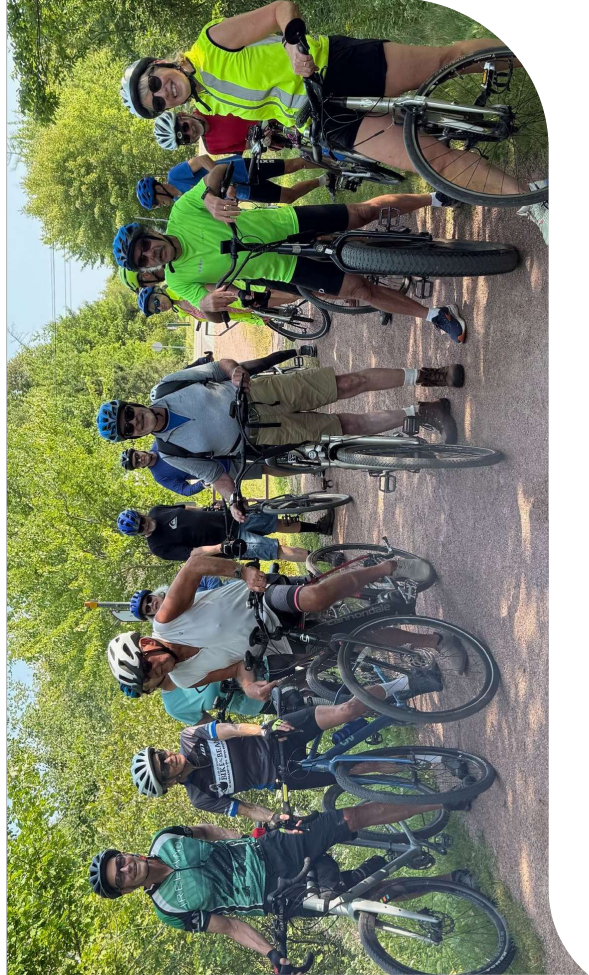




◀ MD Class of 1985 on a group bike ride during their 40th reunion.

Class of 1985: Reconnecting, remembering, and raising \$100,000 for the next generation

When members of Dalhousie Medical School's Class of 1985 gathered this past summer to celebrate their 40th reunion, the event was about much more than nostalgia. It was a return to shared roots, a chance to reconnect, reminisce, and, as it turned out, rally together for a cause that will continue shaping Dalhousie Medicine long after the reunion glow fades.

In less than two months, the class has raised over \$100,000 to establish their own class fund, an achievement that class fund organizer Dr. Ian Campbell (MD '85) admits took him by surprise.

"When I was updating my address online, I noticed other MD class funds listed. I thought, 'What's this?' So, I reached out and before long, we had our own Class of '85 fund."

What began as a simple inquiry quickly became a powerful movement of collective generosity.

"It just made sense," he explains. "We've all gone through the

same profession, and Dalhousie Medicine played such a huge role in shaping who we are. Medicine isn't just what we do, it's part of our identity. Giving back felt like a way to acknowledge that."

Reunion bonds and renewed purpose

For Dr. Campbell, the reunion itself reinforced just how deep those shared experiences run. Seeing classmates he hadn't connected with in decades, some for the first time since graduation, made it an emotional reminder of the enduring bonds forged during those intense years of training in Halifax.

"What really struck me was how easy it was to pick up where we left off," he says. "You can be apart for 40 years, but within five seconds, you're talking like it's 1985 again."

That sense of connection became the catalyst for something bigger. Encouraged by classmates like Drs. Cindy Forbes and Colin Mann, Dr. Campbell began reaching out to others, sending updates and rallying support.

"Every reunion brings people together for a weekend, the class fund gives us a reason to stay connected in between," he says. "It keeps the conversation going."

The power of giving back

The Class of 1985's generosity couldn't have come at a more meaningful time. Today's medical students face unprecedented financial pressures, tuition and living costs have climbed dramatically since the days when a summer job could pay the bills.

"We heard during our reunion that the average medical student debt now exceeds \$200,000," Dr. Campbell says. "That really hit home. It's just not possible anymore to go through medical school without a significant financial burden."

Knowing their contributions will help ease that pressure has given the class a renewed sense of purpose. The fund will support medical learners through bursaries and other forms of financial aid, an investment in the future of medicine and a testament to the class's gratitude for the education that launched their careers.

"I think we all feel a debt of gratitude to Dalhousie," Dr. Campbell reflects. "If we can help even one student worry a little less about money and focus more on learning medicine, then we've done something worthwhile."

A model for other classes

Beyond the immediate impact on students, Dr. Campbell sees the Class of 1985's fund as part of something larger, a growing culture of alumni engagement.

"If each graduating class had a class fund, it would become part of the Dalhousie Medicine tradition," he says. "We may have graduated 40 years ago," he says, "but Dalhousie Medicine is still part of who we are. This fund is our way of saying thank you and of helping ensure that future students can experience what we did."



The MD class of 1985 at their recent 40th reunion this past September.

If your class is interested in starting a Class Fund

to support future medical learners, the Dalhousie Medical Alumni Association is here to help. Reach out to medical.alumni@dal.ca, and we will connect you directly with a Development Officer who can guide you through the process.