

James von Rittmann '95

Dartmouth Club President of the Year 2010

Franklin D. Roosevelt once said “Happiness lies in the joy of achievement and the thrill of creative effort.” If that statement is true, then James von Rittmann must be the happiest man alive.

The Dartmouth Alumni Association of Silicon Valley, as is reflected by their being chosen the 2010 Large Dartmouth Club of the Year, is at the forefront in regards to innovation, creativity and corporate sponsorships. James is the driving force behind this achievement and is tireless in his efforts and desire to connect the Dartmouth family everywhere in new and different ways. Virtually, every event the club sponsors has a unique twist to it – just ask him about the Zeppelin ride or the grape-stomping contest – and as a result, they attract large and diverse crowds. The thirty-five events hosted by the club last year drew over 1,500 alumni, students and guests.

This kind of success could not be achieved without a strong Board of Directors. As president, James is very serious about board recruitment, development and participation. He has instituted the practice of hosting retreats for his volunteers, bringing in outside experts to lead discussions on topics such as branding and fundraising. He empowers and motivates his committees to take ownership of their projects and is very vocal and supportive when they excel. He must be doing something right as the club has more individuals wanting to join the board than there are available spots which many presidents can attest is not the norm.

James’ energy, effort and enthusiasm spans far beyond the Silicon Valley. On his own initiative and at his own expense, he has visited and mentored new presidents across the country. As one beneficiary commented: “He inspires and excites not only his membership and leadership team, but ours and others as well.”

James is a force to contend with, there’s no doubt about that. His passion for Dartmouth is palpable and intense. Jack London wrote “You can’t wait for inspiration. You have to go after it with a club.” James has taken that to heart but does it not only with a “club” but, more importantly, for the club.

For his tremendous efforts this past year and for all that he does for Dartmouth, please join me in recognizing James von Rittmann '95 as the 2010 Club President of the Year.

Acting Vice President, Alumni Relations

Senior Associate Director, Alumni Relations