



2021 Alumni Association Board of Directors

Election Candidate Guide

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Emmy Castro '19

Trainer in leadership and development

She/Her

Please explain why you are interested in contributing your time/expertise to serve as a member of the MCLA Alumni Association Board of Directors.

I am constantly thinking of ways I can give back to the school that prepared me so much for where I am today. What better way to give back by joining this program.

Please share any MCLA or NASC activities with which you have been involved.

Dance Co Club, Fashion Club, Volunteer services.

Please share a brief bio and your goals for your term if elected to the Board.

My goal is to have the guidance to support my fellow alumni and help prepare new alumni. I am more than open to holding conversations and learning from those around me. I think communication is key and if we can hold meetings and resources to our fellow alumni that would be helpful.

Todd Foy '12

EHE Training Manager at New England AIDS Education & Training Center
He/Him/His

Please explain why you are interested in contributing your time/expertise to serve as a member of the MCLA Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Over the past couple of years, I've seen a really committed group of people on this Board come together and do some life-changing work. This has not just helped current students, but it has created a bigger boat for MCLA alumni to join in the work. A few things we've done: creation of the Lavender Fund, critical work on Title IX protections, contributing to campus policing reform, and a strong commitment to racial justice broadly as well as in our own group. This is just the start and I'd like to continue to be a part of it!

Please share any MCLA or NASC activities with which you have been involved.

Student Government Association - Student Senator (2008-10), Coordinating Vice President (2010-11), and President (2011-12)

Yorick - I dabbled here and there!

American Cancer Society MCLA Colleges Against Cancer Chapter Co-Founder & Co-President

MCLA Colleges Against Cancer Chapter 3-College Relay for Life Event Co-Chair

Please share a brief bio and your goals for your term if elected to the Board.

Since graduating in 2012, I have committed my personal and professional life to giving back some of what MCLA gave to me. From spending 3 years on Beacon Hill in public service to the last 4 years working in HIV prevention in Boston, I've always tried to use my platform for the better. I see the Board as an extension of this work--helping connect current students and alumni, creating a broader alumni coalition for progress, and committing to be a part of something bigger. I'd like to expand on that with another term on the Board with the amazing current Directors and those not yet elected! In my personal time, I am chasing the Abbott World Marathon Majors and raising an incredible Aruban Cunucu rescue puppy named Copper.

Michelle Hansen '08

**Coordinator of Affinity & Reunion Programming, SUNY Oneonta
She/Her**

Please explain why you are interested in contributing your time/expertise to serve as a member of the MCLA Alumni Association Board of Directors.

I am seeking re-election as a member on this board because I feel that as a student, I was given so many opportunities to thrive and as an alumna I want to give back in a way that helps others do exactly that. We all know we go to college to get a degree; but I want folks to realize how much potential they really have and to discover new opportunities in and out of the classroom. In addition to support to the campus and its students, the Alumni Association helps to connect and support the ever-growing community of Trailblazer alumni and I think that is something I would like to see continue to grow. My current professional role is working in an alumni engagement office and so I have direct experience in creating community in various communities for alumni and friends.

Please share any MCLA or NASC activities with which you have been involved.

I was involved with the Student Government Association, Residential Programs & Services, the Orientation program, The Beacon, and various other clubs. With these organizations, I enjoyed creating and attending events from the Campus Center takeover, to Faculty/Staff vs. Student Basketball game and of course the Sam Gomez Race etc.

Please share a brief bio and your goals for your term if elected to the Board.

I have been working in Higher Education in various roles since I graduated from MCLA in 2008. I attribute this career path to the staff and faculty that helped to shape and guide my experiences as an undergraduate in the multitude of clubs and organizations I was a part of. When not working, I enjoy hiking and travelling (a specific aim of mine is to get to see all of the National Parks).

My goals for a potential next term as a director would be to help alumni from all different backgrounds to re-kindle their fondness & love for this campus we all once called home. Additionally, I hope to expand how we as an organization can engage, connect, and celebrate the growing alumni base.

Vin Melito '71

Retired
He/Him

Please explain why you are interested in contributing your time/expertise to serve as a member of the MCLA Alumni Association Board of Directors.

During my brief time serving as a MCLA Alumni Association Board Director, I have come to realize the great work, growth and success of the college. Most impressive is the quality of the students, staff and support members whose dedication has, and continues to positively serve MCLA community.

I believed that my life experience and background can be of assistance in contributing to the on going mission of the college. In addressing that mission, it is important to simply say that, I support and would like to serve you and the college because, "MCLA IS A GREAT COLLEGE"! Service to the college is an expression of pay back for it's contributions to each and everyone of us who attended, are attending and will in the future become members of the MCLA community.

With that said I now ask that you to allow me to serve you on the Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Best wishes,

Vin

Please share any MCLA or NASC activities with which you have been involved.

As an educator, I have worked with Sorority student in promoting charitable activities in this City.

Also, have brought young elementary student with potential but lacking a certain degree of support in experience college life to MCLA. This purpose of this was exposure kids to college life and it's importance.

Served as guiding teacher for students who were in the educational department of MCLA

Please share a brief bio and your goals for your term if elected to the Board.

Graduate St. Anselm's College BA

MCLA MA + 38 cr.

Peace Corps Volunteer- 2 yr. Colombia, South America

State President of the Student New Hampshire Education Association

Teacher and School Counselor

Outstanding American Educators Award

Massachusetts Teachers Association State Board on Human and Civil Rights

City Counselor 14 years.

Council President 2 yrs.

Served as acting City Mayor

Founder of "People for Progress" group conducting numerous charitable activities in the community

Co-founder of Prostate Cancer Awareness information organization

Organized fund raising activities to build two schools in developing world countries via Peace Corps

John Hayes Fellowship

Married with 4 children

Bob Morgan '86

Property Claims Manager, Providence Mutual Insurance Company

He/him

Please explain why you are interested in contributing your time/expertise to serve as a member of the MCLA Alumni Association Board of Directors.

I have been following MCLA Alumni board and I want to give back to the school and board. North Adams State (MCLA) holds a special place in my heart. I not only earned a quality education but made new friends from all MA and the country. I grew up in Pittsfield, MA and commuted to school so I can give that perspective. I have a record of serving. I am a veteran of the MA Army National Guard and served 8 years. It was my service in the Guard that helped paid my tuition. I am an elected Member of the Plymouth School Committee and have served 9 years and I am currently the board Secretary. I would treasure the opportunity to serve on the board and give back to the college and the Alumni.

Thank you,

Bob Morgan

Class of 1986

Please share any MCLA or NASC activities with which you have been involved.

I have not been involved in NASCENT activities of late but I want to get more involved, even if I not elected to the board.

Please share a brief bio and your goals for your term if elected to the Board.

Pittsfield High School 1981

Berkshire Community College AA Business Administration 1984

North Adams State College BS Business Administration 1986

MA Army National Guard 8 yrs, reached rank of Sergeant E-5

Property Claims Manager Providence Mutual Fire Insurance Company (present)

Elected member of the Plymouth School Committee, currently board Secretary. 2009-2012, 2014-present

Served as Ambassador for the town of Plymouth, MA on a 1 week trip to Schichigama, Japan which is a sister town to Plymouth. Traveled with 2 chaperones and 15 student Ambassadors. 2019.

My goals if elected to the board would help raise funds for the college and scholarships. Another goal would be to increase involvement in the MCKA Alumni Association. I am sure I would identify more goals if I am elected to the board and learn as I serve.

Theresa O'Bryant '86

**Dean of Student Success and Engagement, MCLA
She/Her**

Please explain why you are interested in contributing your time/expertise to serve as a member of the MCLA Alumni Association Board of Directors.

I am invested in making a difference for our current and future MCLA students. I think the Alumni Association is an important opportunity to engage MCLA alums in the work of giving back to an institution that gave us all a valuable and important starting point in our professional lives. Nowadays, achieving a college degree is harder than ever. MCLA students will benefit from the support and relationships an engaged alumni ensures.

Please share any MCLA or NASC activities with which you have been involved.

In addition to serving on a multitude of MCLA committees over the years, O'Bryant currently serves on the board of directors for the Northern Berkshire United Way in North Adams, Massachusetts, and as vice president and governance committee chair of the board of trustees of Agassiz Village; a summer camp located in West Poland, Maine specializing in serving underprivileged children from Maine, as well as Boston and its surrounding neighborhoods.

Please share a brief bio and your goals for your term if elected to the Board.

Theresa O'Bryant is originally from Boston, Massachusetts. She earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration from Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts in North Adams, Massachusetts; a Masters Degree in Business Administration from Western New England University in Springfield, Massachusetts; and a Juris Doctorate from Northeastern University School of Law in Boston, Massachusetts.

Since 2006, Theresa has worked at Massachusetts of Liberal Arts' in a variety of roles. Currently, she serves as the institution's dean of student success and engagement. In this role, she serves as the college's strategic and operational champion to enhance student success and achievement by developing and implementing student success and advisement strategies specifically designed to advance learning, engagement, retention, and college completion. In this role, she oversees MCLA's undeclared advising, career services, academic support, and disability resources programs.

Prior her employment at MCLA, Theresa worked as a public defender for The Committee for Public Counsel Services in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts specializing in representing indigent children and adults charged with serious felonies.

Theresa currently resides in Adams, Massachusetts with her son Joseph.

Krista Roche '08

Specialist, Licensing, DraftKings Inc.

She/Her

Please explain why you are interested in contributing your time/expertise to serve as a member of the MCLA Alumni Association Board of Directors.

I've spent the last 12 years working for the MA Attorney General's Office in different consumer protection and investigatory roles. Due to my caseload, ethics code and political constraints of working for an elected official, I was unable to give my time and efforts. Sitting on the Alumni Board is something I've always wanted to do post-graduation, especially having served as President of SGA in my time at MCLA. Now that I've taken a leap of faith into the private sector, I want to give back and provide my knowledge, expertise and experiences to make MCLA a better, stronger community of support. I wouldn't be in the position I am today without MCLA, I am forever grateful. Please accept my sincerest and humble self-nomination for the Board.

Please share any MCLA or NASC activities with which you have been involved.

Goodness, it's been quite some time. But I got involved in everything at MCLA. SGA President, Treasurer etc. I was a peer advisor way back when it first rolled out. Spent all 4 years as an Admissions tour guide. I was involved in a lot of clubs, including AASC, Shakespeare club and was featured in a Berkshire Eagle article (feels like forever ago). I also did join Pi Upsilon Omega in my last semester and am grateful for the Greek community.

Please share a brief bio and your goals for your term if elected to the Board.

After graduation May 2008, I joined the MA Attorney General's Office and worked my way up the ladder first as a mediator handling consumer complaints; then spent several years as a paralegal handling consumer protection and false claims litigation (i.e. BOA/Countrywide; Volkswagen etc.); the last almost 5 years at the AGO I was a Sr. Financial Investigator working illegal bookmaking and offshore gambling cases.... which lead me to my current role at DraftKings. My skills and knowledge are vast. From 2013-2015 I earned my MPA from UMass Boston while working full-time. My passion project is prison higher education. My Master's thesis has been nationally recognized and I still continue this work on the side.

My goal if elected is to share my knowledge and to help MCLA grow and develop in ways that matter for next generations. It is my hope that I can be a voice for those that may not have one. Alumni involvement and retention is extremely difficult, I am part of that problem and own it. Most importantly I'm so excited to finally have time to commit and give back to MCLA. As I've stated already, this has been something I've always wanted to do. I now have the ability to commit to what is expected of the duties outlined.

PS - to the Board members reading this that may recognize my name and to those that don't, I hope you're well and wish you and yours love and light in 2021. Thank you for your time and let's press onward together as one. Cheers, Krista Roche

Bradley Shulda '19

Information Services Coordinator, Trinity College

He/Him

Please explain why you are interested in contributing your time/expertise to serve as a member of the MCLA Alumni Association Board of Directors.

I was a non-traditional degree completion student. I genuinely believe in the importance of this program and the overall mission of the college. I would genuinely appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the College's continued success.

Please share any MCLA or NASC activities with which you have been involved.

As a degree completion student who worked full-time, I was not directly involved in campus activities. I did work with the degree completion coordinator by offering quotes and allowing my photo for use in their advertising. I did this because MCLA was an essential part of my growth as a professional, and I wanted others to see the advantages of this great school.

Please share a brief bio and your goals for your term if elected to the Board.

I did my schooling slightly backward. I was offered a great full-time job opportunity at a young age as an ITS Support Specialist at Deerfield Academy. I did not want to pass up the opportunity, so I took the vow to stay in school and take night classes to obtain my undergraduate degree. This is ultimately what led me to MCLA. I'm now two courses away from completing my MBA at Elms College and currently work at Trinity College managing the Library/IT User Support Services. If elected, I would use my educational background, professional experience, and relationship building skills to seek out opportunities for funding that would greatly benefit the institution. I would make it my mission to leave the role in an even more positive standing than when I prospectively took over.

Hannah Sterrs '14

Manager, Community Engagement and Diversity & Inclusion, Madison Square Park Conservancy
She/Her

Please explain why you are interested in contributing your time/expertise to serve as a member of the MCLA Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Everything I am, in both my personal and professional life, is because of the time I spent as a student at MCLA. The knowledge I gained, support I received, and community I was apart of truly changed my life for the better and I want to make sure that current and future students are afforded the same opportunities I had. As a member of the MCLA Alumni Board of Directors, I will work hard to ensure that the MCLA community is stronger than it has ever been. Using my professional experience and educational background, I aim to step-up the college's commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Incusion and strengthen the relationship between the MCLA & North Adams community, all while doing my best to assure that ALL students, faculty, and staff thrive.

When I think of the best way to give back to the place that gave me so much, the Alumni Board of Directors is the perfect opportunity, and I hope I am afforded the chance to join the group in helping to make MCLA, its students, and the alumni association stronger than ever.

Please share any MCLA or NASC activities with which you have been involved.

Allegrettos - club member (2011-2013)

All College Committee [SGA] - student representative (2013-2014)

Arts Management Dept. trip to New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival - selected student participant (2014)

The Beacon - staff writer, features (2013-2014)

Berkshire Hills Internship Program - participant and intern at Berkshire Creative (2014)

Harlequinn Musical Theatre Club - member (2010-2014)

MCLA Presidents Office - marketing and communications intern (2012-2014)

Multicultural Student Society - member (2010-2014), secretary (2012-2013)

Peer Advisor (2011)

Sam Gomez Race - participant (2011-2013), co-coordinator (2014)

Students for a Sensible Drug Policy - club member (2011-2014)

Student Government Association, Coordinating Vice-President (2013-2014)

Advanced Performing Arts Management - Teachers Assistant (2013-2014)

Rock the Block [downtown North Adams block party] - production coordinator (2012)

Rock the Block 2.0 - event director/student coordinator (2014)

Participant, Martin Luther King Day of Service (2011-2014)

The Write Stuff - youth mentor (2011-2014)

Throughout my time at MCLA I attended many college events, including, SAC Spring Concert, MCLA Athletics games (soccer, basketball, baseball, tennis), Waffle Wednesdays, Dance Company performances, Midnight Madness, and more. I felt it was important to support my friends and peers in their extra-curricular activities while showing my school spirit and being part of the MCLA community.

Please share a brief bio and your goals for your term if elected to the Board.

Hannah Sterrs '14, was an active member of the MCLA and North Adams communities throughout her undergraduate career. Upon graduating, Sterrs used the skills, knowledge, experience, and relationships she cultivated during her time in Berkshire County to receive her Master of Education degree in Arts, Community, and Education from Lesley University, with a specialization on Multicultural Education and Community/Cultural Development. A current resident of Brooklyn, NY, Hannah works in Strategic Planning and Development for Madison Square Park Conservancy and the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation. In her free time, she serves as a member of the Brooklyn Public Library's Young Philanthropists Board and is heavily involved in local initiatives to better her community. Hannah credits serving as SGA Coordinating Vice-President, her former internships in the President's Office and Berkshire Hills Internship Program, various club memberships, and supportive professors for helping her to become the woman and proud MCLA alumna she is today.