

# POST-COLLEGIATE LIFE SURVEY

Hobart and William Smith Colleges  
Geneva, New York 14456

*Classes of 1979, 1982, 1985, 1989, 1993, 1997, 2001, 2005 and 2006*

Dear Alumnus/Alumna:

Greetings once again to the Classes of '79, '82, '85, '89, '93, '97 and 2001 and a new greeting to the classes of 2005 and 2006! Your help is being requested in this ongoing sociological study of post-collegiate life among our graduates. As a member of one of these classes you are part of a very special research project that has now become a tradition at HWS with response rates that are unparalleled in any research on college graduates in this country. Indeed, this study is unique in all of higher education because it has kept going for so long and because so many of you continue to respond.

If you are a member of the class of '79, '82 or '85 you first received a Post-Collegiate Life Survey in 1987. The response to that survey was unprecedented (860 of you responded or 76%)! In the 1991 version of this survey the class of '89 was added and 1,151 of you responded (70%). About every four years thereafter I have continued to follow up by contacting each class previously surveyed and adding a new cohort to the study as well. I am extremely grateful that each time the majority has responded and many of you have sent in extra thoughts and comments. Reports on all of these surveys and related articles are available at my Post-Collegiate Life Survey Project web site (<http://people.hws.edu/perkins/PCLrep.htm>).

Now some four years later, it's time to check back in with all of you and this year I am adding graduates from two of the most recent classes (2005 and 2006) to this study to see what changes have taken place, what issues and experiences remain as persistent themes, and what new patterns are emerging in your lives. The intention of this survey as in previous surveys is to gain a more accurate picture of current life styles among graduates and assess the diversity of life transitions that members of your classes have experienced since college. All graduates of the nine classes are being contacted and asked to complete the Post-Collegiate Life Survey regardless of whether or not you participated previously. Participation is anonymous as in past surveys and voluntary, of course, but every member of these classes is urged to respond so that all views and experiences among graduates from a variety of backgrounds will be adequately represented. The survey takes only about 15 minutes to complete and there are no other requirements or obligations associated with participating in this study. If you would like to see the aggregate results, I will be happy to provide them (see instructions), and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

The survey has traditionally concentrated on questions about 1) friendship patterns, 2) family transitions, 3) postgraduate education and vocational experiences, 4) health concerns such as alcohol use, smoking, eating patterns, and exercise, 5) personal value priorities, and 6) forgiveness in personal relationships. In the last survey, I also included a series of questions asking you to reflect on the value of your HWS education. These questions about HWS were particularly useful for our institution in evaluating what we provide to students in the long run so I have included them again.

I am very grateful for your help and continued interest in this study!

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