



Get to know University Councillor Alison Holt, Artsci'87:



BAH'87. Managing Director, Offord Group, and Senior Consultant and Principal, Marts & Lundy in the field of management consulting in the charitable sector. Council Trustee 2018-current. Member of University Council 2003-current. Previously served as Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee of Council, Chair of the University Council Reform Planning Group, and member of the Chancellor's Selection Committee. Current member, Board of Trustees External Relations and Development Committee and Governance and Nominating Committee. Member of the Marts & Lundy Board of Directors. Volunteer engagements include:

LEAP | Pecault Centre for Social Impact Advisory Committee; Montcrest School Board of Directors; former member of Child Development Institute Foundation Board and Integra Advisory Board; Past Vice-President, Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education; and past board member, Queen's Alumni Association. Staff member in Queen's Advancement 1988-1999. Queen's Herb Hamilton Award Winner 2000. Current term to 2024.

1. Why did you select Queen's University?

This won't make the view book testimonial page. I visited a close friend for a weekend and slept on her floor in Vic Hall. We went to the Engineering Carol Service, the Underground Pub and the Quiet Pub. I lost a contact lens, subsisted on carrots and wine, and returned home to Montreal determined that there was only one choice for me. Oh, and the academic reputation was stellar.

2. Most memorable moment as a student?

Press nights at the Queen's Journal (many, many memorable moments over sleepless nights twice a week). It's where I found my people and learned the value of raising your voice. It changed my life.

3. What is your job?

I help great organizations get stronger so they can make an even bigger difference in the world. As a consultant to charities and not-for-profits, I help them with strategy, revenue development and marketing.

4. What's the best career advice you've ever received?

I was working at U of T in the central alumni office at a job I loved when I got an offer to go to a start-up independent school and create their external relations office. It was a big leap of faith – the school didn't even exist yet. When I told my boss, she said that while she didn't

want me to go, I had to do it, because you just don't get many chances to build something incredible from the ground up. She was right.

5. What's the career highlight you're most proud of?

Helping to make that school a success was great, but more importantly the relationships built along the way are what I'll take most pride in. I'm also proud of the fact that my colleagues and I have been a small part of the success of great organizations changing the world.

6. How do you spend your free time?

Because I love spending time with my family. My husband Innes van Nostrand (former Councillor and Council Trustee) and I have three kids – Jack, Claire and Alec -- all current Queen's students. We love to spend time at our cottage in the Eastern Townships of Quebec, or travelling (when that's possible again).

7. What motivated you to stand for election for University Council?

It was part of my lifelong effort to never truly leave Queen's!

8. What are some of your most memorable milestones/accomplishments as a Councillor?

I've always firmly believed that this quirky, Queen's-specific, governance-adjacent group is a huge asset for the University. This year's election, when a record number of people ran and there was such enthusiasm and eagerness to get involved, felt like Council was really coming into its own. As part of the reform group that recommended the current structure of Council, it's exciting to see it being such a magnet for alumni.

9. Your aspirations for being on University Council?

Represent Council well as a Trustee and continue to advocate for Council and Councillors.

10. Do you have any words of wisdom for incoming Councillors?

Get involved, get on a committee, provide your perspective and experience because that's really valuable to the University.

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