

# How an Alumni College Works

By ALFRED NAIFEH

## Michigan University's Program For Graduates Has Proved That Idea Has Definite Possibilities

DEAR TED:

In answer to your letter of December 16, I am offering the following information in regard to the proposed Alumni College. I take it that your idea was that I should investigate the type of program carried on at the University of Michigan, its scope, its success, and the possibility of a similar program being conducted at the University of Oklahoma. I will say that my interest in the work at the University of Michigan dates from Dr. Bizzell's article in the alumni magazine of November, 1940, in which he stated that such a program was being carried on successfully at the University of Michigan.

Before losing ourselves in a maze of details, let me state that they do conduct a program which I believe is of the nature that you have in mind and that such a program has been most successful.

The work at the University of Michigan is carried on both jointly and separately by the Extension Division and by the Alumni Association. The program centers around what is called the Rackham Building, which is used by the School of Graduate Studies. This building was given to the University by Horace H. Rackham, one of the original stockholders in the Ford Motor Company. This three-story building was built originally to house the graduate school which is known as the Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies. In it are found the offices of the graduate school and of the Rackham facilities. However, its facilities are open to use by graduate groups. Actually

EDITOR'S NOTE: Alfred Naifeh, '40law, is an outstanding graduate of the O. U. School of Law, who is attending the University of Michigan Law School this year on a \$1,200 fellowship. He wrote the above report on adult education at Michigan at the request of Ted Beaird, executive secretary of the O. U. Alumni Association.



Alfred Naifeh

the most practical use made of the building is as a center for the type of activities which Dr. Bizzell seems to have in mind when he speaks of an Alumni College.

The building contains a small auditorium, numerous conference rooms, exhibition galleries, a ballroom, lecture rooms, a reading room, and adequate office space. I must tell you here that Rackham Building is the most ornate building that I have ever seen on a college campus. I am told that over \$4,000,000 was spent in its construction. However, when a man offers to give that much for the construction of a building, a University could hardly refuse to accept on the mere grounds that the building upon completion would be too beautiful for a college building. The purposes served by this building and the facilities included therein could easily be obtained by the expenditure of less than one-tenth of the amount invested in the Rackham Building.

Here at the Rackham Building are conducted the numerous extension courses, institutes, conferences, and so on sponsored by the extension service of the University of Michigan in co-operation with various civic, business, and governmental bodies. Some of the institutes held recently include a vocational guidance conference, a foreman's conference, an institute on the problems of taxation, a parent education institute, and an adult education institute. These are just a few of the many conferences and institutes held each year.

In addition, the various schools and colleges, such as the School of Business Administration and the School of Engineering, and the School of Medicine conduct conferences and short courses and often use this building for a large part of their program. Of course the building contains no laboratories or libraries and the more technical phases of such meetings must

be held in the professional schools but the meetings and lectures are usually held in the Rackham Building.

Another interesting phase of this alumni-adult education program carried on at the University of Michigan is what is known as the Alumni University. This is an annual short course conducted during commencement week in June and lasting usually for five or six days. It includes a course of lectures given by members of the faculty at the University on various problems of contemporary nature.

For example, the Alumni University for 1940 was held from June 17 to 22, inclusive. Its theme was, "Our American Democracy." It included a course of lectures on subjects such as The Texture of American Society, The American Governmental System, America Abroad, Industry and Commerce in America, American Education, Science Today in America, The Problems of American Labor, Our Country's Resources, America and Its Homes, The Literature of Today, and American Music. These subjects are each covered by a series of lectures so that the Alumni University really amounts to a back-to-school program for a few days. I am advised that the program has been carried on for ten years and has been most favorably received. It is sponsored by the Alumni Association although, of course, the program presented is really that of the entire faculty of the University.

During commencement week the Medical School sponsors a series of lectures for medical alumni. This program includes lectures given in the Rackham Building and is carried on for four or five days. The Law School, during commencement week, sponsors what is known as a Law Institute. This is a three-day program and includes lectures, discussions, and conferences on contemporary problems in law. Members of the University of Michigan law school faculty, as well as prominent judges and practitioners, present their views and lead the various discussion groups.

To give a better idea of the type of program carried on at the Law Institute, I might list the lecture courses offered at the 1940 institute. These included: Restitution, Problems of Procedure, Recent Federal Legislation, the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Robinson-Patman Act, Recent Federal Statutes Affecting the Law of Corporations. I am told that both the medical and law institutes have been well received both by alumni and other members of these professions who participate therein. The law institute is not, however, conducted in the Rackham Building. The facilities of the Law Quadrangle are used for this program.

The attitude of the University of Michigan toward this phase of its work is well expressed by President Alexander G. Ruthven in an address delivered October 27, 1939, in which he said: "There

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## Has Your Address Changed Recently?

Ted Beaird  
Alumni Secretary  
University of Oklahoma  
Norman, Okla.

Please correct my address as follows:

Name .....

Street .....

City and State .....

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remains, however, much that the University should do for its graduates, and this field of service has been intensively cultivated only in the last ten years. The alumni should be assisted in continuing their education. College training is not worth its cost unless the recipient can build upon it with materials more substantial than bridge, golf, popular literature, or specialized knowledge in a business, trade, or profession. The ideal alumnus grows in wisdom. He devotes his life to an effort to become a cultivated person. He has a right to expect assistance in this growth from his University, as the highest school in the system."

This briefly is an account of the program at the University of Michigan. I well realize that we are doing many of these things at the University of Oklahoma. It seems to me that Dr. Bizzell's proposal of an Alumni College will serve to emphasize the importance of a program of this type and to increase the scope of its activities. We must remember that the University of Oklahoma is a state institution financed by public funds. The problems of the state of Oklahoma and its people are, and should be the problems of the University of Oklahoma, and it is one of the fundamental duties of the University to help the state and its people to better meet and solve these problems.

In submitting this information about the program carried on at the University of Michigan I do not feel that it is a matter of "keeping up with the Joneses" for we all realize there is far too much competition in the field of education already; but it is a matter of a state university broadening the scope of its services and helping its alumni as well as other adults to keep abreast with the times.

As to the need of a building, I might say that the University of Michigan was fortunate in having the Rackham Building available. However, because of the elaborate building program that has been carried on there, this was not really necessary.

At the University of Oklahoma, crowded as we are for building space as well as other facilities, it seems to me that if a program of this type is to be undertaken whole-heartedly, one of the initial moves should be the construction of a building to be known as the Alumni College. Of course this could be a separate building but it would appear that probably the preferable thing to do would be to construct it either as a separate building attached to the Union Building, or as a wing of the Union Building. This would enable us to avoid any duplication of facilities. Herein could be housed the offices of the various extension services as well as the facilities for conducting short

courses, conference, institutes and so on. This would become the center for the alumni-adult education program of the University.

I feel that this proposal for an Alumni College is one that is really worthy of the support of the Alumni Association. I dare say that no program yet undertaken by the Association holds more prospects of future service and benefit to Oklahoma and its people than this. And we must remember that whatever services and benefits the state of Oklahoma will in turn benefit the University of Oklahoma.

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## Roll Call

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30)

Ernest W. Tune, Jr., '40, both of Oklahoma City. They are at home in Santa Monica, California, where Mr. Tune is employed by the Douglas Aircraft Company.

James A. Skinner, '40, Ponca City, second lieutenant in the Reserve Corps, has been called for a year's service at Camp Lee, Virginia.

Virginia Lee White, '40bus, is a junior clerk in the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Washington, D.C.

WHITESIDE-BROCK: Miss Maxine Whiteside, '40, and Harry A. Brock were married January 12 in Bristow. Mrs. Brock is a member of Delta Gamma sorority. Mr. Brock, who attended Oklahoma A. and M. College, is employed by the Tulsa Engineering Construction Company in Pawnee.

Jack T. Woodson, '40, Vinita, has been ordered to report for active army duty at Fort Knox, Kentucky, effective March 31.

### 1941

Ruth Gungl, '41m.ed, is teaching in the public schools at Hobart.

Bill Jennings, senior in the University, has been named football coach at Cushing High School for next year. He made a notable record as back and end on the Sooner football team in the last three seasons.

KINNEY-JUDSON: Miss Martha Jane Kinney, '41h.ec, Norman, and Edward H. Judson, Houston, Texas, were married January 28 in Norman. The bride is a member of Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority. Mr. Judson is a student in the College of Engineering at the University and is a member of Alpha Tau Omega fraternity. The couple are at home in Norman.

LUPER - EARNEST: Announcement has been made of the marriage of Wanda Dean Luper, '41 phys.ed, to James V. Earnest, Stillwater, September 30 at Watonga. Both the bride and bridegroom attended Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee. Mr. Earnest also attended Oklahoma A. & M. College. The couple are now at home in Stillwater where Mr. Earnest is manager of Earnest Brothers' shoe store.

SHULTZ-BAILEY: Miss Marie Jeannette Shultz, '41, and Phillips Sigmon Bailey, '40ms, were married February 2 in Norman. They live at Great Bend, Kansas, where he is employed by the Halliburton Oil Well Cementing Company.

Randall R. Morton, '40eng, is in Washington, D. C., where he is working for the War Department and attending Georgetown University Law School.

James D. McLean, '40, of Ardmore, second lieutenant in the Reserve Corps, has been called to extended active duty at Fort Sill.

Arch M. Parmenter, Jr., '40law, of Lawton, second lieutenant in the Reserve Corps, has been called to extended active duty at Fort Sill.

Faine H. Poole, '40bus, is employed in the traffic and advertising department of Braniff Airways at Oklahoma City. Mrs. Poole is the former Marcella Roberts, '39

Jack D. Powell, '40bus, has completed primary aviation training at the Spartan School of Aeronautics at Tulsa, being one of 78 out of 112