

A Shared Experience

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For many alumni, what connects them most closely to UNH isn't necessarily their graduating class — it's a shared experience in a residence hall, student group, major, athletics or fraternity and sorority life.

At this year's reunion in June, almost 40 alumni who were residents of Smith Hall in the 1990s and early 2000s gathered in the place they had lived as students to reconnect and reminisce. Today an administrative building and the home of UNH admissions, Smith was once UNH's international dorm, housing students from all over the world. During reunion weekend, international flags that formerly adorned Smith were again hung in honor of the hall's former occupants.

“I always thought we had something very special at Smith Hall,” says Nikos Livadas ’92, one of the “Smithies” who returned to Durham for the event. “This past reunion reconfirmed that conviction. It was great meeting everyone all over again as adults.”

Livadas’ fellow Smithie Erica Luongo ’91 concurs. “Words can’t possibly describe how much the four days meant to me,” she says. “Who knew seeing all my Smithie friends was exactly what I needed?” Since 2017, UNH has hosted affinity gatherings during reunion weekend to bring together Wildcats across class years and even decades who have shared a common experience. Past affinity groups have included ROTC members, alums who served as residence hall assistants in the 1990s, McGregor EMS volunteers and a number of fraternities and sororities. Affinity gatherings for next year’s reunion — June 5–7, 2020 — will include mini-dorms and student senate.

As for the Smithies? The 2019 gathering was so successful that organizer Brittany Williams ’94, ’99G says some attendees are planning yearly reunions in other locations, leading up to the next Smith Hall Reunion on campus in 2024.

“What an absolute blast to spend the weekend with dear friends 25 years later,” she says. “It felt like we never left.”

Learn how we can support your affinity group reunion by emailing reunion.weekend@unh.edu, or find out more at unh.edu/reunion.

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