AAC New Member Slate
May 2026

Kirsten Major ’84

Kirsten is a communications professional with a creative writing practice. Her expertise is in internal communications and constituency building. Currently, she works as the director of internal communications at the Simons Foundation, a $3 billion foundation that funds scientific research through its four institutes, faculty positions, research grants, and major allied research initiatives worldwide.

As a constituency builder, Kirsten has created events for Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, the alumni communities of Emma Willard and Carleton College, and Paragraph Writers Space. Kirsten founded the New York City Chapter of Women Who Submit Litworks, an organization that supports women writers seeking publication, which is in its tenth year, and then went on to found Writing Alone Together, a community of practice that meets daily, now in its fifth year.

She has served on two boards of directors: the International Association of Business Communicators and her apartment co-op, which is part of an NYC program that provides housing for lower and middle-income earners.

Kirsten’s creative writing practice spans both fiction and musical theater. Her most recent project, *Co-op: The Musical* was showcased at the Theater Center in New York City, and has received a Lower Manhattan Cultural Council grant and sponsorship from the New York Foundation for the Arts. Her fiction and essays have been published in a variety of magazines and literary journals.

Claudia Thompson '71

Claudia's professional work has brought together a lifelong commitment to environmental protection, a love of design and the importance of place, and a desire to contribute to the greater public good through policy and advocacy.

As a junior at Emma Willard, she took the initiative to become the lead organizer for EW's participation in Earth Day 1970, a pivotal national event helping to catalyze the creation of the EPA, and significant new environmental policies and legislation at both the federal and state levels. After her undergraduate college years and throughout her career, she has worked as an environmental educator in many capacities. Notable positions include serving as the director of education for the Appalachian Mountain Club, and as the director of Mass Audubon's largest public reserve, Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary.

Known during her Emma years as "the girl with a camera," she appreciates the power of good visual communication. Having also studied and worked as a graphic designer in the 1980s, she sustained her environmental focus during that period and authored *Recycled Papers: The Essential Guide*, a comprehensive book published in 1992 by MIT Press and the American Institute of Graphic Arts. Widely lauded, in part for exposing a lack of transparency and honesty in the marketing of "recycled paper," this led to her engagement in subsequent policy work on the regulation of environmental marketing claims across the United States.

Most recently, Claudia has been a trailblazer in the growing field of landscape ecology. In 2010, she founded Grow Native Massachusetts—promoting the importance of native plants to biodiversity, and the importance of public engagement in this critical issue. Her dedication to the hard work of building this new nonprofit organization, as well as her ability to communicate as a speaker using her beautiful photographs, have brought her some acclaim. For the past fifteen years, she has given talks all over New England, helping to reframe "conservation" as a valued objective that goes far beyond protecting isolated parcels of land that are "set aside." Instead, it is a goal that can only be achieved

through the wise stewardship of all lands, large or small, urban or rural, and both public and private.

Claudia deeply values her four years at Emma Willard, considering them life-changing and fundamental to who she is today. Over the years, she has served as a class reporter, co-chair of her 30th Reunion Gift Fund, and in other volunteer capacities.

Education & Honors:

Harvard Kennedy School, MPA, 1996

Lucius N. Littauer Award for Academic Excellence, Leadership, and Public Service

Rhode Island School of Design, MFA Graphic Design, 1986

University of Rochester, BA Biology / Environmental Studies 1975

Phi Beta Kappa, High Distinction, Janet Howell Clark Prize for Interdisciplinary Excellence

Katelyn Milinowicz ’95

Katelyn spent ten+ years in the music industry, focused on data structures and standards, and twelve+ years at Google learning how to bring complex technical products to scale—then decided it was time to put those skills to work somewhere that mattered more urgently.

After a career that took her to San Francisco, London, Los Angeles, and Denver, she has recently come full circle, settling in Kinderhook, NY, back in the Hudson Valley where it all started. It turns out it's a fitting home base for someone now focused on climate work and the future of technology, and an opportunity to reengage with her foundations.

Since leaving Google in 2024, Katelyn has been advising early-stage climate tech organizations and growing with the rapidly evolving AI landscape. She's become a passionate advocate for ensuring women aren't just users of AI tools, but informed and empowered participants in shaping how AI develops—a conviction that traces back to her years at Emma Willard. Katelyn's AI practice focuses on what AI can unlock for small businesses and sustainability-driven ventures.

She holds a B.A. in Computer Science from Vassar College and is based in Kinderhook, NY.

Lucy West Marczak ’16

Lucy is from the class of 2016 and the daughter of Vivienne Kaye West ’80 and niece of Jacqueline Kaye Dufresne ’78. Emma Willard has always been a part of her life. From early on, she dreamed of following in her mother’s footsteps and attending Emma. When visiting her grandparents, who still lived in Troy until her junior year at EWS, she would look out the window of her bedroom, and dream about the castle that she knew was just around the corner. At age 8, her mom began bringing her to Revels, which would become an annual tradition, and which would also have the wonderful end result of her 10th Revels being her own Revels. At age 11, her mom brought her to reunion, allowing her to see the depth and longevity of the sisterhood firsthand. This was her first time sleeping in the dorms, and it already felt like a second home.

It took her father longer to come around to the idea. He was understandably hesitant to let his only daughter leave home at just 14. But as he watched her older brother grow up, he saw that leadership opportunities continued to be more commonly awarded to men in co-ed environments. He also saw that her personal interests, which had always leaned towards writing and the arts, were being given less focus in many public school environments. He knew then that Emma Willard was where she could thrive and truly stretch her legs as a scholar, athlete, artist, and leader.

When she met her husband, she told him early on that if they had a daughter, they were going to Emma Willard, so he should start preparing now. And she knows her brother has told his fiancée the same. At Lucy's wedding, five of her seven bridesmaids were Emma sisters. Emma Willard has always been intertwined in her life and continues to be to this day with her ongoing involvement as her class bulletin reporter, her current participation in her class reunion committee, and in any opportunity she gets to share about this wonderful place and the importance of all-girls education. And while in recent years, she has sadly not been able to visit the school as often due to moving for her husband’s career, she would love the excuse that being on AAC would give her to visit ye grey walls at least twice a year.

Her time at Emma made her the woman she is today. She works as the advancement coordinator for the Virginia Living Museum, one of only 15 facilities with AZA and AAM accreditation, where she does fundraising for conservation education, and the care of wildlife. They focus on animals who are endangered, or who aren't releasable to the wild due to injury or early exposure to humans.

The confidence Emma Willard gave her, and the skillset she gained through her time there, are integral to her ability to do her job, from public speaking skills and confident donor interaction, to writing an effective call to action or giving a comprehensive tour, to simply caring about the world on a deeper level. The diversity of Emma gave young Lucy a broader perspective of the world around her—the idea that anything happening in the world could directly be impacting someone she knew made it feel real in a way that these broader issues hadn't felt before her time as a student there. This perspective and instinctual want to educate, protect, and conserve, is a mindset that began at Emma and has influenced who she is today.

In her personal life, she is the wife of a naval officer, a cat mom to three adorable kitties, and she continues to be passionate about many of the same hobbies she held at Emma Willard, from skiing and tennis to writing and singing. In addition to how her time at Emma influenced her professional life, she fully believes that without the education and confidence from Emma Willard, she would not be a strong enough woman to handle the requirements of being a naval spouse. Even in the darkest of days during his combat deployment, she knew she had the independence and strength to hold down the homefront, and be the support he needed that made it possible for him to keep going even as missiles fired overhead. And it certainly helped that her mother and many of her Emma sisters made an extra effort to support the couple through those times as well.

Nothing can compare to the sisterhood that Emma Willard offers, and Lucy sincerely hopes to be given the opportunity to represent her class decade on the EWS AAC and continue to take a more active role in Emma Willard's future.

Teagan Moriarty '14

Teagan Moriarty is a proud member of Emma Willard's bicentennial class of 2014. While at Emma, she was a four-year member of the crew team, participated in JSG and Twelve Tones, and was a peer educator during her junior year. A native New Yorker, Teagan was never too far from home while at Emma, but she quickly found that Mount Ida became a second home to her, too.

After graduating from Ye Grey Walls, Teagan studied business management at Stetson University in Deland, Florida. She became an orientation leader and welcomed new students to campus during her junior and senior years, and for four years was an active member of Zeta Tau Alpha, a sorority where she served on the Executive Council as Panhellenic Delegate and Historian.

Teagan spent her first four years post-grad in Tampa, FL, where she began working in commercial insurance. These were valuable years growing professionally and personally, but she knew that New York was calling her home. She has been residing back in NY since 2022 and has reunited with many of her close Emma friends.

Now, you can find Teagan in Manhattan working in residential real estate, walking her dog Magnolia around her neighborhood, getting together with her Emma classmates and sundry friends, participating in the arts, and diligently meeting the deadlines of her two demanding book clubs. She is the class reporter for her year, reporting for Emma's biannual magazine, *Signature*, and thoroughly enjoys getting back to campus for Reunion weekends (too bad they aren't annual!)

Ying Cao ’15

Ying is based in Midtown Manhattan and currently works on the corporate development team at the Guggenheim Museum on the Upper East Side.

Staying connected to the Emma community has been deeply meaningful to her, especially through participating in Emma Locally events like the seasonal book club. She values the opportunity to expand her relationships with fellow alumnae, particularly now that she has increasingly encountered Emma graduates working in creative and cultural industries.

Her professional and personal experiences have reinforced the importance of strong, supportive networks, and she is excited to help foster those connections within the Emma Willard community.

Betsy Ivey '70

Betsy Smith (Ivey) graduated in the Class of 1970 from Emma Willard School and is grateful to have been formed as a young African American woman at EWS. Betsy's framing at Emma Willard allowed her to embrace her passion for justice. Her lifelong study of history began at the University of Pennsylvania as an undergrad in 1970, and continued through two Master's degrees in church history at Lancaster and the General Theological seminaries.

Betsy found her voice as an advocate for disenfranchised persons through her executive leadership in state government of federally funded programs. Through this work and as a member of a historical Black church in her adopted city of Philadelphia, Betsy discerned the call to ministry that tied the study of history with the call for justice.* Betsy was ordained to the priesthood of the Episcopal Church in 2014.

Reverend Ivey's vocation called her to serve as a parish priest at another historically Black church, which gave her the opportunity to tie her advocacy for justice in a disenfranchised church community to her administration of a historic congregation. Her ministry eventually led to her six-plus year appointment to the staff of the diocesan bishop as a church developer.

As Reverend Ivey approached mandatory retirement age for Episcopal clergy in 2023, she took advantage of the diocese's generosity to advance her knowledge of preserving historic places of worship by obtaining a Master's degree in Historical Preservation from the University of Pennsylvania. Through this degree and her experience with the diocese, Betsy entered a three-year contract with the non-profit organization Partners for Sacred Places, where she directs a grant program to preserve eight historic Black churches.

Betsy lives as a single woman in Philadelphia, whose former marriage has given her two daughters who, in turn, have given her four grandchildren. She

maintains daily contact with her EWS sisters of the Class of 1970.

*Betsy's transition to priesthood was featured in the 2016 publication of *Signature* magazine.