



# CAP AND GOWN CLUB SPRING 2021 NEWSLETTER



“WHENEVER I ENTER THIS CLUB,  
I FEEL HAPPY INSIDE.”

HERMAN A. HEYDT, JR. '29

TRUER WORDS WERE NEVER SPOKEN  
AS WE WAIT FOR THE CLUB  
TO REOPEN THIS FALL.



Tom Fleming '69

Dear Cap Members,

When Cap and Gown and the other Princeton Eating Clubs served their last meal to undergraduates on March 13, 2020, many of us naively hoped that we would be able to reopen last fall. Today our expectation/

hope is that we will reopen in September 2021. In a recent call with the University, the clubs were informed that the compliance with safety protocols among the students has been good and the incidents of COVID-19 have been small and so far manageable. While the view is that we will reopen, that does not mean that it will be a completely normal situation, particularly with respect to the return of large gatherings that could impact our membership numbers. Here is a summary of where we stand in major areas:

### **Culture/Relevance/Undergraduates**

Cap and Gown will only continue to thrive if we remain relevant to the rapidly evolving undergraduate demography. With the clubs closed, the Street was cautious heading into "Street Week," entirely on a virtual basis. Fortunately, Cap President Karthik Ramesh '21 also provided leadership to the entire Street as the President of the ICC (Interclub Council).

Here is a report that we received from Karthik:

### **Street-wide Sophomore Interest**

*There was a net decrease of 30% in the raw number of sophomores participating in Street Week. The size of the enrolled sophomore class was reduced by 14% from 1,340 to 1,164. Additionally, the proportion of enrolled sophomores signing up for Street Week reduced from 78% to 68%. The compound of these two effects is that instead of about 1,140 sophomores signing up, the ICC received 790 registrations. A large percentage of the 350 'lost' registrations should be made up next fall as students on gap years and those tentative to join a club in the virtual environment re-engage in a (hopefully) more normal, in-person, environment.*

### **Cap and Gown Sophomore Interest**

*We have had 267 sophomores complete bicker, a 12% increase over last year's number. 30% of sophomores interested in joining an eating club bickered Cap.*

Karthik also reported that the officers received strong support from the membership with over 95% participating in virtual bicker. For several years, Cap has been the most popular club as measured by the number of students who chose to bicker us. We chose to admit 90 sophomores and ten juniors, giving us the room to admit more students



in the fall, when fall bicker should be much larger than in a normal year.

Recognizing the impact of the pandemic, we accepted the Cap Officers' recommendation on a one-time basis to allow members who dropped the club last spring to rejoin without rebickering. Students on financial aid will be able to take advantage of our new financial aid policy. At the time of this writing, it appears that several former members will take advantage of this opportunity.

One of our concerns last spring was the realization that in February we would elect new officers whose in-person experience at Cap and Gown was only a month following bicker in February 2020. I am delighted to report that we have had Zoom meetings with our newly elected officers who are off to a great start clearly evidencing the enthusiasm, dedication, and competence of their predecessors.



### **Staff**

The success of Cap is dependent on our loyal staff, many of whom have worked for us for decades, who have obviously been greatly impacted by the club's closure. Our general manager of 40 years, Dennis Normile has remained on payroll. We have also been able to engage a few other staff members on an hourly basis for work on the clubhouse. As a 501 (c)(7), we were not able to qualify

for funding under the relief act. Fortunately, most of our staff has qualified for the special unemployment benefits. We were also able to provide additional assistance to them during the holidays without jeopardizing their unemployment status. So far COVID-19 cases among the staff have been limited. We expect nearly everybody to return when we reopen.

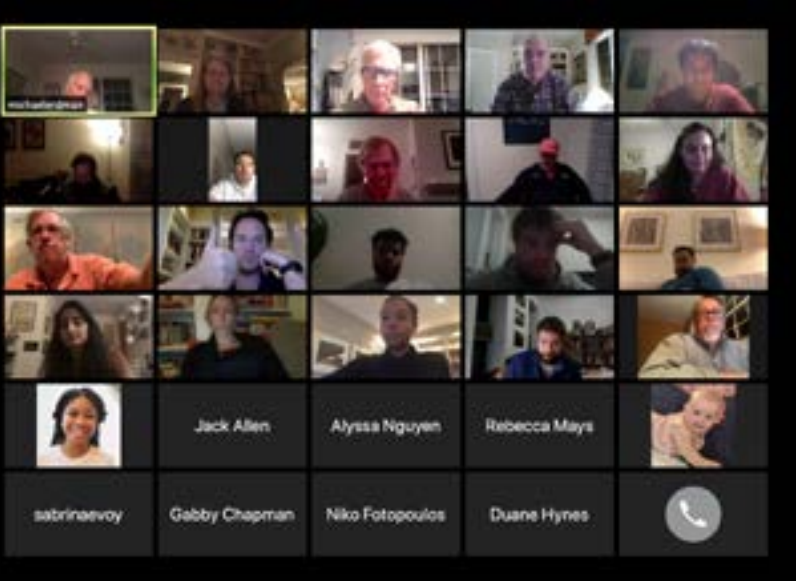
### **Financial Condition**

The good news is that the agreement with the University to respect their wishes to remain closed from March 2020 through June 2021 has covered most of our fixed costs. Combining that with generous support from our alumni and students, as well as careful expense management, has meant that we should emerge from this pandemic in a condition broadly similar to where we were going into it. The less than good news is that following the completion of the Cox Wing project, our reserves are at an historical low point as we enter the uncertainty of post-COVID times.



### **Clubhouse**

Fortunately, with the completion of our building projects, our beautiful clubhouse is optimized for decades to come. We have a small project to add a brick façade to the Cox Wing to match the rest of the clubhouse, which we will probably authorize in the next year or so. Most of that expense has already been funded by several alumni. We have no deferred maintenance of any significance.



### Graduate Board

One might think that with the club closed for an extended period, the involvement of the Cap Graduate Board would be limited. Taking full advantage of Zoom technology, participation in board and committee meetings has been high with progress made on many fronts, including formulating our new financial aid policy mentioned in the last newsletter. See the article on page 8. Our new officers have confirmed that the members welcome the continuation of our “Connect to Cap” program in order to provide valuable mentoring in these turbulent times. This will not only require the continuing involvement of our board, but also our broader alumni group. Our new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee has also been active on many fronts.

### Future Implications

Cap’s continuing popularity confirms that we have remained relevant to our members in a rapidly changing environment. We are aware of the fact that students are much more cost-sensitive, and the clubs are the high-cost alternative, exacerbated by University policies that subsidize co-op eating arrangements and independents and allow students on financial aid to use cash saved by not joining or dropping clubs for other purposes. Competition on the Street is also great. Cottage has been able to build a sizable endowment as they did not need

to expand their clubhouse, and Ivy sold its underutilized parking lot behind the club to the University for over \$7M.

Your continuing support through contributions for financial aid, general building support, and the endowment will be critical. Also, as you do estate planning, please remember bequests to our endowment will ensure that Cap continues to positively impact the undergraduate experience of our members for the years to come.

Stay safe. I hope to see you at the club in the not-too-distant future.

Sincerely,

Thomas F. Fleming Jr. '69  
Graduate Board Chair

**Strong participation in Street Week**

- Clubs hosted events on Zoom and Glimpse
- 70% sophomore participation
- 69% of sophomores placed into their 1<sup>st</sup> choice club
- All students placed into a club

### Spring 2021 Club Admissions: 87% of Sophomores Admitted to 1st or 2nd Choice Club

Read the article on Spring 2021 Virtual Club Admissions in the Daily Princetonian.

<https://tinyurl.com/StreetWeek21>



## News from the Club President

Dear Cap Alumni,

I hope this message finds you safe and well! My name is Alan Lin, and I am honored to have been elected President of Cap and Gown Club. It is my pleasure to update you all about news from the club this spring. Over a year has passed since the clubhouse closed and students were sent home in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. In spite of the challenges of the past year, the Cap community is thriving!



*Alan Lin '22*

The semester began with Spring Bicker, facilitated in a virtual format. Cap was once again the most popular club on the Street. We received 267 bickerees, more than 40 additional bickerees compared to last year despite sophomore class enrollment reducing by 14%. Members and bickerees experienced very few technical issues and no bickeree was unable to complete a sufficient number of conversations. Member involvement was extraordinary with 95% of members participating in the process. We welcomed 90 new sophomores and 10 new juniors to our Cap family through virtual pickup activities in lieu of typical in-person pickups.

Members have stayed connected with each other this semester through virtual events, social media, and regional groups across the globe. Many members are living on campus this semester and interacting informally in small groups in accordance with the rules of the University-mandated social contract. The Officers have urged members to abide by the social contract and refrain from large gatherings.

The Officers have hosted a variety of weekly virtual social events to engage members both on and off campus. Led by Social Chair Shriya Bhatt '22, Cap's community is as vibrant as ever and has been on display through events such as a club-wide "Paint and Sip" virtual event in which members joined each other via Zoom to create a painting together with a beverage of choice. Meanwhile, Bicker Chair Aryaman Khandelwal '22 organized a Cap Monday Poker Night where members enjoyed friendly competition

over cards. Within the limits of the social contract, the Officers have also encouraged and facilitated informal, small "pod" group activities with optional in-person components to supplement our virtual programming.

Even in a virtual format, the Officers have stayed busy. Vice President Valeria Torres-Olivares '22 has spearheaded efforts to improve the club's sexual assault prevention methods. With all membership fees waived this semester, Treasurer Turquoise Brewington '22 has carefully managed the club's budget. House Manager Ange Ndayeshimiye '22 has facilitated a roommate matching system for graduating seniors to find living arrangements together with other Cap members. Gear Chair Seth Walensky '22 has released this year's roster of apparel and gear options. The Cap Gear Store opens twice a year for orders.

The Officers will be resuming the Cap Connections program and hope to build upon the Cap Career Panels of the previous semester by providing Cap Connections events which offer members more opportunities for networking and one-on-one time, which was the most common request from survey respondents. We are also introducing a new Cap Officer position, Alumni Relations Chair, which will devote special focus to managing the Cap Connections Career Panels and assist the President in liaising with alumni on behalf of the club.

Approaching the end of the semester, we look forward to a restful and productive summer break and, hopefully, good news in the fall regarding the potential reopening of the clubhouse. When it is safe to do so and University regulations allow, we would love to see alumni around the club once again!

Best wishes,

Alan Lin '22  
President



## Undergraduate Officers | Class of 2022



**ALAN LIN '22**

President



**VALERIA TORRES-OLIVARES '22**

Vice President



**TURQUOISE BREWINGTON '22**

Treasurer



**SHRIYA BHATT '22**

Social Chair



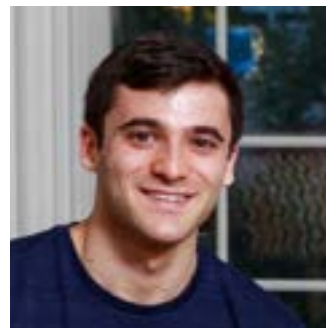
**ARYAMAN KHANDELWAL '22**

Bicker Chair



**ANGE NDAYISHIMIYE '22**

House Manager



**SETH WALENSKY '22**

Athletics/Gear Chair



**JORGE ZREIK '22**

Tech Chair



**BENNETT HOLMES '22**

Culturally Cap Co-Chair



**SEEMA GUPTA, '22**

Culturally Cap Co-Chair



**ISABELLE NIMICK '22**

Community Outreach  
Co-Chair



**CAREN JU '22**

Community Outreach  
Co-Chair



## New Members Admitted in Spring 2021

Priyanka Aiyer Singapore, Singapore	Julia Douvas Charlottesville, VA	James Lee Atlanta, GA	Adelina Rolea Hagerstown, MD
Sultan Al Habsi Muscat, Oman	Adam Elkins Buffalo Grove, IL	Kate Liu Princeton, NJ	Ivan Ruiz Leon Idaho Falls, ID
Ayush Alag Santa Clara, CA	Jamie Feder Bronx, NY, NY	Daniel Lyons Brunswick, ME	Mike Ruttlen Jr Nashville, TN
Fatinah Albeez Troy, MI	Sam Frank Sacramento, CA	Anoushka Malhotra Dubai, UAE	Zachary Sahin Pensacola, FL
Sahil Ambardekar Dublin, OH	Sreesha Ghosh Dubai, UAE	Mary Elizabeth Marquardt Atlanta, GA	Henrique Schechter Vera Asunción, Paraguay
Darin Avila Waterford, VA	Hudson Godfrey Los Angeles, CA	Riley Martinez West Jordan, UT	Janum Shah Montgomery, NJ
Nazdar Ayzit Diyarbakir, Turkey	Anna. Goodman Sydney, New South Wales (NSW) Australia	Katie McLaughlin Cupertino, CA	Jack Shigeta Ridgewood, NJ
Susan Baek Clarksville, MD	Kate. Gross-Whitaker Piedmont, CA	Tanzila Morshed Sicklerville, NJ	Lucy Sirrs Missoula, MT
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Jeremy Bernius Statham, GA	David. Hwang Belmont, MA	Derek Nam Fort Washington, PA	Sam Vasen Brooklyn, NY
Isaac Bledsoe Saint Louis, MO	Naaji Hylton Tampa, FL	Tanvi Nibhanupudi, Singapore	Anu Vellore West Windsor, NJ
Creston Brooks Dallas, TX	Andy Iyabor Atlanta, GA	Brennen. Nishimura Pahala, HI	Shruti Venkat Edison, NJ
Corinna Brueckner Philadelphia, PA	Sahil Jain Fremont, CA	Jose Ortiz Fort Worth, TX	Ava Vilensky New Prague, MN
Jenseric Calimag Bergenfield, NJ	Danielle Jenkins Wilmington, DE	Angela Park Seoul, South Korea	Christina Wang Morganville, NJ
Emma. Chang Fairfax, VA	Rohan Jinturkar Basking Ridge, NJ	Mikala Parnell Wilmington, NC	Hana Widerman Mercer Island, WA
Preeti Chemiti Fargo, ND	Ishea Johnson Philadelphia, PA	Gabriel Peña San Antonio, TX	Jarod Wille Egg Harbor Township, NJ
Linda Chen Fort Lee, NJ	Samantha Johnson Franklin Township, NJ	Joan Perez Stamford, CT	Julie Wilson Boston, MA
Cindy Cheng Hicksville, NY	Kanishkh Kanodia Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, India	Abigail Poten Sebastopol, CA	Jayson Wu Marietta, GA
Samantha Chin Newton, MA	Hannah Kapoor Parkland, FL	Shantanu Ramji Poway, CA	Travis York Milan, MI
Allison Chou Princeton, NJ	Gio Kim Los Angeles, CA	Carmina Rangel-Pacheco Omaha, NE	Aidan Zentner Montreal, Canada
Clare Crescimanno Youngstown, OH	Nihar Kommu Tallahassee, FL	Beck Reiferson Weston, CT	Cheyenne Zhang Seattle, WA
Ewan Curtis Houston, TX	Jennifer Lee Ridgewood, NJ	Sophia Richter Missoula, MT	Richard Zhu Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Austin Davis Pittsburgh, PA	Sean Lee Anaheim, CA	Arielle Rivera Jessup, MD	
Jack Deschenes Pasadena, CA		Isabel Rodrigues Clifton Park, NY	



## Cap and Gown's New Financial Aid Policy



Kasturi Shah '16

Cap Financial Aid Committee

At a December 9, 2020 meeting, the Cap Board of Trustees unanimously approved a new financial aid policy that provides a grant for club membership to every member on Princeton University financial aid and guarantees that no member on full financial aid pays any out-of-pocket costs for club

membership. The policy was the result of an extensively researched proposal by the Cap Financial Aid Committee.

### Here is how it works:

Each year, Cap members who receive any financial aid from Princeton University will receive a grant from the Cap and Gown Financial Aid Fund that covers the difference between the Princeton board rate (inclusive of the additional grant provided by Princeton Financial Aid for upperclassman board) and Cap and Gown member house and board rates. Any member who is not on financial aid from Princeton University, but receives external sources of aid—such as government grants from their home country—is similarly eligible for a Cap and Gown financial aid grant, provided that they meet criteria consistent

with Princeton University's Financial Aid Office's eligibility criteria. The new policy is transparent and will ensure that members on University financial aid know the value of the grant that they will receive as soon as the University has released its board rate for an academic year.

While a recent *Daily Princetonian* article suggests that Cap's financial aid policy is among the most inclusive on the street, the Financial Aid Committee is continuously seeking to improve the existing program and is very open to receiving suggestions. Please direct your thoughts to [capfundingcommittee@gmail.com](mailto:capfundingcommittee@gmail.com)

When the club re-opens, hopefully in September, the Cap Board of Trustees is committed to keeping membership fees as affordable as possible for the foreseeable future, particularly given the hardship induced by the COVID19 pandemic.

The Cap Board gives special thanks to the members of the Classes of 2020 and 2021, who donated a large share of their spring board rebates for financial aid when the club closed because of the coronavirus pandemic in March. The Cap and Gown Financial Aid Fund will be supported through funds donated by the Cap and Gown community.

### Donate to the Cap and Gown Financial Aid Fund

<https://tinyurl.com/2021CapAid>

Daily Princetonian — December 21, 2020



### Read the news on Cap's new financial aid policy report in the Daily Princetonian.

The *Daily Princetonian* ran a feature article on Cap and Gown's new financial aid policy, and also provided a summary of the aid policies of the other clubs.

Read the article at <https://tinyurl.com/CapAidArticle>





## Special Report on DEI Initiatives

By Club President Alan Lin '22



Karthik Ramesh '21



Alan Lin '22



Valeria Torres-Olivares '22



Jade Williams '18



Sean Poosson '17

As the newly-elected President of Cap and Gown, it is my pleasure to provide a special report on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives taken by the club this year.

This year, President Emeritus Karthik Ramesh '21 oversaw the club's participation with ICC programs to promote DEI-related action in all the clubs. The membership engaged actively and fruitfully with the ICC's "Conversation on Race and the Eating Clubs" as well as the new implicit bias training offered in partnership with the Carl A. Fields Center prior to the Street-wide spring club admissions. Following the ICC's "Conversation on Race and the Eating Clubs" and the Fields Center's Implicit Bias Training, the Cap Officers put together a list of takeaways for the membership that were the product of conversations that occurred both during and after the two events. These takeaways were shared with the membership in mid-January and they were invited to offer edits. These lessons on how to identify and eliminate unconscious bias before, during, and after the bicker process will inform the Officers' decision-making going forward as we continue to reflect on ways to remove undue barriers in bicker and make Cap more accessible to all of Princeton's diverse undergraduate population.

After being elected this February, Vice President Valeria Torres-Olivares '22 and I have devoted special focus to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our planning has included emphasizing one-on-one conversations during bicker based on positive feedback from Cap Virtual Bicker, a series of interactive events for members, and the introduction of a new Chair position which will help continue to incorporate considerations regarding DEI into all facets of the Club, in cooperation with the Cap Graduate Board DEI Committee co-chaired by Jade Williams '18 and Sean Poosson '17.

In light of the ongoing surge of violence and hate crimes against Asian Americans in the United States, we are offering members a variety of programming

to better educate and equip themselves to protect against and prevent hateful incidents against Asian Americans, including free bystander intervention trainings, documentary viewings, and discussion groups. These efforts are driven by our hope that the club be not only a social community of students who share a common spirit and love of each other's company, but also a place where exemplary individuals can inspire each other to learn and grow together. Members of Cap and Gown should graduate from Princeton taking away from their time in the club not just fond memories, but also the ability to be a leader in their communities.

This semester, in conjunction with the Graduate Board and in light of several important club initiatives aimed at improving the membership experience, as well as the extraordinary circumstances of the past year, the Officers opened a week-long window during March offering all former members who previously left the club a one-time option to rejoin the club (consistent with Cap's membership contract, a drop at any time after this one-time exception will require re-bickering Cap). In alignment with the club's new financial aid policy announced in December which will help make the membership experience even more affordable, as well as DEI initiatives promoting a more inclusive environment at the club, this one-time rejoin initiative for former members was an extension of our efforts to make Cap more welcoming and accessible to all members, including those who left the club, for whatever reason, before they were able to see these reforms take place. Approximately ten former members opted to rejoin and were welcomed back to the club.

Overall, the Officers are pursuing our DEI efforts with humility and look forward to hearing more feedback from members and alumni as we continue our efforts to make the Club an even more vibrant and welcoming place to be. I welcome your thoughts and input on these initiatives, and you can email us at [thecapandgownclub@gmail.com](mailto:thecapandgownclub@gmail.com).



## Thank You to Our Cap 2020 Donors!



2020 was the most challenging year in Cap and Gown's history, and we are so thankful for your generosity during this most difficult time.

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Philip R. Mengel '68  
D. Bruce Merrifield Jr '72  
Megan Milam '03

Erin P. Mills '09  
Christopher H. Milton '69  
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Laura Schloss Moore '94  
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Leland F. Newens '64  
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Carey Crutcher Smith '81  
Gordon L. Smith '80  
Mark W. Smith '04  
Tom E. Smith Jr '64  
Abigail Sooy '07  
J. Rand Sparling '63  
Allen F. Steere '70  
James Stenson '53  
Mary E. Stockton '78  
Priscilla W. Stumm '72  
Jeffrey G. Sullivan '78  
Russell L. Swanson '67  
Seth S. Terry '90  
J. Richard Thomas Jr '76  
Charles W. Thompson '86  
Joan E. Thompson '16  
James Thorman '10  
Preston B. Tims '00  
Emily Leland Todd '79  
Stephen C. Townend '71  
Eric S. Traub '14  
Roderick R. Turner '74  
Kellie Ann Valladares '13  
Edwin R. Van Dusen '90  
Richard E. Wall '61  
John D. Wallace '55  
Eric J. Walz '07  
Lisa Washington '89  
Joel D. Weinstein '58  
W. Drew Weyerhaeuser '05  
A. Donald Wiles II '61  
Jade Williams '18  
John P. Williams Jr '63  
Michael J. Winter '85  
Jordan Michael Hackmyer Wish '07  
Max E.G. Yano '14  
Keunwoo Peter Yu '13  
James W. Zug '62  
William R. Zwecker Jr '71

### Please give generously to support Cap

- The Cap Annual Fund provides support for the new Cap Financial Aid Fund, and also provides support for club operations and maintenance.
- Cap Dues are a commitment to support operations, alumni events, and communications so we continue to keep Cap members connected.
- To make a pledge or bequest to the Endowment, please email [thecapandgownclub@gmail.com](mailto:thecapandgownclub@gmail.com).

Please donate online at [cap.reuniontechnologies.com](http://cap.reuniontechnologies.com)



*Nina Bahadur '12  
Cap Connections Committee*

## What's Next for the Cap Connections Career Mentoring Program?

In fall 2020, we launched the Cap Connections pilot—a program to connect undergraduates with alumni for career networking. We hosted five Zoom panels, where alumni advised undergrads on pursuing careers in finance, technology, consulting, health care, and nonprofits. We had alumni participants from classes ranging from 2018 to 1960, and the career panels were some of the best-attended club events through fall 2020.

Moving into 2021, we're excited to figure out what's next for the program. New club president Alan Lin '22 is working with the Cap Connections team to establish an undergraduate Alumni Relations Chair to help with planning. We're also seeking feedback from current students on what type of events would be most helpful—and

fun!—for them, ensuring that our offerings are unique and impactful.

Options for future programming include virtual "office hours" where students can drop in to chat with alumni, Zoom coffee chats, or pairing people individually to connect. We're also excited about the eventual possibility of in-person programming down the line.

Our incredible alumni have been extremely generous with their time and expertise to make the program a success, and feedback from students shows how pleased they are to get to know older alums and learn from them.

If you have any suggestions regarding the Cap Connection Program, feel free to contact board member Nina Bahadur '12 at [nina.bahadur@gmail.com](mailto:nina.bahadur@gmail.com).



### Listen to our Cap Career Panel Podcasts:

Non-Profits

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[www.capandgownclub.org/careerpanels](http://www.capandgownclub.org/careerpanels)



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## Key Contacts

You can send an email to [thecapandgownclub@gmail.com](mailto:thecapandgownclub@gmail.com), and we'll direct your inquiry to the right person. You can also reach the following key people directly:

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**Lisa Schmucki '74**  
Alumni Relations  
[lisaschmucki@gmail.com](mailto:lisaschmucki@gmail.com)  
908-407-2755

**Dennis M. Normile**  
Club Steward  
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**Alan Lin '22**  
Club President  
[alanlin@princeton.edu](mailto:alanlin@princeton.edu)

Visit the Cap website at [www.capandgownclub.org](http://www.capandgownclub.org)

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## In Memoriam 2020

- Byron S. Hollinshead, Jr. '51
- Roger Gilbert, Jr. '55
- Dr. Leroy Riddick, Jr. '58
- Arthur L. Brown, II, M.D. '59
- Prof. David W. Brown '59
- Sam B. Caruthers, Jr., M.D. '59
- Prof. Edward D. Spurgeon '61
- David S. Fitzpatrick '64
- David H. Blair '67
- Robert S. Merrifield '75
- David C. Villa '76
- Henry W. Lane '78
- Terry S. Osborne '81



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