Michael Curran ’09, a member of the Class of 2009 Reunion Class Committee, wrote this eloquent letter to his classmates about why they should give back to the University.

Why should I give back to Fairfield? Personalizing the reason for giving requires knowing all the people I reach out to for support. Ultimately, this task is impossible. I don’t know everyone’s financial situations, affinity for their alma mater, etc. However, I do know why I give and I know why I think it’s important. I hope by sharing some of these thoughts, I can help make sense of why giving is important and why I think you should join me.

Half of our class signed up for the five year reunion. Half! A quick look at average reunion statistics says that most schools are lucky to gather a quarter of their class. Does this mean the class of ’09 is the best ever? Obviously. More so, it also shows that we love being Stags. Even as we move forward with our lives, we know that we will forever be connected to a great university. Why not help keep it that way?

I give because I owe Fairfield. I met the girl I wanted to marry at 20 years old. Yes, we were part of the “God squad” in Loyola, but we still think we’re pretty cool. She’s kind, caring, and beautiful in so many ways. She is the person I want around to comfort me in failures and to share in my joys. In the same way, I want to be there for her. She is the best person in my life and she is my best friend. As I think about attending a Fairfield wedding in a few weeks, I know that I’m not alone in feeling blessed to have met the person with whom I want to share everything. I will forever love Fairfield, because it brought me love, as it did for so many of us.

I give because I believe in Fairfield. I teach in a Catholic all-boys high school. Each year, students, mostly my juniors, ask me for advice during their college search and to explain how I chose Fairfield. Often, they ask, “Would you do it again?” Hell yes, I would! To be part of a community that cares is incredibly special. I hope, in giving back, that the students I send to Fairfield feel cared for as we did. I hope that they will be taught to be men and women for others, because I know that the mission of the school was fulfilled in us and we continue to make the school great as we carry that forward in our lives.

My favorite speech is from the 1993 ESPY awards. A feeble, dying former college basketball coach named Jim Valvano delivered a profoundly moving address. In setting up the Jimmy V Foundation for Cancer research, he imparted this wisdom, “Think about it: If you laugh, you think, and you cry, that’s a full day. That’s a heck of a day. You do that seven days a week; you’re going to have something special.” I felt that way at Fairfield. I shared a million laughs, from Traveling Max on orientation to canoe races at Senior Week. I grew academically and intellectually, with great professors like Dr. Rajan, Dr. Orlando, Dr. Van Hise, Dr. Lopez, and the “Doc” Orman. I also grew because I was surrounded by thoughtful, intelligent people that wanted to learn. Finally, I was moved to tears, especially leaving the beach! In times of difficulty though, I could count on campus ministers, faculty, and my fellow Stags to be there for me. For four years, we shared our hopes and dreams with professors, advisors, and one another. I give because I want others to build the incredible relationships I was fortunate to build at Fairfield.

Ultimately, I give because I know it will help the school. I don’t give a lot, but that’s okay. The percentage of donors gives the school a higher ranking in many guidebooks. One item considered by
many of the rankings publications is “percentage of alumni donors.” Even if we all gave twenty bucks, the school would gain recognition. Who doesn’t pull a few Andrew Jackson’s from the ATM each week? Consider sliding just one into the Fairfield Fund each year, rather than taking it to the Grape or whatever bar you have used to replace that wonderful spot. Join me in giving to Fairfield because you found the one you love. Join me in giving because you met great people who became great friends. And, please, join me in giving because it will make our alma mater stronger for the future, so that future classes (who can only hope to compete with ours) will have the chance to be part of such a special place. Go Stags!

*Michael Curran ’09*