

The undersigned are all members of the Horace Mann School Class of 1975. (Now joined by members of other classes and friends who support our objectives.)

Most of us have worn that title proudly for 43 years. When those of us who started in First Form arrived on the Hill in September of 1969, we were told that Horace Mann was special, a place where excellence was the standard and “Great is the truth and it prevails.”

From the outset, our experience confirmed that notion. In May of 1970, business as usual stopped at Horace Mann when four students were killed at Kent State University by the Ohio National Guard and the My Lai Massacre dominated the headlines. Our regular routine gave way to a day of dialogue—called a “teach-in”—where we discussed the issues of war and death, innocence and the sanctity of human life.

This past week we read the story in the June 10, 2012 New York Times Magazine of sexual abuse at Horace Mann. The story is personal for us. We knew all involved. Stanley Kops began his teaching career at Horace Mann on the same day we arrived. R. Inslee Clark started the next year. Johannes Somary was a ubiquitous presence, particularly to the musically inclined. Mark Wright was a football and basketball hero who knew the name of practically every Firstie and became our “friend.”

As in May 1970, we are again having a dialogue about an emotionally charged issue with profound moral implications. This time the dialogue relates to the New York Times Magazine article, our individual experiences with these people, the cruelty of this forced loss of innocence, the root causes of these problems and how events at Horace Mann relate to problems that have occurred at educational, religious and other institutions throughout the world. We are aware that members of other classes are engaged in similar conversations in a variety of forums.

While the living and the dead are all entitled to a presumption of innocence not just as a matter of law but as a matter of conscience, a significant number of us observed behavior that is consistent with the allegations contained in the New York Times Magazine article. Our consensus is that there is good reason to believe that the essence of Mr. Kamil’s story is true and that there is a long history of abusive behavior at Horace Mann involving not only the individuals identified in the article, but likely other individuals as well.

We would appreciate the opportunity for a limited number of representatives of our class to meet with Tom Kelly and Steve Friedman privately in the near future to present our concerns, thoughts and suggestions as to both the process for addressing issues raised by the article and the substantive areas that need to be considered. In this regard, some of our thoughts are presented below.

First, the victims, known and unknown are in our thoughts and prayers. Support for the victims already identified (or who might come forward in the future), based on and with the advice of health professionals with expertise in assisting victims of these types of abuse, needs to be a priority for Horace Mann. The school should provide and promote a way, as private and confidential as necessary, for victims to come forward and receive

assistance. As a first step, Horace Mann should immediately and proactively reach out to alumni and their families to provide assistance and support for the therapeutic services that any such victims may need.

Second, we think Horace Mann ought to publicly apologize for what happened without reservation and regardless of when the conduct occurred.

Third, Horace Mann must learn from these past abuses and make sure that they never occur again. In order to do so, a clear understanding of the past is required, including an understanding of why it took so long for this information to become public; whether evidence and/or knowledge of abuse was ignored or covered up and, if so, how systematic was this behavior; and what were the roles and actions (or non-actions) of the school's various headmasters. Finally, with what degree of certainty can it be said that this behavior has truly stopped?

In order to answer these questions, we believe serious consideration needs to be given to commencing an independent investigation of this terrible part of Horace Mann's history and examination of the school's current policies and procedures. We recognize the difficulties and limitations of such an investigation given the passage of time and the need to ensure that the privacy and concerns of each victim are protected. Nevertheless, we believe that knowing and presenting the truth is both the morally correct thing to do and in Horace Mann's best interest since it is an essential part of putting these events in the past and doing our best to ensure that they do not recur at Horace Mann or anywhere else.

The current administration needs to be proactive in its actions in light of these revelations and see this as an opportunity to be a leader and model for other institutions in addressing a problem that is prevalent in our society. We recommend that, in consultation with alumni from the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, the Board appoint a committee of alumni, faculty and parents with sufficient funding to afford the assistance of competent legal, investigative and mental health professionals to investigate, report and make recommendations not only concerning the past, but concerning current policies and procedures. It would serve as a forum in which victims can tell their stories and be helped to understand that they have the support and respect of the entire Horace Mann community. Last, the independent committee could consider whether referral to law enforcement officials is appropriate. Such a report would benefit not only Horace Mann, but a much broader community.

Our hope is that Horace Mann will live up to its own traditions and not permit institutional defensiveness to take control. Horace Mann is not unique in having this happen, but it can and should be unique in the quality of its response. Please contact the individuals listed below the signature lines with your response.

Respectfully submitted,

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