

December 2019



The Year in Review

Well, it's been quite a year for the College with plenty of good news, new programs, new faculty, a solid balance sheet, and some reasons to imagine that our good fortune will continue into the new year and beyond. This is not to say that the College isn't facing the same challenges as our peer institutions, but at least we recognize those challenges and are making plans to adapt to an increasingly uncertain higher education marketplace. And we are doing it by being Prescott College.

Here are some of the highlights of the year, from the perspective of advancement and alumni relations crew.

January brought the sad passing of Dr. Layne Longfellow, long time member of the faculty and probably the person most responsible for the College's adoption of humanistic psychology and human spirituality into our liberal arts curriculum, an innovative idea that continues today. As befits a larger than life character, it took two memorial celebrations to accommodate his tribe. And naturally when you celebrate the life of a beloved teacher, a compelling speaker, a musician, a writer, and a Coyote-like trickster, a good time was had by all who attended.

In **February** my colleague Desi and I flew east into the teeth of a blizzard to hobnob with our fellow alumni relations wizards at Green Mountain College (GMC), which announced in early January that their last graduation would occur in May. We got snowed in overnight in Boston, but we rallied and boarded a five-seater puddle jumper in the morning and flew blindly into the continuing storm to a tiny, snow-covered runway in Rutland, Vermont. As an old New Englander myself, it felt like a homecoming, but Desi is Southern California born and raised. She white-knuckled her way through the plane ride and the subsequent slip 'n slide rent-a-car

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adventure, muttering all the while “How do people live like this?”

The College agreed to be the primary “teach out” institution for remaining GMC students, to provide various services to the GMC alumni community and to acquire a number of online graduate programs. We picked up some faculty and staff too. To see that spectacular 135-year-old campus and to speak with GMC alumni from as far back as the seventies has been an emotional experience for both of us, and it’s particularly poignant for those of us who lived through our own bankruptcy. Our hearts go out to all the GMC folks.

In March I headed south to our Tucson campus at Changemaker High School to participate with our Social Justice and Community Organizing (SJCO) Masters cohort as they mounted the annual “Praxis” conference for high school social justice activists. A hundred or so young people came from all over the country to share stories, hone techniques, network, sing and dance. Patrisse Cullors, one of the founders of Black Lives Matter, was the keynote speaker and she burned the house down. The new SJCO cohort is doing it again this year; as an alumnus I am so proud that we have taken on this work.

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