

Elizabeth Dunn von Keyserling Lynch

Cornell degree: BA '90 (A&S), DVM '95

Endorsed by the Committee on Alumni Trustee Nominations



Higher education is facing an existential crisis, with public opinion trending negative and scientific principles being questioned. Increasingly, the cost of tuition is out of reach for many middle-class families. Cornell must continue to adapt, prove its relevance, and demonstrate the value of higher education.

Describe the reasons you are interested in serving

on the board. What strengths and attributes would you bring to this role?

I've served the university at every level—locally, by class, by college, and on Cornell University Council. This breadth of involvement has given me a comprehensive understanding of Cornell. I am committed to life-long learning. As a veterinarian, I've been trained to analyze problems holistically and objectively. My analytical skills are couched in compassion, so I navigate sensitive topics with tact. Ultimately, my motivation is simple: to ensure Cornell's enduring success. I am ready to listen, learn, and work tirelessly to uphold the traditions and values that make Cornell extraordinary today, and identify adaptations to ensure its success for years to come.

In your opinion, what does Carl Becker's concept of "freedom and responsibility" mean for today's Cornell community?

Freedom and responsibility are inseparable, but today they have garnered nationwide attention because many feel they can demand freedom without being responsible for their actions. At Cornell, everyone enjoys the freedom to explore their passions, challenge assumptions, and engage with widely diverse perspectives. They also have the freedom to speak out against what they believe to be injustice, advocate for reform, or debate the ideas and beliefs of others. However, this freedom comes with a responsibility to act thoughtfully, respect others, avoid interfering with their educational experience, and contribute positively to the community.

Interim President Michael I. Kotlikoff recently said that this is an important time to "educate citizens to think for themselves, and live together; and to value truth, openness and equality as cornerstones of democracy." In your opinion, what does this mean at Cornell?

Cornell's founding egalitarian mission of "... any person ... any study" sought to educate engaged citizens from all backgrounds, melding the practical with the theoretical. We must continue to teach civil discourse, collaboration, evidence-based reasoning, and active listening. When students learn to approach disagreements with empathy and intellectual curiosity, they carry those values into their lives beyond campus. Cornell's mission is to educate principled citizens who know how to think, not what to think. By fostering a culture of intellectual openness, Cornell can champion the free exchange of ideas, to do the greatest good.

Professional experience:

- Pet Partners, national program educator, 2019–present
- Greenwich Wildlife Center, veterinarian, 2003–2005
- Avian Health Clinic, veterinarian, 1995–1999
- The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine, resident practitioner, 1997–1998
- The Animal Medical Center: Oncology, externship, 1994

Alumni service:

- Cornell University Council, Development Committee, vice chair, 2024–present; Administrative Board, member at large, 2023–present; member, 2021–present, 2002–2006
- College of Veterinary Medicine Reunion Committee, member, 2024–present; fundraising chair, 2014–2015
- Reunion Campaign Committee, member, 2024–present, 2014–2015, 2009–2010
- College of Veterinary Medicine Advisory Council, member emeritus, 2016–present; member, 1997–2016; chair, 2003–2005
- Cornell Club of Fairfield County, member, 2003–present
- Veterinary Women's Engagement Philanthropy Committee, member, 2021–2023
- Cornell Alumni Admissions Ambassador Network, member, 2003–2023; committee chair, 2019–2022
- Major Gifts Committee, member, 2005–2015
- Committee on Alumni Trustee Nominations, member, 2012–2014
- College of Veterinary Medicine, Black Tie and Tails NYC Gala Committee, chair, 2009–2010

Community/public service/philanthropic priorities:

- Association of Animal-Assisted Intervention Professionals, 2022–present; Board of Accreditation, member; Certification Commission, member; content expert
- Pet Partners of Fairfield County, evaluator, 2008–present; therapy animal team handler, 2000–present
- Port Chester Obedience Training Club, member, 2003–present; house director, 2015–2020
- CT Licensed Clinical Social Workers annual meeting: *People, Pets and Abuse*, speaker, 2024
- CT Medical Home Initiative Care Coordinators quarterly meeting: *Animal-Assisted Interventions: Improving Youth Health Outcomes*, speaker, 2024
- YWCA, professional series: *People, Pets, and Abuse*, speaker, 2023
- American Veterinary Medical Association, Leo Bustad Award Selection Committee, 2018–2020
- The Big Fix Committee member, CT Veterinary Medical Association, 2012
- The Good Dog Foundation, therapy animal handler, 2000–2008
- Ohio Veterinary Medical Association, 1995–1999; chair, Committee on Animal Welfare, Committee on Public Relations; Meritorious Service Award 1999

Other education:

- Human Animal Bond Certification, Human Animal Bond Research Institute/American Veterinary Medical Association
- University of Washington, Certificate: Human Animal Interactions
- FEMA, Certificate: Animal-Assisted Crisis Response
- University of Denver, Institute for Human Animal Connection, Certificate: Animals and Human Health, Equine Behavior
- Board-certified Animal-Assisted Intervention Professional, C-AAIS

Student involvements/activities:

- Association of Avian Veterinarians
- Externship, Animal Medical Center, NYC
- Internship, WCS-Bronx Zoo
- Intramural sports: broomstick polo, equestrian team
- Pre-Vet Society
- Red Carpet Society
- Student Ambassador, College of Arts and Sciences

Additional information:

A dedicated supporter of Cornell for over three decades, Elizabeth is active at the class, college and university levels: Cornell University Council Administrative Board, Committee on Alumni Trustee Nominations, Women in Philanthropy committee chair, Veterinary College Advisory Council chair, CAAAN committee chair, and working on class Reunion campaigns. As a first-generation student, she believes in access to higher education for all qualified students. Elizabeth is a veterinarian and National Program Educator for Pet Partners, an international non-profit for therapy animals. She lives in CT and WY, with her husband (CALs '90, MBA '95), three children, and a lively household of pets.