

Dear Carleton alum,

Greetings from the Department of Physical Education, Athletics, and Recreation and from the Office of Alumni Relations. We write with good news of a decision that the college has made to correct a historical imbalance in the honoring of our female varsity athletes.

Since its founding, Carleton has championed the role of athletics in the life of the college. The commitment to physical endeavor has always been a fundamental part of our liberal arts education, and the college values the effort dedicated to the training of the body as well as the mind.

The college is equally proud of the role that varsity athletics has played throughout our history. The opportunities for intercollegiate competition have allowed thousands of alumni over the years to participate, to compete, and to excel in a wide variety of sports. The college has honored the achievements of its varsity athletes by awarding them varsity letters.

However, those honors have not always been granted on equal terms. Throughout the twentieth century, and especially after the establishment in the late 1960s of the women's athletics program, hundreds of female athletes competed in varsity intercollegiate athletics without the opportunity of lettering in an official capacity. While many of the coaches of women's varsity teams chose to celebrate their athletes with individual prizes and awards, it was only in the 1988-89 academic year that the college, through the newly formed Department of Physical Education, Athletics, and Recreation, officially celebrated female varsity athletes with the honor of lettering.

The purpose of this announcement, then, is to recognize and honor the athletic dedication and achievements of decades of female athletes by retroactively awarding them an official varsity letter. **All female athletes who participated on a varsity team before the 1988-89 academic year are hereby retroactively granted a varsity letter.** Although this award does not extend to club sports, such as gymnastics, synchronized swimming or ultimate, any member of a women's varsity team before the 1988-89 academic year is now considered to have earned a letter. Women's varsity sports before 1988-89 include tennis; swimming and diving; basketball; softball; field hockey (until 1985, when it became a club sport); volleyball; cross-country and track (after 1975), downhill skiing (after 1976), Nordic skiing (after 1980), and soccer (after 1980).

If you were a participant on a women's varsity team before the 1988-89 academic year, Carleton's Department of Physical Education, Athletics, and Recreation acknowledges and apologizes for this omission from the past and hereby confirms that you lettered in that sport. No further effort beyond what you have already given as a varsity athlete is needed to prove your participation. The college, however, also recognizes the importance of providing a tangible symbol of that honor to all who wish to receive one. Therefore, any alum who participated on one or more of the varsity teams listed above and who fills out [this linked form](#) will receive a Carleton 'C' letter and a certificate. Information provided on the form will allow us to improve our historical records, but there is no need to prove or document varsity participation in order to receive the physical 'C' letter and certificate. Since some female varsity athletes may not have

shared their email addresses with the college, please feel free to share this notice with others who may wish to hear the news.

We appreciate the efforts of many varsity athletes who have helped bring this decision to fruition, and we honor and are grateful for the efforts of all women varsity athletes, whose participation, competitiveness, and accomplishments have always enriched the life of the college and will always continue to do so.

Sincerely,

Gerald Young, Director of Physical Athletics, Education, and Recreation
Michael Thompson, Director of Alumni Relations