What is an alumni association and what does it do? Why would I want to join? You may have asked yourself those questions when you got a dinner-time phone call or a letter asking for a donation. Well, you won't be getting those phone calls or letters any longer. Since 2015 the UC Santa Cruz Alumni Association, now named UC Santa Cruz Alumni, has been a free and all-inclusive organization. If you have ever taken a class at UC Santa Cruz, you are automatically a member of UC Santa Cruz Alumni, with all rights and privileges. You are truly a Banana Slug for Life.

Alumni mean a great deal to any university. Our accomplishments reflect assuredly back on them – we are their success stories and their institutional memories. Together, we forge a family with a common shared experience of scholarship and of place. Supporting UC Santa Cruz is not just cheerleading for a “brand” or a faceless operation. It means supporting current and future Banana Slugs’ dreams – dreams that were once your dreams. And, it means supporting each other. You have a lot more to offer, and the needs are much greater, than you might think.

Does UC Santa Cruz mean a great deal to you? Maybe your experience at UC Santa Cruz was a sublime journey of self-discovery and new self-confidence. Maybe your experience was one long struggle, and you felt like you got your degree in spite of the institution’s best effort to hold you back. Maybe your parents went to UC Santa Cruz and you always knew you would too. Maybe you were the first in your family to go to college, and you had to figure it all out for yourself. No matter your experience, today’s students can benefit from hearing your story.

Was there someone who stands out in your memory as that special mentor who helped you achieve your dreams? You can pay it forward, and be that person for someone else. You can help students navigate the same challenges that you faced in college. You can advise them on channeling their diverse passions into a uniquely UCSC style of interdisciplinary education. You can give them an example of a path to follow. You can help them afford to eat after they've paid for their books. You can just listen.

So what is UC Santa Cruz Alumni? We provide the connection between you, other alumni, and the UC Santa Cruz staff, faculty, administration and students. We make sure that your engagement is valuable and fulfilling with maximum impact. We make sure you are kept informed and that your voice is heard. But, we are nothing without all of you. Please get involved – we need you!

Write to me. I’d love to hear your stories and plug you back into the campus that you love so much!

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