you will continue to stay connected to the Waltham Group by getting involved as alumni as well. We offer a number of ways to get involved, including: providing a training, hosting a volunteer event, organizing a volunteer project with alumni in your region, sharing relevant resources, or making a donation toward the Waltham Group at giving.brandeis.edu. Please contact us if you're interested in further involvement.

Thank you for all that you have done and continue you to do. It’s because of each of you that we have been able to create a sustainable impact in the community for over 50 years.

Best wishes,
Waltham Group and the Department of Community Service

**50th Anniversary Follow-up**

The Waltham Group 50th Anniversary was an overwhelming success and truly took the entire institution’s support and funding to ensure a positive experience for our students, alumni, faculty/staff, and community partners. Although there were signature events the 50th was filtered throughout all that we did this year. The event had a goal of educating and spreading awareness about the past 50 years for the Brandeis community and Waltham Community. Although we consider attendance to be good, it could have been higher it were not a holiday weekend as many alum and students were unavailable during the selected weekend. We heard impact stories of the Waltham Group on Alum and their identities and how it has left a positive place for Brandeis in their hearts. Student leaders connected with alum who managed their programs decades ago, reigniting the passion for the service and provide networking opportunities for other avenues of their campus identity. The founding members of the Waltham Group were able to speak at the Gala and their remarks especially hit home for our student leaders in understanding that hands on advocacy goes hand-in-hand with direct service. The outward facing components (sign on the Squire Bridge, community partners at the events, service projects) were certainly appreciated and opened doors for future students to engage. The future of Waltham Group has certainly propelled forward due to this event as we look into best practices, enhanced models of engagement, and what makes us the happiest is that we were able to engage volunteers (beyond coordinators) in a variety of Waltham Group events and activities, thus domino affecting our impact across campus and the Brandeis
experience.

**Signature Events**

- Gala
- National Service Projects
- Waltham Service Projects
- Time Capsule
- Historical Timeline
- Fundraising Campaign (short and long term)
- Case Study Challenge
- Anniversary T-Shirt Design Contest
- Share a Memory Submissions
- Panel Discussions
- 50th Anniversary Video
- Founding Member Engagement & Remarks

**Gala Attendance**

- Gala Alumni = 68
- Gala Students = 101
- Gala Staff/Faculty/Community Partners = 21
- Total = 190

**Service Projects Attendance**

- Service Projects Students in Waltham = 76
- Service Projects Alumni in Waltham = 28
- Service Projects Faculty/Staff Waltham = 43
- Service Projects with Alumni in DC, NYC, and Chicago = 46
- Total = 193

**Total Engagement in 50th Signature Events = 383**

- There may be a handful of duplicated folks who did both
- Total Engagement at other events = countless

Fundraising Campaign = $17,898 with 128 donors as of 4/19/17

**WG Speaker Series**

- Hiatt Career Center Workshop
  - Hiatt Career Center employees assisted Waltham Group coordinators in networking skills and crafting resumes to highlight community service experience.
- Sustainability and Social Justice
  - Representatives from the New England Aquarium joined the Waltham Group for a discussion on environmental justice and how our actions can contribute to a cleaner, healthier world.

**Commitment to Service**

The Department of Community Service is proud to honor the following seniors for their outstanding
commitment to making a positive impact on the community throughout their four years. Enrollment for the program reached 603 members and in total, 40,678 hours were logged over the 2016-2017 academic year.

- **Gold Medal (900+ hours logged)**
  - Mitchell Beers
  - Eunice Choe
  - Shira Harary
  - Tzilil Levy
  - Krupa Patel

- **Silver Medal (600+ hours logged)**
  - Eliana Bernstein
  - Sojin Chon
  - Ledia Erkou
  - Anni Fortnow
  - Heather Gitler
  - Sejal Kotecha
  - Krishna Narayanan
  - Tom Rosetti
  - Erica Schutzman
  - Sarah Stein
  - Jackson Tuck
  - Ciara Williams

- **Bronze Medal (300+ hours logged)**
  - Samina Aktar
  - Dennis Averin
  - Megan Boateng
  - Mei Ming Cornue-Hollander
  - Yuki Dai
  - Priya DeBerry
  - Kayla Flanagan
  - Zirui Fu
  - Eric Gordon
  - Anna Grandis
  - Daniel Hakakian
  - Sara Horton
  - Michelle Huang
  - Ashley Jean
  - Paulina Kuzmin
  - Sofia Lavrentyeva
  - Patrick Lo
  - Kimberly Montano
  - Lauren Nadeau
  - Aashika Nagaran
  - Racheal Odusanya
  - Apporva Polavarapu
  - Jennifer Rossman
  - Sharleen Sanchez
  - Kathryn Semerau
Alumni Spotlight

Juliet Barr '81

The Activity Fair. As a wide-eyed freshman in the fall 1977, there was nothing more appealing than a room full of tables touting their promises of a full, enriched, busy year which could including singing, acting, davening, hiking, biking, and tikkun olam, just to name a few. I went from table to table and learned of all the opportunities. I wrote my name down on pads of yellow paper where ever I thought I might want to get involved.

As you might have guessed, the Waltham Group was one of the places where I signed up. I saw that they had several options for volunteering. I don’t remember the first Waltham Group meeting, I’m sure it was sandwiched in there between auditioning for the chorus (alto) and signing up for the Hillel once-a-month craft and service group. If anyone thought I was spreading myself a bit too thin, no one mentioned it as I volunteered to do Elder Outreach (visiting at nursing homes) and Homework Helpers (going to a local school a few times a month) and the Big Brother / Big Sister Program.

At first, with no car, and being the newbie that I was, I stuck to the Waltham Group’s planned programs. I met my “Little Sister” in some planned setting, and we got together according to a schedule. But it didn’t take long before Vicki and I formed our own relationship. I was only 18, and she was 10 but we clicked, and started to make dates on our own time and according to our own interests.

We enjoyed each other’s company, and one evening in December, I took her on the commuter train to Faneuil Hall. For me, I knew that I would have to look after her, a little girl out at night in the big city, even though this was a trip that I had already made at least a dozen times. While we were out, I had the idea to collect some discarded pine branches that a Christmas Tree vendor had left on the street to create a makeshift Christmas Tree for my roommate. (I thought it would help her, a Roman Catholic, with the culture shock of being of her first year at Brandeis during the Christmas season!) Vicki and I carried those branches back on the train, schlepped them up the hill, back to Massell, up three flights to my Usen dorm room. There I found an old box, cut a hole in it, and we jammed the branches in every which way. Vicki and I surprised my roommate by making her a Christmas tree that was waiting for her when she got back to the room. Years later, Vicki told me that this taught her the real meaning of Christmas. Imagine, I think I’m doing a mitzvah, but in fact, I’m teaching about Christmas!

By sophomore year, I no longer was involved in the other Waltham Group activities, having moved on to the fall musical and spring’s production of the Mikado, but Vicki and I were becoming as close as real sisters. I would attend her concerts at school, and I’d bring her to events at Brandeis such as the famous Bronstein Weekend. I learned a lot from being her big sister. I learned to be on time, and to keep my promises, because I knew she was counting on me. Many of my friends really did not understand when I chose not to attend a party or go to a concert because I had plans with Vicki. I once dumped a boyfriend because he gave me a hard time when I kept my promise to take Vicki out and told him he’d have to wait. I truly believe that this helped me become the type of parent that I am today.
Junior year may have been a challenge for Vicki, I was concerned for her because I had plans to go to Israel second semester. I told her I would write. I hope I did. She told me recently I did bring home a souvenir for her. We did not have the luxury of email, Facebook or texting, but when I returned senior year, my parents gave me the old family car and I DID have the luxury of taking Vicki out for ice cream, and bringing her to campus or to my apartment.

After I graduated, we stayed in touch. Although I moved around to many places we never forgot one another. When Vicki got a job at Brandeis, I saw her briefly at one of my reunions. We continue to communicate through Facebook, email, and the good old telephone. Looking back, how random that someone only a year or two older than me threw us together one day and the match was made that has kept us connected for forty years. Our story continues.

**About Juliet:** Juliet Cantor Barr is a Jewish Educator and has run Religious Schools in NY, NJ, and WA. She met her husband Michael as a freshman in Usen dorm. Two of her three children also attended Brandeis, and volunteered in the Waltham Group during their years at school. She continues to find ways to give back to her community.

Vicki Corpian

My name is Vicki Corpian, and I work at The Heller School for Social Policy and Management, in the Student Services office. I've worked in the same field for over 17 years, and I truly enjoy it. I work to enrich the lives of graduate students (mostly international). Most of my interpersonal skills I have learned from my "Big" sister Juliet.

I am grateful to the Waltham Group for existing and impacting the lives of others, but more so for the ability to make perfect matches like the one made for Juliet and I. We were matched halfway through my sixth grade year. At the time I was very shy and withdrawn but she brought out the best in me. The most valuable lesson she taught me was that the best gifts don't need to come from a store, they need to come from the heart. This lesson manifested itself on a cold December night, when Juliet and I went to Faneuil Hall in Boston. She told me about her roommate who was a Christian at a predominantly Jewish school, and how she wanted to make Christmas special for her. So we picked out some old pine tree branches from a florist, brought them back to Brandeis, and made a Christmas tree!

**Program Spotlight:**

- **TAPS (Teaching Assistants in Public Schools)**
  - TAPS (Teaching Assistants in Public Schools) is celebrating 20 years of service with the Waltham Group! Although we have had a few different names throughout the years, we have always served the same purpose: helping teachers foster the best learning environments for children in the Waltham Public School system. We were started as Waltham Reads in 1997 as a response to President Bill Clinton's “America Reads” Challenge. In 1996, Clinton proposed that at least half of college students' work study funds be dedicated to community service (including 100,000 work...
study slots for reading tutors). His goal was to help all children in the United States be at equal reading levels by third grade. From there, we transitioned to TIPS (Tutoring in Public Schools) in the early 2000s where students served in classrooms and in after school programs. This year, we changed our name to TAPS to more accurately reflect the work our volunteers do to make the classroom experience the best it can be. In addition to our 20th birthday party (which included ice cream) we recently completed mid-semester check-ins with all of our volunteers to share all of the wonderful feedback we received from the teachers they work with. In honor of all of these teachers, our volunteers will be tabling in the Shapiro Campus Center on May 1st to celebrate National Teacher Appreciation Day (May 2nd). We'll be asking Brandeis students how teachers and professors have impacted them over the years. We will then send these notes and gifts to the elementary schools we serve to express the impact that teachers have on their students and the community beyond.

- **Habitat for Humanity:**
  - Brandeis University's Habitat for Humanity chapter strives [to ensure] that all individuals have safe, decent, affordable housing through education, advocacy, and volunteering in the national and Greater Boston communities. Throughout the fall and spring, students have volunteered with the North Shore affiliate to work on framing a new single-family home in Lynn, MA. We have also worked in South Hamilton to clear space and frame two new single-family homes throughout the fall and spring. Spring breaks have also kept the Habitat chapter busy: in February, a group of 10 students traveled to Elizabethtown, KY. They spent the week putting up vinyl siding while learning about the local community (the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln, as it turns out). Similarly, a group of students traveled to Rockport, ME during the April break to help with the construction of a single-family home. In the week, they were able to finish the home's siding. On campus, the chapter co-hosted a successful Deis Impact event to discuss housing insecurity in Waltham, and how we - as a Brandeis community - can be involved. The event provided a great starting point from which to launch future actions that will promote access to affordable housing in our community.

### Coordinator Profile

**Sojin Chon '18**

I have learned so much as a LEAP (Language Empowering Action Project) volunteer and coordinator. For four years, this program has been an uplifting part of my life; I [have met] devoted and passionate individuals who understand that tutoring those who want to learn English will be astronomically helpful in their transition into life in America. Crossing language/age/cultural barriers coupled with solidifying a complicated English concept in a short 2-hour session exhausted many of our amazing volunteers, including me. Yet, every week, I meet new volunteers, learners, and program coordinators that are excited and ready to help with open arms and minds. Being a part of LEAP [has convinced] me to commit to volunteerism for life.
New Staff
The Department of Community Service welcomed three new staff members who joined us this spring! We are proud to introduce:

- Lauren Soares, Community Service Specialist
- Katie McNamara, Senior Department Coordinator for Community Service and Student Activities
- Max Brodsky, AmeriCorps CCSNE VISTA