Cornell Retiree Engagement Survey

A celebration of Cornell University’s 5,779 retired faculty, academics, and staff.

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In May 2019, the Division of Human Resources invited retired faculty, academic professionals, and staff to participate in its inaugural Cornell Retiree Engagement Survey.

Eight hundred fifty-one individuals (or approximately 15% of the retiree population of 5,779) completed the survey, which was designed to capture information about the many ways retirees contribute to and actively engage with Cornell, the community, their families, and the world.

During their years of service, Cornell’s retirees helped shape and care for our campuses; educated and supported generations of students; advanced research and publications; developed and implemented policies, programs, and procedures; and much more. Their contributions have furthered Cornell’s reputation for excellence and paved the way for today’s achievements.

Survey respondents inspired us with detailed accounts of their encore careers, creative endeavors, travels, awards, publications, and community involvement. This report is not designed to chronicle the history of Cornell’s retirees. Rather, it should be viewed as a snapshot in time, focused on the past five years.

Comments from Retirees

When we launched the Cornell Retiree Engagement Survey, we did not plan to share the responses to open-ended
questions as part of the Retiree Engagement Report. However, the responses were so rich and detailed, and conveyed such a wide range of activities, that we felt our readers would find them fascinating — and perhaps draw inspiration for their own endeavors by reading about those of their colleagues. Therefore, we chose to publish them here.

- Volunteering
- Work & Encore Careers
- Travel
- Creative Endeavors

Except for minimal editing for grammar and consistency, we have tried to maintain the voice of each individual contributor; almost everything written here is in the exact words of the writer. Please bear in mind that individuals completing the survey were not writing for publication, and many of the responses are written as casual comments, not formal replies. We apologize in advance for any errors or omissions.

Questions

Questions regarding retiree engagement initiatives, the survey, and the report may be directed to Work/Life in Human Resources at worklife@cornell.edu.