

What Hinman Means to Me: Voices of the Past, Present and Future

*You may forget but
Let me tell you
this: someone in
some future time
will think of us.*

-Sappho (Ancient Greek poet, 630-570 BC)

“It was an experiential kind of thing. It is a collection of students living together in five residence halls. It’s the experience of watching these young people develop and watching their talent grow. It’s watching them go off into the world and be successful and to see that over and over again. It’s separate from the academic side of things. It’s a living experience.”

-Nick Sterling
Faculty Master of Hinman College
1981-1985, 1990-1998

“I got into Residential Life late in life. Hinman was my introduction to real Residential Life and how it works. It made me realize that this was the career for me. Hinman has been and always will be my introduction to Residential Life, not dorm life. It showed me that I can be an educator without having to be in the classroom. It taught me social skills. It showed me that I could be an educator, but a different kind.”

-Rene Coderre
Coordinator of Hinman College
1985-1990

“Hinman was a place where I felt comfortable. It was a new environment. People wanted to stay there and grow up together.”

-Jeff Horowitz
Class of 1994

“When I think of Hinman I think of the conversations I used to have with [Faculty Master] Al Haber. I used to ask him the question, “What is home?” I found that the answer was that Hinman was home. When you go away to college or another place you leave home. When I went away [to Binghamton] my mom went to Florida so I really couldn’t go home. I spent seven years of my life here. I stayed and I’m very glad that I stayed. Hinman was my home. Where else can you live with the people that you love for four years?”

-Adam Brown
Class of 1986 (BA)
Class of 1989 (MA)
RD Roosevelt Hall 1986-1989

“Hinman gave me a chance. It was the foundation of my professional career. It allowed me to explore and be creative. I felt that my accomplishments brought something to the college—that I made the students’ four years of college better. I learned a lot from my time there. A lot of it I still use today. Personally and professionally it was very important. Hinman took a chance on me and I just hope that I was able to give something back.”

-Robert F. Giomi
 Director of Social Services
 Director of Academic Services
 Head Resident of Lehman Hall
 Creator of Co-Rec Football
 Creator of HLT and Hinman Follies
 Creator of the *Hinman Halitosis*
 Creator of the *Dynamo* Yearbook
 Involved in Hinman from 1970-1978

“Hinman is community. It’s given me opportunity even as a freshman.”

-Sara Pressberg
 Class of 2010

“I think I would say that Hinman was a community, that a lot of my great memories of college are associated with it. It was due to the people who lived there. It’s more than just a place to live.”

-Brent Landau
 Class of 1998

“Hinman to me is like a second family. Whether it’s eating at the dining hall, walking around the quad, or just walking up into my room there is always somebody around to speak to and catch up with. I don’t think the other communities have people with those kinds of relationships, which make Hinman a very special place.”

-Matt Sagat
 Class of 2009

“Hinman was a fun place to live. It was a whole lot better than living off campus.”

-Eric Rubin
 Class of 1980

“Hinman was a home away from home. I think about family when I think about Hinman.”

-Valerie Potopsingh
 Class of 2004

“I started off in Hinman. I learned a lot in Hinman. It was my first professional job.”

-Maria Carra (Brasacchio)
Assistant Coordinator of Hinman
Resident Director of Lehman Hall
1981-1985

“Hinman still remains the happiest place on earth. It’s more than just buildings, it’s a magical place.”

-Donna K. Lazarus
Class of 2003

“Hinman was my home for five years. Still is to this very day. I still dream about trying to open my mailbox in the dining hall.”

-Scott-Robert Shenkman
Class of 1989

“Hinman is a community that works. It’s large and offers a lot, but still small enough to be intimate. It works better than the other colleges at Binghamton. The suites, lounges, all of it contributed to that. You get to know your floormates. It’s very easy to meet the people around you.”

-Eric Pomerantz
Class of 1979

“Hinman means a place where I can go and be surrounded by friends and people who support me.”

-Jill Bernstein
Class of 2010

“People and memories are associated with the events that occurred in Hinman. It feels empty when I return because I don’t recognize anyone. It was the people who I was with at the time that made it a special place.”

-Peter Lorenzi
Class of 1974

“Hinman is a huge family but a very tight family. It’s almost like it has the whole ‘I got your back’ notion to it. Whether it’s a current student or an alum you have that tie of family.”

-Scott Bennett
RD Roosevelt Hall (1999-2001)

“Hinman will always be home. I became attached to it, to its people. It was an amazing time in my life. College in general and Hinman in particular creates a great opportunity to do whatever you want in your life.”

-Kristen Graffagino
Class of 1998

“It’s family, plain and simple.”

-Melanie Feltmate
Class of 2007

“Everything I’ve done in college somehow or another goes back to Hinman. We [Flo and Melanie] live off campus and we still come back.”

-Flo Varela
Class of 2007

“Hinman means Binghamton. It was the best thing that ever happened to me. Most of my memories of college are associated with Hinman. They’re associated with the people. I feel associated with Hinman, not my class. Academically it was wonderful. It allowed for personal growth, the life experiences I got, being able to explore and get leadership roles. It allowed you to do things with your peers. It gave me the chance to interact with students, faculty, and even the administration. President Clark knew me by name, because of my position in Hinman. It was the center of my college activity. Hinman means my whole college experience.”

-Diane Castiglione (Fischer)
Class of 1982

“Hinman to me is a home away from home. My friends here are as close as family. As a community Hinman is a building block for the rest of my college career. I couldn’t imagine what my first year would be like without the tradition, opportunity and fun that Hinman has to offer.”

-Jennifer Ward
Class of 2010

“College is a time when you have total freedom. This was Hinman in the ‘70’s. There was lots of support. People enjoyed each other in Hinman. It had a nice feel, a real laid back time full of warmth and tolerance. I really enjoyed my time in Hinman.”

-Gary Levine
Class of 1974

“It was my first time away from home. It had a family atmosphere. When I moved off campus I wanted to come back. It had a certain camaraderie to it. HLT, Follies, Co-Rec, meeting in the Commons, all of it was just a great time.”

-Steve Fialkoff
Class of 1976

“Hinman epitomizes my college career. I’m very excited when I get to go back to Binghamton but I’m even more excited because I get to come back to Hinman. It was the part of college that I loved the most.”

-Michelle Grossman
Class of 2006

“Hinman is your home away from home. All your friends are here. You get to know everyone. I don’t mind not going home. I dread every second that I get closer to graduation. The time we have here is special. I’ll never forget what it meant to me. Hinman is home. I commuted my freshman year. I could have done that all four years and been pretty much debt free. When I decided to move on campus and got placed in Hinman I loved being involved and knew that I just wanted to stay no matter what the cost. I can’t say enough how precious the time we have here is. You can’t put a value on it. I’ve had to work three to four jobs just to make ends meet and it’s going to make it harder to start my own life, but it was all worth it to be in Hinman.”

-Josh Delmage
Class of 2007

“Binghamton University has about 14,000 students in it. At first you’re just trying to meet other students and find your place. Hinman was a place where I found all that. When I first came I thought that Hinman would just be a place to live while I got my degree. What I earned was a family and a fiancé.”

-Vicki Wargo
Class of 2007

“Hinman was the greatest four years in my life. It was the one time in life I was able to pursue the things I really loved. It was my last chance to do theater. It was the last time I was able to play sports on a regular basis. I was the only person who loved the dining hall food. To this day Bob Giomi and the other people I was with in Hinman are ingrained into my memory. I haven’t spoken to many of them in years but I still remember them. To this day whenever someone says that they graduated from Binghamton, I ask if they were from Hinman.”

-Stan Goldberg
Class of 1975

“Hinman was a home away from home. It made a big university a little bit smaller. Hinman has everything that a family should have including the fights and the controversies. I’m always able

to compare Hinman to other colleges. It was the best because all the students were smart and spirited. HCC had the best turnout. It had great traditions and great innovation. Hinman people are still at the core of the Hinman experience which is that element of family.”

-Jordan Peck
Class of 2006

“Hinman meant a lot to me. It meant meeting my future wife and my friends. It meant growing up. It meant education. It meant so much.”

-Reuben Labendz
Class of 1990

“I have really enjoyed my first year of college. I attribute a lot of that to Hinman. It means more than just a three minute walk to class. The people I have met here and the experiences I have had, have really made Hinman a home away from home.

-Darlene Roygulchareon
Class of 2010

“To me Hinman is like being in the mafia. Ever since I’ve been President of HCC, the RA’s let me get away with murder. People treat me with respect and ask for advice. But that’s anyone who has had a leadership role in Hinman. You get to have that sort of respect by being involved in Hinman. Being HCC President is like being the Godfather of Hinman.”

-Frankie Seeman
Class of 2007

“We’re like an extended family. In 1995 when we all got back together it was like twenty years of being apart never happened. We talk to each other almost every week. The people that you met...that’s what was special about Hinman. You got more than a good education. That’s something I don’t think you really appreciate until years later.”

-Gary Rosen
Class of 1976

“At our last reunion we toured Smith Hall. This guy from the administration came down to give us the tour. He was really polite and all dressed up in a suit and tie. When we asked him why he of all people was giving the tour he said that they [the administration] wanted to know why we kept coming back year after year. We really didn’t have a good answer for him. I said that it was the confluence of fortuitous circumstances. That wasn’t the answer he was hoping for but that was the truth. We weren’t the coolest people when we were in Hinman, that’s for sure, but everyone was really nice. Your college years are your formative years. You’re away from home but don’t have all the responsibility of an adult yet, so I guess you could say that you can have your cake and eat it too. That was our time in Hinman.”

-Fred Silverman
Class of 1975

“Hinman itself has taken on a personality all its own. HCC, Dorm Wars, Hysteria, are all part of that personality. I think of core groups with each of those activities. When I think of community I think of Hinman. Hinman has made Binghamton University smaller and we can make an impact on others. When I think of Hinman I think of all the friendships I’ve made along the way. In high school you can remove yourself and be completely anonymous. In college you unite with people around you and they see you at your best and worst and you see them at their best and worst. The people you live with are the people you learn with and play with. It gets people in their most raw moments. That’s where the passion and emotion come from. Hinman is like that summer camp where you do the same silly games every year and you complain about to no end...but yet you just keep coming back.”

Eric Kurs-Lasky
Class of 2007

“I love Hinman because it was a home. I could go to the Hinman Commons and Al, Peggy or Kristin would be there. Dim [Bernadel] was offered the senior speaker position at Hinman Commencement. He worked on that speech up until the very last minute. When he was done speaking I was hysterically crying because it was the culmination of all four years of college. Hinman is all about family. Everyone cares about you. Everyone loves Hinman because they’re involved in it.”

-Lynsay Satriano
Class of 2005

“A great experience overall. I do remember very clearly the first few times we had 75+ at a Council meeting. I’ll never forget how energized I felt watching more and more people engage in this process. I met a lot of great people at Binghamton, most in or through Hinman College. For me, it is the place where no matter what your interests were, you naturally made close associations with people, and developed the kind of relationships that you’ll have for a lifetime.”

-Jonathan Capp
Class of 1992

“It’s hard to put that into words. I guess when I think of my overall experience at Binghamton, from living and working in Dickinson, to being off-campus, to living and working in Hinman, the latter stands out the most as the place that was my “home.” Can’t say exactly why, but when I remember Binghamton, my first thought is Hinman.”

-Gabe Yankowitz
Class of 1971
Head Resident Cleveland Hall
1974-1977

“I really can't say what my favorite Hinman memory was. Not because I can't recall one, but because there are so many. There was a reason I lived there all four years, and applied (unsuccessfully) for an RD position to stay there while in grad school. It was my favorite place on campus. I found myself while living there. I went back regularly to visit friends still living there after moving off campus for graduate school. Whenever I went back to Binghamton to visit friends, I always drove on-campus and walked around Hinman. It's possible that alums of the other residential colleges feel the same way about their areas, but I wouldn't have lived anywhere else for anything. Just have to say that Hinman was four of the best years I can remember. I wouldn't have moved to one of the other colleges (Animal House-like Newing, preppy CITW, granola-eating Dickinson) for anything.”

-Jim Greenlees
Class of 1981

“My time in Hinman was a defining moment in my life. I met some of the best friends I have ever had there and many I am in touch with till this day. It was also essential in developing me as a person. I am not so sure if I lived in CIW, I would be who I am today because those experiences wouldn't have been available to me. I got involved in HCC because of being pushed through my RA, though other communities don't value public service the way Hinman does. I enjoyed HCC meetings, and the sense of camaraderie. When I was president and I would go through my file cabinets in my office and read about the years gone by, I knew I was part of something larger than myself, but it was comforting to know that what we did at that time was the same as what was done before us and that those who came after us would do the same. I also felt a responsibility to make sure all those traditions remained intact as my year was a big transition year because of Nick Sterling and Tamara Clark's departure in the same year.”

-Joshua Kittenplan
Class of 2000

“Even though I'm a freshman, Hinman has helped me grow so much as a person. As the incoming HCC President I hold new responsibility and hope to carry on the many wonderful traditions Hinman is built on.”

-Polina Yeliseyev
Class of 2010

“I know this is corny but I don't know if I can pick out just one favorite memory from Hinman; but I know without a doubt that my favorite memory of Binghamton is Hinman. It's the place where I made my best friends, felt like part of a family and grew into the person that I am today. It was my home away from home for four years and I have so many memories from Hinman that I will carry with me for a lifetime.”

-Lauren Losapio
Class of 2006

“Hinman and HPC specifically, were how I defined myself for the four years of college. If you ask Liza [Adelman], she will tell you that everyone began to know me by face and name because of my position with the company. James had laid a great foundation, and under my presidency, the organization grew to 10 times its original size that it was my freshmen year. It was a lot of hard work, a lot of patience and organization, and a lot of perseverance over all the little things that popped up. It was more than a full-time job; it was my life and became the most important thing to me at college. My senior year, my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer and Hinman became my safe-haven. The people (students, administration, even the office) were supportive and understanding. I don't know if I can really express what Hinman means to me, other than it was my family when I was away from my real family.”

-Sharon Kowalsky
Class of 2005

“When I say “Hinman,” my mind races to Vito Sinisi. It races to people like John and Heidi Kowalcyk. There were others. I can't measure what I learned from them; I can only know how significant it was, and know how grateful I am.

When I say “Hinman” I see a muddy quad, my muddy sneakers, and a pair of jeans that were so stiff from dried mud that they almost cracked in half. Tackle football in the mud was great because no one could move fast enough for anyone to get hurt. Too slippery.

My mind sees the hill and the nature preserve, quiet, just out the window, a place where I walked many times alone.

My ears hear Brendan Sullivan calling me “Moto,” which came from the serial I had been writing in the *Halitosis* about the Moto Clan. I hear me calling out “Mr. Sullivan” the way Charles Laughton yelled out “Mr. Christian” in the movie, *Mutiny on the Bounty*.

I appreciated the diversity of the half of Roosevelt Hall known as the cooking dorm. Only there could anyone hear Claudette, who was from Jamaica, try to imitate the Three Stooges.

In high school, friends are seldom more than one year younger or older, Hinman made me realize that as young adults we were not merely thrown in with older kids in these dorms; we could be respected by them, and be friends. Hinman over the course of years was a revolving place. Upper classmen would move off-campus. Seniors graduated. Each passing semester brought new people, people who I had fun with, became close with. For two years after I left, I came back to visit. I really didn't want to leave.

Hinman—all five buildings—brought meaningful people into my life. Because of the help I received from upper classmen, I have always tried to help those coming up behind me.

Hinman is the place where I grew up. It didn't change me; it improved me.”

-Steven “Pudge” Meyer
Class of 1981

“I can't possibly pick a favorite Hinman memory. My fondest memories of college fall within Hinman territory. Whether it was piling into a dangerously overcrowded taxi to head to Cheers my freshman year, the competition of Co-Rec (which I played every semester) or just the hours spent idling in the dining hall, my minutes in Hinman were precious and far too few. Looking back as a recent grad, it is bittersweet to think of the life I led there. I was simply happy. Hinman means many things to me. Like a birthplace, Hinman will always be a kind of hometown. It's where the adult in me was formed and took shape. Hinman means community and more than that, it means family. It's comfortable and warm. Hinman also means responsibility; it is the first place I became a guiding force to others. Hinman is Co-Rec and AI, Dorm Wars and Hysteria. It is HCC and Hinman graduation and *Halitosis*. It is blood drives and study abroad fairs. It is painting the windows of Cleveland and proudly hanging our banner on events day. It is snippets of joy, memories that will last a lifetime. It is Donna and Kristin, Linda and Peggy, Mary Ann, and all the HCC E-Boards. It is Miss Cleveland competitions and snacks from the Nite Owl. I know I am sentimental, but Hinman was the heart of Binghamton for me. It was a refuge in tough times, and the core of my family away from home. I am proud to be from Hinman.”

-Tara Stevens
Class of 2006

“Hinman helped me form some lasting memories, and friendships that will stay with me forever.”

-William Khan
Class of 1991

“Hinman is more than a community. It's a place where friends, traditions, and opportunity come together and many memories are created.”

-Amelia Simonson
Class of 2010

“I tell folks that what I loved about SUNY-B were the residential colleges. It meant that while you had the resources of the entire campus (library, computer center, gym, etc.) nearby, you had a "small college" feel within the residential college. Of the four available then, Hinman was the one which appealed to me most, so I'm glad I had the opportunity to live there! In my "Star Trek" story when the Enterprise was orbiting above SUNY-B they scanned all the residential colleges. One seemed to be hidden away in the woods as if the residents were ashamed to be there (CIW). One had life but no intelligence (Newing); another intelligence but no life (Dickinson). That's how the Enterprise crew chose Hinman.”

-Tony Toluba
Class of 1979 (BA)
Class of 1981 (MA)

“I think Hinman is synonymous with “involvement.” There is something about the community that attracts students who genuinely want to take an active part in their college life. I’ve had some residents that could care less about being involved, but the large majority of my residents did care. I’d see it out on the quad during Dorm Wars and Hysteria. My first week in Hinman there was a program in the Commons—I can’t quite remember what it was, some kind of a social or dance, but EVERY RA that was there came up to me and introduced themselves, as well as HCC members. I felt very welcome I think that had a lot to do with the kind of community it was and still is.”

-Jason Bajor
Class of 2001

“Hinman means ‘college’ to me. Yes, I worked hard at my courses, and started my career in Art History and museum work, but it was all the activities in Hinman that left its mark. It was the people, some who I still stay in touch and will always love (even the ones I have lost touch with) that are everything. If I could snap my fingers and have one day back on stage or on the football field in ‘74-‘75 with all those people I would do it in a heartbeat.”

-Janet Krulick
Class of 1975

“Hinman is the place where I realized it's OK to be me, the place where I found myself, the place where I met the girls that will be bridesmaids at my wedding. When I went away to school, I was so determined that college would never be my home; but I was wrong. Roosevelt, and Hinman, was my home, and I miss it dearly.”

-Amy Forgacs
Class of 2003 (BA)
Class of 2005 (MPA)

“To me Hinman means five things. It means Hinman Community, Hinman Spirit, Hinman Family, Hinman Pride, and Hinman Traditions. I see myself as a talent scout and a community builder and nothing makes me happier than seeing my students (especially those from my Literacies of Power course) take leadership positions in Hinman.”

-Al Vos
Faculty Master of Hinman College
1998-Present

After speaking with me for close to two hours, with him dominating almost the entire conversation, Jarrod Bagatell (Class of 1989) one of the most influential Hinman RA’s of his era and as fine a gentleman as ever I have spoken with, had, in the opinion of this author, the best answer to the question “What does Hinman mean to you?”

(After a long pause) “Wow...I’m speechless. (Another long pause) Nothing has ever done that to me before.”

-Jarrod Bagatell
Class of 1989