Mara Minerva Melum ’73 S72 P10

On campus, c. 1969

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Mara Melum ’73, President of the Minerva Leadership Institute in St. Paul, Minnesota, has lived in the Twin Cities area for 35 years – but she hasn’t let a mere 1200 miles separate her from Princeton. Mara is a long-time interviewer for the local Alumni Schools Committee and has hosted mini-Reunions for alumni in Minnesota.

Mara’s current Princeton focus is the Alumni Council’s Careers Committee. This engagement grows naturally out of her career as a highly rated executive coach. Mara works with new CEOs and senior leaders to help them shorten transition time to peak performance in their new roles. In 2010 she was featured in an Alumni Day workshop on “Managing Your Career in the Current Market” and was both a planner of and facilitator for the 2010 Reunions Careers Conference, “Lane Changes: Navigating Career Transitions in an Unpredictable World.” Mara is co-chair of the NetNights Sub-Committee of the Careers Committee and is a member of the Global NetNight Steering Committee. NetNights is the highly successful career-networking event hosted by Princeton regional associations around the country. Global NetNight, scheduled for February 15, 2011, will be a networking event consisting of “discrete-but-connected” networking evenings occurring on the same day in Princeton regional associations around the world. (For more information, see facing page.)

A member of the Class of ’73, Mara was part of that pioneering first group of women undergraduate students who arrived on Princeton’s campus in the fall of 1969. She remembers vividly both the fun and the frustrations of that first year of co-education. Experiences ranged from the “zoo-like” atmosphere in Pyne Courtyard with all the media and other attention, to a guard telling her that she couldn’t use her student agency pass to watch a football game from the press box “because you’re a girl.” Mara is thankful to have experienced the greatness of Princeton and its world-class professors, with whom she continues to stay in touch on the Princeton campus and from 1200 miles away.