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2011-2012

PARENT GUIDE

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About Our Guides

University Parent Media works closely with institutions around the country to bring together the most relevant, timely information into one all-inclusive resource.

We have published this guide with the mission of helping you easily navigate the university and its surrounding community. Ultimately, we hope these resources help nurture your connection and involvement in your student's college years!

Make the Most of Your Parent Guide

- Hang on to your Guide! Inside you'll find information that's useful all-year long, including important phone numbers, web sites and calendars.
- Store your copy in a purse or glove compartment for convenient reference.
- Pass it along to parents of prospective college students to promote the school.
- Please recycle when finished!
- Discover more content, tips and local business information by visiting us online at: www.universityparent.com/union



Welcome to Union College!

Dear Union College Parents and Family Members,

Welcome to the Union community and to the Union College Parent Guide. As your child transitions to college life, this guide will help you get acquainted with the Union experience, our campus and the surrounding region.

As the parent of a Union student, you are automatically a member of the Parent Association. This means you'll receive regular news updates from the College, the quarterly Union magazine, and invitations to Homecoming and Family Weekend and other special events.

Whether your child is hundreds of miles away or in the next town, it's important for parents to stay connected during this exciting time in a student's life. We're delighted to provide this vital link. Once again, welcome to the Union family, and don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions or concerns about life at Union.

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friels@union.edu

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Pam Ritter, ritterp@union.edu
Lisa Mason, masonl@union.edu

Sincerely,

Julia Blanchard
(Nick '10 and Ellen '12)
Chair, Parent Association ■

Our Setting

- Idyllic 120-acre residential campus in Schenectady, N.Y., combining historic and modern architecture with gardens and natural woodlands
- 16-sided Nott Memorial, a National Historic Monument, a hub for art exhibits, study, symposia and special events
- Jackson's Garden, the nation's oldest continually cultivated campus garden
- The new Peter Irving Wold Center, a \$22 million, three-story, 35,000-square-foot research and education facility
- Located 15 miles from the state capital of Albany, three hours from New York City, Boston and Montreal
- Close to a major airport, Amtrak stations and buses
- Major opportunities for hiking, biking, boating, camping, skiing and other recreational activities in the Adirondack Mountains (north), Catskills (south) and Berkshires (east), as well as on the Mohawk and Hudson rivers and many lakes
- Part of tri-city region (Albany, Schenectady, Troy) known as Tech Valley, featuring a robust economy in a mix of industries, including high tech, health care and higher education
- The city of Schenectady undergoing a renaissance, thanks to major renovations and investment, including GE's \$100 million battery manufacturing plant
- Downtown highlights include theaters, restaurants, hotels, an independent bookstore, multiplex cinema and farmers' markets. ■

About Union

- Founded in 1795, the first college chartered by the Regents of the State of New York
- Pioneer of many firsts, from curricular offerings to planned campus design
- 2,100 full-time undergraduates (51% men, 49% women)
- Students from 40 states and 40 countries
- A vibrant Minerva system of residential, intellectual and social activities
- Abundant opportunities for internships, service and global study
- Hands-on research and application of ideas
- A broad range of disciplinary and interdisciplinary programs in the liberal arts and engineering
- Among the nation's top 50 liberal arts schools, as ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* ■

A Union Education

The Union curriculum is challenging and flexible, broad and deep. From day 1, it encourages students to explore, question, think creatively and take risks.

The first and second years are devoted to foundations – to building a broad base of knowledge by taking introductory course in a variety of disciplines and to understanding issues from multiple perspectives and ethical considerations. Once students decide on one or more majors, the focus is on developing deep expertise in their field of interest and gaining understanding of the world through the lens of their specialty.

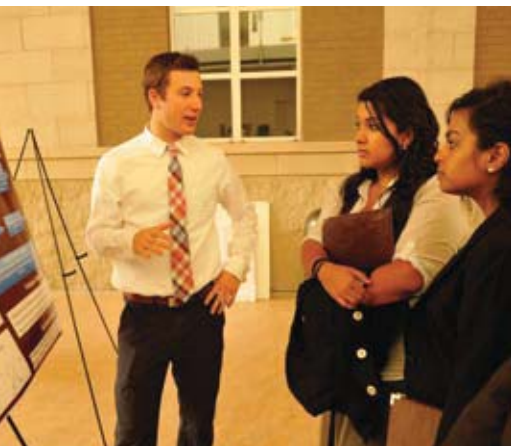
Our curriculum also challenges students to combine fields and apply knowledge in new ways, through courses grouped around themes, interdisciplinary courses and team projects, and classes in a variety of disciplines. Since our beginnings, we have had a deep and significant commitment to undergraduate research across all disciplines. Students have many opportunities to work closely with their professors, co-author publications and deliver papers at conferences. Each spring, the College celebrates scholarly activity and research at the Steinmetz Symposium. Established in 1991,

the symposium showcases advancements made by student researchers through oral, dance, music, art and poster sessions. A primary focus is the presentation of senior capstone projects and thesis work. The symposium coincides with Prize Day.

Through our International Programs, more than 60 percent of Union students engage in coursework and fieldwork across the globe, from Argentina to Vietnam. There are two dozen full terms abroad and a variety of three-week mini-terms during winter break or at the beginning of summer. There are also opportunities for extended terms, formal exchanges, research and independent study.

Union's Scholars Program, offered to a select group of outstanding incoming students upon admission, gives participants the opportunity to pursue an accelerated curriculum. The Michael Rapaport '59 Ethics Across the Curriculum offers a variety of courses in all departments that provide extensive training in everyday ethics, preparing students to face a world of tough decisions and empowering them to exercise moral leadership.

Union's Writing Across the Curriculum initiative develops writing skills in the context of courses students take in all disciplines. Every student is required to take five designated courses from at least two divisions and one Senior Writing Experience. ■



Some staples of the Union curriculum

- First-Year Preceptorial, or “precept,” emphasizes critical reading and thinking skills, writing, speaking and cultural diversity.
- Sophomore Research Seminar helps students expand their research and writing skills through content-rich courses designed by faculty from throughout the college.
- Steinmetz Symposium showcases the research, scholarship and creative endeavors of hundreds of students each spring.
- Senior Thesis or Capstone Project encourages students to research, prepare and design their own project around an issue or problem of interest.
- Academic competitions such as the intercollegiate Ethics Bowl, Mini-Baja Competition, Model UN and SAE AeroLift put students' skills, acumen and hard work to the test alongside their peers worldwide.
- Internships in such leading organizations as Barclay's, Bloomberg, GE Energy, Goldman Sachs, Harvard University, Hearst, IBM and Teach for America, to name just a few, give students a leg up when seeking jobs after graduation. ■

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Majors and Programs of Study

Union offers some 40 majors, double majors, combined majors and minors, as well as other programs and interdisciplinary concentrations.

For those who want to study in two different fields, there's an interdepartmental major – for instance, philosophy and biology for those with an interest in bioethics. Students may also design their own program of study, known as an Organizing Theme Major, which integrates courses from at least three different departments. Most students take three courses in each of the three 10-week terms that comprise Union's academic year.

Union grants undergraduate B.A. and B.S. degrees, but students may also enroll in an advanced dual degree program. We offer a Leadership in Medicine program with Albany Medical College and Union Graduate College (B.S., M.S. or M.B.A., and M.D.); the Law and Public Policy program with Albany Law School (six-year program leading to a J.D.); and five-year bachelor's/M.B.A. or bachelor's/M.A.T. programs with Union Graduate College. ■

Small Classes, Dedicated Faculty and Student Supports

The Union student-faculty ratio is 10:1, and 96 percent of the teaching faculty holds a doctorate or highest degree earned in their field of expertise. The average introductory class has 20 students; average upper level class, 14. No classes are led by teaching assistants.

Academic advising is central to the mission of the College and is a key faculty responsibility. Students enjoy a close working relationship with their advisors, who help them make informed choices that maximize the benefits of a liberal arts education. First-year students are assigned advisors by the Dean of Studies; upper class advisors are chosen by the student. Students may request a change of advisor at any time through the Dean of Studies office.

For eligible students who need help transitioning to college, Student Support Services, located on the third floor of



Reamer Campus Center, offers a peer mentoring program. This program supplements the advising system by providing valuable information on course selection, academic requirements and resources, and what it takes to be successful at Union. Also available are liaison services, testing accommodations, note-taking assistance, alternate format course materials and access to assistive technology. ■



Minerva Programs

In 2004, Union created a new vision for campus life by establishing the Minerva Houses, lively hubs for intellectual, social and residential activities that bring together students, faculty and staff. Today, this innovation continues to flourish.

All incoming students are assigned to one of seven houses: Beuth, Blue, Breazzano, Golub, Green, Sorum and Wold. Students are in charge of governing the houses, and a generous budget provides money for discussions,

movies, multicultural events and more.

In 2008, Union also pioneered Minerva Fellows, Union's own Peace Corps. The program offers new Union graduates a chance to spend nine months on a fellowship working with entrepreneurial organizations in developing countries across the globe. They apply innovative, critical and passionate thinking to social welfare and anti-poverty initiatives. Each spring, the Fellows return to campus to share their experiences with students. ■

A Diverse Community

Currently, about 17 percent of students self-identify as members of an underrepresented group. International students make up 4 percent of our student population, a figure that is growing as Union continues its emphasis on international recruitment.

The Office of Multicultural Affairs helps campus organizations collaborate with each other and also assists with cultural

events, LGBTQ programs, religious and spiritual programs for a variety of faiths, and other special events. The office addresses issues related to diversity, safety and inclusion, and it facilitates professional and student-organized workshops, lectures and discussion groups. UNITAS is an organization that specifically supports groups and individuals who create events aimed at fostering diversity and inclusion. ■

Campus Life

In addition to Minerva programs, Union has:

- 100 student clubs
- 30 student volunteer programs
- 25 athletic teams (23 teams in Division III, and men's and women's ice hockey in Division I)
- 51 intramurals and club sports
- 13 theme houses
- 11 residential fraternities and sororities

Our Greek system, the oldest in the country, is governed by the Interfraternity Council, College Panhellenic Council and Multicultural Greek Council.

Student clubs and organizations cover a range of interests, including performance and art, social action, media, literary arts, religion, spirituality, politics, multiculturalism and academic honor societies.

The Kenney Community Center is Union's headquarters for community service and a vibrant resource for our neighboring communities. Here, students can easily connect with America Reads, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Habitat for Humanity, Junior Science, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

Community service at Union

- More than 30 programs are offered, everything from anti-hunger to youth mentoring.
- More than 1,200 students volunteer their time and skills each year.
- More than 12,000 student hours are devoted annually to community service.
- Almost every student participates in some kind of service activity during their four years at Union, either through the Kenney Center or other campus organizations.
- For three straight years, Union has been named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, the highest federal recognition a school can achieve for its commitment to service learning and civic engagement. ■

and other community-focused programs. Students regularly bring ideas of their own to the mix. In addition, sororities, fraternities, athletic teams, theme houses, Minerva Houses and many clubs also sponsor civic projects. ■



Dining and Residence Life

With seven separate facilities on campus, including two resident dining halls and a full-scale catering service, Dining Services provides quality meals and a variety of options, including vegetarian choices, kosher meals and theme meals that showcase the cuisine of individual cultures.

First-year students are on a meal plan, eating almost all meals in West Dining Hall. In subsequent years, they eat at Upper Class Dining Hall, located in Reamer Campus Center. Students keep a declining balance or debit account that provides funds for use in all Union dining locations and for vending services. Money can be added at any time at the Dining Services Office. Parents may purchase special packages for birthdays and campus exam periods.

The Department of Residential Life strives to create exceptional and distinct living experiences. Ninety percent of all students live in residence halls or houses. Union's diverse accommodations include six independent residence halls and the college-owned Seward and Roger Hull Place apartments. Students also reside in Minerva Houses, fraternity and sorority houses, theme houses and College Park Hall, a renovated hotel a block from campus. CPH is also home to the Campus Safety Department. ■

Theme Houses at Union

Upper-class students who share a particular interest may live together in an apartment-style house on or near campus.

- **ARTS House**, 201 Seward Place
- **Bronner House (multicultural)**, Smith House
- **Culinary House**, 319 Seward Place
- **Dickens House (literature)**, 315 Seward Place
- **Iris House (LGBTQ community)**, 301 Seward Place
- **Europa House (Russian and German cultures)**, 209 Seward Place
- **Music Culture House**, 32 Union Avenue
- **Ozone House (sustainable living)**, 1294 Lenox Road
- **Religious Diversity**, 215 Seward Place
- **Safe House**, 325 Seward Place
- **Symposium House (discourse)**, 233 Seward Place
- **Thurston House (East Asian interest)**, 207 Seward Place
- **Wells House (community service)**, 1 Union Ave. ■



Health, Wellness and Safety

Through our staff of board-certified nurse practitioners, registered nurses and a collaborating physician, Health Services provides treatment of illness and injuries, and offers education and support to help students make choices that will enable them to enjoy a lifetime of good health. Students should call the office to set up an appointment, with special consideration given for emergency situations. All full-time students must be covered by health insurance. Students covered by their own plan must complete an online waiver form to avoid compulsory enrollment in the College plan.

The Counseling Center provides free services to students who elect to

address personal or psychological concerns with a professional counselor. Typical concerns include interpersonal and family issues, academic problems, anxiety, depression and addictions. The center also assists with referrals for students who seek services beyond the scope of campus resources.

Union is dedicated to providing the safest possible living, learning and working environment for students, faculty and staff. From monitoring emergency telephone lines to providing nighttime trolley service on campus, the Department of Campus Safety is proactive in promoting safety and preventing crime. Campus Safety also has established a number of outreach, education and awareness programs for the College community.

Campus Safety officers are on duty 24/7. Other personal safety measures include a blue light emergency alert system; keypad locks for residences and Minerva Houses; the Union Trolley and walking escorts; new security cameras, improved campus lighting and public address system in 22 campus buildings; and a comprehensive emergency notification system.

The Emergency Response website outlines the College's preparation for emergency conditions. Here visitors may register their mobile phone to receive text message alerts and updates in the event of an emergency, review the draft Emergency Response Policy and keep abreast of new safety-related initiatives. Campus Safety also provides information regarding OSHA, fire and lab safety, and parking on campus. ■



Career Development

The Becker Career Center assists students with everything from self-assessment to the internship, job and graduate school search process. Trained counselors help students develop five core professional competencies: career decision-making, resumé writing, cover letter writing, interviewing and networking.

The center houses a wealth of online and print career tools that allow students to research careers, locate employers in their field or geographic area, and find internship and job postings. It maintains an extensive alumni network, sponsors career days and job fairs, promotes internships and participates in special events such as careers fairs and recruiting consortiums.

About 60 percent of graduating seniors go on to pursue full-time jobs, while

30 percent go directly to graduate or professional school and 10 percent travel or pursue other goals.

Union's extensive alumni network is a valuable resource for students. The College's 22,000 alumni have made their mark in every field and profession, from the arts and academia to business, engineering, law and medicine. Their active participation in alumni events and campus life continues to enrich the student experience. ■





Admissions & Financial Aid

Some 5,000 applicants seek first-year class positions; about half are in the top 10 percent of their secondary school class. Admissions counselors look at the prospective student's grades, quality of courses, class rank, recommendations and extracurriculars.

Union is committed to admitting an economically diverse student body, to meeting the full, demonstrated need of all admitted students and to keeping students' debt as low as possible. Those families who are unable to pay full tuition and fees are typically covered by a financial aid package consisting of a grant,

loan and work opportunity. About half of all applicants apply for financial aid; more than 60 percent receive assistance.

Our comprehensive financial aid program includes more than \$40 million in aid from Union's own resources and from federal, state, institutional and other agencies. The College directly awards more than \$34 million in scholarships each year. For students in the Class of 2014, the average need-based scholarship is \$32,500 and the average merit award, \$10,000. Merit awards are offered to top academic candidates; approximately 10 percent of students receive merit scholarships. ■

Visit www.union.edu/admissions for information on deadlines and filing procedures

The Union College Parent Association

The Union College Parent Association involves parents of students and alumni in campus and regional activities, fosters communication with the College, enriches their students' experiences and helps strengthen the financial foundation of the College. It offers a variety of meaningful and fun ways for parents and families to be an integral part of the Union experience and make a positive impact on the daily life of the campus.



All parents of current students are automatically members of the association. There are no dues for membership.

Parent Fund

Philanthropic support from parents of current students and parents of alumni is very important to the College. The Parent Fund is a special part of the Annual Fund that provides annual support from parents, grandparents and other family members for every aspect of campus life, from academic programs to scholarships. A generous gesture above and beyond tuition, participation in the Parent Fund by our current parents also sends a strong vote of confidence about the extraordinary Union experience that their children are receiving. Each fiscal year (July 1-June 30), Union depends on these resources to operate in the present and build for the future.

Volunteer and Other Opportunities

There are more opportunities than ever for parents and families to get involved in life at Union. Our Parent Association is looking for enthusiastic parents who want to help with the following initiatives of our new Parent Leadership Committee (our group of parent volunteers):

- **Communications:** Volunteer your time by providing input on direct mail campaigns or helping us welcome parents of first-year students.
- **Development:** Contributors to the Parent Fund can help us spread the message. Contact other parents to encourage contributions to the fund, which supports student experiences.
- **Events:** Join us at Summer Orientation, Summer Sendoff, or Homecoming and Family Weekend to answer questions and offer advice to new Union parents. ■

Welcome to Schenectady

We invite you to experience Schenectady

You'll discover fascinating history, world-renowned entertainment, unique shopping, eclectic restaurants and vibrant nightspots.

Located on the historic Erie Canal in the Capital-Saratoga region, Schenectady has an incredible past stretching from its colonization in 1661, through the opening of the Erie Canal and onward toward the birth of General Electric. Today, Schenectady is known for its historic districts and the wonderful cultural venues. The city has a resident ballet, symphony and several theaters including Proctors – home to an I-Werks Extreme Screen Theater, a GE Black Box Theater, and its main stage located in a restored vaudeville theater. You can see an impressive array of performances including shows direct from Broadway, international ballet and opera, and nationally known performers. There are also several community



theaters, art galleries, special events, museums and numerous historic sites – including the Stockade, New York State's oldest historic district.

Just a short drive from downtown, nature enthusiasts will enjoy the nine nature preserves and parks located in the county with hiking, fishing and hunting opportunities. The Mohawk-Hudson Bike trail passes through the county and is accessible from many locations. There is a multitude of water activities including canoeing, kayaking, water skiing, and fishing on the Mohawk River.

Come and Enjoy! ■





Schenectady Attractions

Art and Theater

It all starts with Proctors Theater in Schenectady, New York. Here, spectacular Broadway productions are showcased in one of the finest restored vaudeville theaters in the U.S. From there, Freedom Park lets you relax and enjoy the sounds of jazz, a symphony or blues band during their free concert series.

Check out a performance of the Schenectady Symphony Orchestra, the Northeast Ballet or the Schenectady Civic Players. Or see what's



happening at the Yulman Center or Mandeville Art Gallery at Union College. There is never a shortage of theater, music or the arts as you travel across Schenectady County.

History and Museums

Explore Schenectady's history from its early beginning as a tiny Dutch outpost in 1661 to its present day status as a world leader in science and technology. Schenectady is one of the oldest cities in the United States, and the Stockade District is one of the places where it all started. As New York State's first Historic District, it was originally named for the wooden stockades that enclosed it. In 1690 it was burned to the ground in one of the first battles in the European struggle for control of the new world, but was rebuilt with the help of the resident Mohawk Indian neighbors. By 1692 it was once again flourishing.

In 1825 the opening of the Erie Canal changed the character of Schenectady from that of a riverfront town that served as the gateway to the west, to a leader in the Industrial Revolution. In 1848 the Schenectady Locomotive Manufactory was established followed by the Schenectady Locomotive Works. The 1901 merging of the Schenectady Locomotive Works with seven other locomotive manufacturers in the northeast created the American Locomotive Company, one of the largest locomotive manufacturers in the world.

Thomas Edison established his Edison Machine Works, later to become the General Electric Company, here in 1886. Schenectady was the worldwide corporate headquarters for the General Electric Company until 1974. The people of Schenectady made pioneering contributions to power generation and distribution, radio and television technology,

medical diagnostic imaging, and many other technological innovations that changed the world during the 20th century. Don't forget about the Empire State Air Museum at the Schenectady County Airport. It has something for all flight enthusiasts, from educational programs to exhibits to rare aircrafts.

The many museums throughout Schenectady tell the story of its unique history. Find the exhibits, performance and attractions that interest you by using the Tourism Directory. As you plan your trip don't forget about the wonderful Schenectady restaurants, sporting events and leisure activities that are always a short trip away.

Public Transportation, Tours

Schenectady is easily accessible, and even easier to get around in with ample sidewalks and public transportation. Located just 20 minutes from the Albany International Airport, the County has Amtrak Service, bus service and an excellent public transportation system that goes right through the city of Schenectady. ►



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For those looking to walk around and see the area on foot, there are a number of regularly planned walking tours in different areas of the city. Special guided tours happen regularly as well, and can be found on the Schenectady event calendar (www.sayschenectady.org/events_calendar).

Shopping

With all the new and renovated stores and restaurants now in Schenectady County, there's never been a better time to come and shop for your family, friends and, of course, yourself.

Within walking distance of many of the downtown Schenectady hotels you'll find fabulous and unique boutique shops, including those at the Jay Street Marketplace downtown and on Upper Union Street.

Just a short drive west of downtown Schenectady is the Rotterdam Square Mall, offering up a host of stores to suit your entire family's shopping desires. And then there is the Mohawk Commons. Niskayuna is the town where the Commons resides, and it is just east of the city. It offers Barnes & Noble, Target, PetSmart, Old Navy, Payless Shoes and much more!

Sports and Recreation

Hike in one of our nine nature preserves, or golf at one of our six golf courses. Cross country skiing, swimming, biking along the Erie Canal, fishing at one of our ponds or streams, or boating on the beautiful Mohawk River -- it's all here waiting for you!



For more information please visit www.sayschenectady.org

Parks

Schenectady's dozens of parks have a variety of offerings, from the simple pleasure of watching boats on the Mohawk River, to an afternoon of hiking in one of the nature preserves. Several parks offer swimming, tennis, bocce ball and evening entertainment. ■

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Academic Calendar

SEPTEMBER 2011

4	Residence halls open (first-year students only)
4-6	First year student orientation
6	Residence halls and houses open for returning students
7	Fall term classes begin

NOVEMBER 2011

15	Fall term classes end
17	Fall term exams begin
22	Fall term exams end
23	Residence halls and houses close

JANUARY 2012

2	Residence halls and houses open
3	Winter term classes begin

MARCH 2012

12	Winter term classes end
13	Winter term exams begin
16	Exams end; recess begins
17	Residence halls and houses close
25	Residence halls and houses open
26	Spring term classes begin

JUNE 2012

1	Spring term classes end
4	Spring term exams begin
7	Spring term exams end
8	Residence halls and houses close for non-graduates
10	Commencement; resident halls and houses close for students participating in graduation

Important Phone Numbers

LISTING	NUMBER
Academic Opportunity Program	388-6113
Admissions	388-6112
Athletics	388-6284
Book Store	388-6188
Dean of Students	388-6116
Dean of Studies	388-6234
Campus Safety	388-6358
Career Development Center (Becker)	388-6176
College Relations (Alumni Affairs and Development)	388-6149
Computer Services	388-6293
Counseling Center	388-6161
Dining Services	388-6050
Financial Aid	388-6123
First-Year Students Office	388-6061
Greek Life	388-8777
Health Professions Programs	388-6300
Health Services	388-6120
International Programs	388-6002
Mail Services	388-6048
Parking Permits	388-6381
Parent Program	388-6601
President's Office	388-6101
Registrar	388-6109
Religious Programs	388-6618, 399-6087
Residential Life	388-6117
Schaffer Library	388-6277
Student Accounts	388-6106
Student Activities	388-6118
Student Support Services	388-8785
Writing Center	388-6680
Yulman Theater Box Office	388-6545

Alma Mater

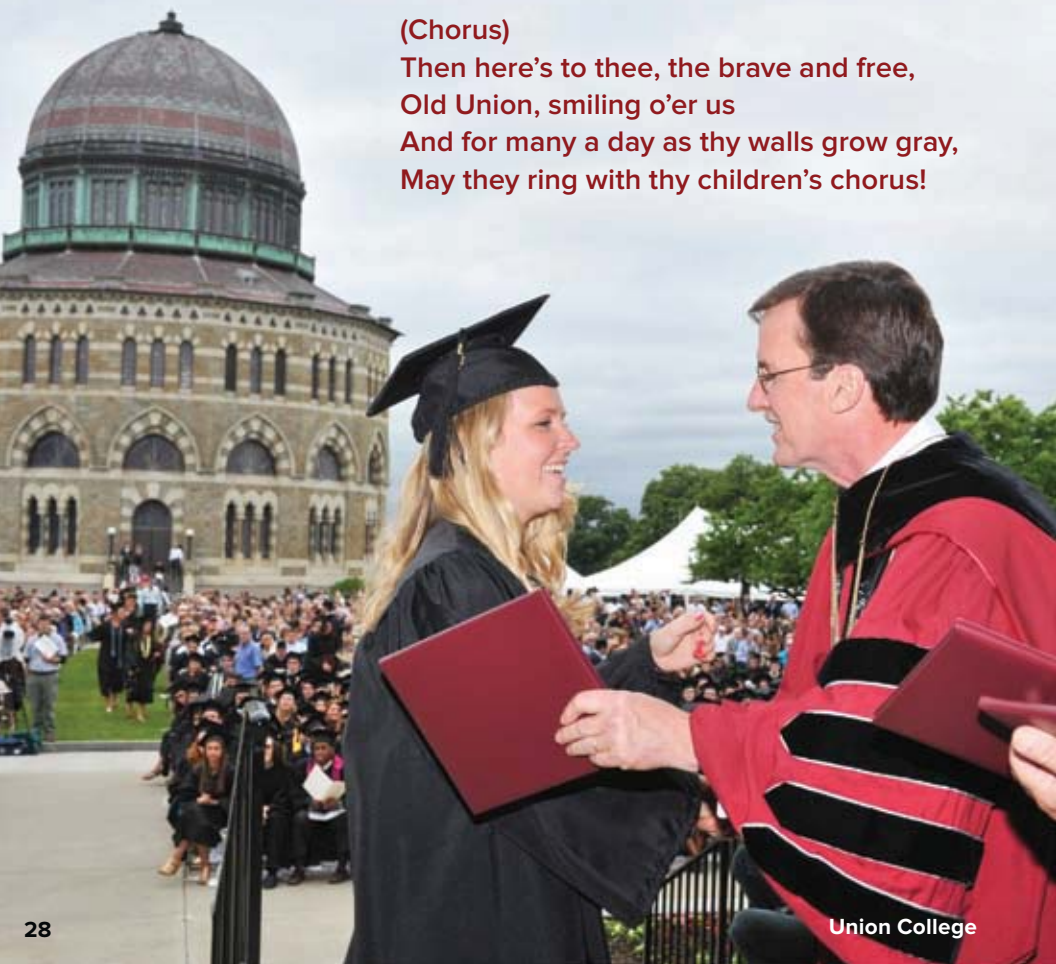
Ode to Old Union

by Fitzhugh Ludlow, Class of 1856

Let the Grecian dream of his sacred stream,
And sing of the brave adorning,
That Phoebus weaves from his laurel leaves
At the golden gates of morning,
But the brook that bounds
through Union's Grounds
Glams bright as the Delphic water,
And a prize as fair as a god may wear
Is a dip from our Alma Mater.

(Chorus)

Then here's to thee, the brave and free,
Old Union, smiling o'er us
And for many a day as thy walls grow gray,
May they ring with thy children's chorus!



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