



2026 Alumni Association Board of Directors

## Election Candidate Guide

### Tabatha Beshears 2007

Freelance Filmmaker, Author, and Hospitality Industry Employee

#### Pronouns

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 currently on the board now. I feel like I'm able to take past knowledge and current knowledge of MCLA and bring forth light on current situations that MCLA is facing. I've served on the outreach committee and have been active in alumni events on campus and would like the opportunity to dig further. I also have perfect attendance during my time on the board.

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

Class President of 2007, SGA senator, Resident Advisor, Rho Pi Sigma honorary council, Residence Hall board member, Film Club, Aikido Club, Yorick founding secretary, WJJW radio station DJ, All College Committee student representative, etc.

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

I'd like to continue my work on the alumni board. I'd like to continue building alumni relationships, being involved in alumni programming, and continue in finding ways where alumni relations can help aid current students at MCLA for the greater good of the institution.



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## Election Candidate Guide

### **Diana El Hariri Saie, MBA 2024**

Assistant Director of Academic Advising and Support and TRiO SSS

**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 interested in serving on the MCLA Alumni Association Board of Directors because I believe strong alumni engagement is essential to enhancing student experience and supporting student success. MCLA provided me with a solid academic and personal foundation, and I am eager to give back by helping strengthen connections between current students and alumni., especially TRiO SSS students.

I am particularly passionate about increasing student engagement through mentorship, networking, and career-focused opportunities that connect students with alumni early and often. These connections help students feel supported, prepared, and invested in the MCLA community beyond graduation. I would bring my collaborative approach and professional experience to support initiatives that advance MCLA's mission and foster lifelong alumni involvement.

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

I am currently organizing college events for TRiO SSS.

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

Diana El Hariri Saie holds a master's in business from Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA), master's in educational management and leadership from the Lebanese International University, a bachelor's in teaching English as a Second Language and English Literature from the Lebanese University (Teaching Diploma), and a bachelor's in business administration from the American University of Beirut. Diana has ten years of experience at three universities (Lebanese International University, Lebanese American University, and University of Sciences and Arts in Lebanon) in teaching TEFL, research, business communication, academic advising, and event coordination. She collaborated with different schools at the Lebanese International University to aid students with their research papers and presentations. A dedicated proponent of innovative pedagogy, Diana has continuously enhanced her skills in teaching writing, conflict resolution, leadership, and active learning. Diana has multiple publications. In pursuit of the public good, student success, and equity, Diana served as the vice president of an NGO called LOUDER (Lebanese Organization Unified Defending Equal Rights) from 2015

until 2019. She also organized several events at the Lebanese International University entitled “Cultural City”, “Education Day”, and “Annual Education Symposium”.

My Goals:

- Strengthen connections between alumni and current students through mentorship, networking, and career-focused engagement opportunities
- Increase student awareness of the Alumni Association by supporting programs that encourage early and ongoing involvement
- Collaborate with board members to develop inclusive initiatives that reflect the diverse MCLA community
- Support efforts that enhance student success and foster lifelong alumni engagement.



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## Election Candidate Guide

### Bob Hofmann 1986

Principal/Solutions Sales Executive, Equifax

#### Pronouns

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.**

My time at MCLA (then NASC) was a truly transformative experience in my life. As one of the few out of state students at the time, I came to NASC knowing no one and left with lifetime friends, a great education, and extracurricular experiences that set me up for success in the real world.

I truly believe in the power of public colleges and universities to provide opportunities to students that they may not be able to afford due to the skyrocketing expense of private institutions, and I know many of my fellow alumni share that same belief.

Through my professional career I have leveraged the experiences and learnings I obtained at MCLA. Beyond the teachings of my excellent professors, I also learned the values of hard work, critical thinking and common sense approaches to challenges vs. just doing what it says in the textbook.

I want to bring my business experience in sales and management to the efforts of the alumni board to help reach out to past students to tap into their passion for this great school, and ensure the success of MCLA for many years to come.

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

While at MCLA I served as the Treasurer and Vice President for the Student Government Association, worked as a building monitor at the campus center and for student security. I was an orientation leader and participated in the DIGS program. I also participated in intramural sports and was a member of the outing club.

I've been a regular contributor to the alumni fund and other special fundraising appeals over the years.

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

As Principal Solutions Sales Executive in the Equifax Alternative Finance Division, I help lenders safely expand access to credit for consumers through the use of alternative credit data sources. I have been with Equifax for 20 years in a number of roles, ranging from Analytics and Consulting to Sales Management within the credit risk and marketing spaces. I specialize in working with cross-vertical teams from financial institutions, to insurance and telecommunications companies. I've also led the analytic and market tracking of Buy Now Pay Later as part of Equifax's Fintech practice.

I am known for my ability to turn complex data and analytics into insights that can easily be consumed by senior leadership to help drive their business forward. My colleagues regularly seek my advice on complex sales pursuits, and I am a frequent speaker at both internal and external conferences.

Additionally, I act as an advisor to many younger employees and am a mentor for Equifax's Women's Career Development Network.

Prior to Equifax, I worked in the technology field for both Entex and Lucent, providing end to end networking solutions. I began my career working for a banking software company as a technical analyst and sales consultant to medium and large banks in the Asset and Liability planning space.

My goals for my term as a member of the board are threefold:

- 1) Expand alumni giving through direct outreach and fundraising campaigns.
- 2) Identify and implement areas to expand the enrollment of MCLA.
- 3) Coordinate corporate outreach campaigns to drive additional funding for the alumni association.



## 2026 Alumni Association Board of Directors

### **Shaleigh Howells 2010**

Owner & Principal Consultant, River to Ridge Consulting

#### **Pronouns**

She/they

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

MCLA changed the course of my life. As a nontraditional student working full time while earning my degree, I saw how supportive and accessible the MCLA community can be. That foundation helped me pursue graduate study at Harvard and build a career in the nonprofit and Tribal sectors. Serving on the Alumni Board has reinforced my appreciation for the impact MCLA has on students and alumni. I would like to continue my service to strengthen alumni engagement, expand opportunities for students, and support the long term success of the MCLA community.

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

As a student, I was a member of Phi Alpha Theta and served as a Teaching Assistant for Dr. Frances Jones Sneed.

As an alum, I have continued to support the College through my current Board service, alumni engagement, and informal mentorship for students interested in museums, cultural resource management, and nonprofit careers. For many years, I have volunteered to write welcome notes for incoming and outgoing students.

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

Shaleigh Howells (she/they) is the founder and principal consultant of River to Ridge Consulting, LLC, a relationship centered firm that supports culturally grounded and community driven approaches to cultural resource management, interpretation, and conservation. Through this work, they partner with Native Nations, public agencies, and community organizations to advance cultural sovereignty, heritage preservation, and environmental stewardship. Shaleigh also serves as the Indigenous Cultural Landscape Research Fellow with the Shenandoah National Park Trust, where their work focuses on cultural and historic preservation, stakeholder engagement, and advocacy for place-based Indigenous knowledge systems.

Shaleigh is Co-Chair of the NAGPRA Community of Practice and contributes to national efforts related to Indigenous collections care through the School for Advanced Research's Indigenous Collections Care Working Group. They also serve on the Southeastern NAGPRA Community of Practice's Split Collections Workgroup and Conference Committee. Beyond their professional work, Shaleigh is active in community service as a Virginia Master Naturalist and as an Ambassador for Girls Who Hike Virginia. Shaleigh enjoys exploring the outdoors, reading, working on Lego and entomology projects, and spending time at home with their partner and a trumpet of beagles.

Shaleigh grew up in The Berkshires and has lived in Virginia since 2012. They earned a Bachelor of Arts in History from Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts and a Master of Liberal Arts in Museum Studies from Harvard University, completing both degrees as a nontraditional student while working full time.





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## Election Candidate Guide

### William “Spider” Lucci 1980

Assistant Director, ROAD to Success Project at Vermont State University

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

As a graduate of North Adams State College, I look back fondly on how the faculty, staff, and classmates molded me into the person I became both personally and professionally. In fact, my experiences at NASC help chart the course I would take as a graduate assistant at Bridgewater State University, and then as a college administrator at Xavier University and the University of Cincinnati both in Ohio, and then as the Chief Student Affairs Officer at the College of St. Joseph in Vermont. Trying to recreate for all of my students the same campus climate that I enjoyed at NASC became the core of my work life in higher education. Even when I stepped outside of higher education to become an Assistant Director-Principal in career and technical education focusing on creating education and training programs for regional employers, I was guided by the strong foundation I was given by everyone in the NASC community who taught me the importance of creating connections and partnerships and sharing your gifts as part of the greater community. After having a career that has taken me full-circle back to higher education at Vermont State University, I find the need to reconnect with my alma mater and hopefully share my talents and gifts with a place that gave me all of the important tools I needed to enjoy a satisfying life.

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

Having spent so many years living outside of Massachusetts and the region I was not able to participate directly in activities and volunteer opportunities that would benefit NASC or MCLA. I am hoping to make up for lost time by serving as a member of the Alumni Association Board of Directors.

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

Upon receiving my Masters degree from Bridgewater State University, I began my career at Xavier University in Cincinnati as the Director of the Student Union and Campus Activities. I moved to the University of Cincinnati where I became the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, overseeing a satellite campus that focused on degree programs for allied health programs. Returning to New England to become the Dean of Student Affairs at the College of St. Joseph in Vermont and then Assistant Director-Principal for Adult Technical Education and Workforce Development for many years, I have made a career in education marked by connecting my schools with movers and shakers in the greater



communities in which we operated. I believe that in these trying times for education as a whole, cultivating school-community partnerships becomes the lifeblood of all stakeholders in that enterprise. I would make the pursuit of this goal a primary focus for my term on the board. Personally, I am married to a career elementary school teacher (Kim), and have two grown sons (Alex and Sam) and a daughter who is a junior at the University of Central Florida in Orlando where we have many opportunities to visit her and a rather famous Mouse.



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## Election Candidate Guide

### Paul Paradiso, MBA 2025

Vice President IT Infrastructure, Tenerity

#### Pronouns

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'm interested in serving on the MCLA Alumni Association Board because my MBA experience had a meaningful impact on my growth, and I feel a strong desire to give back to the institution that helped shape me. I hope to contribute my leadership, technology, and innovation experience to strengthen alumni engagement, support student success, and help advance MCLA's broader institutional goals, including visibility, enrollment, and long-term sustainability. I'm committed to fostering a more connected and active alumni community that elevates the college's impact in the region and supports the aspirations of alumni and students alike.

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

During my MBA program, I had the opportunity to serve as the 2025 commencement speaker for the graduate program. It was an invigorating and humbling experience that deepened my appreciation for MCLA and inspired me to remain connected with the institution. As part of my capstone work, I collaborated with faculty and classmates on a strategic project focused on expanding the Berkshire Innovation Center and strengthening its regional impact. I also remain closely connected with my cohort and professors, and I continue to look for opportunities to stay involved with the campus community and support both alumni and student initiatives.

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

Paul Paradiso is an IT infrastructure and cybersecurity executive with a strong interest in emerging technologies, including cryptocurrency and blockchain systems, and an entrepreneur at heart who is actively developing his own startup. Committed to lifelong learning, he enjoys exploring innovative and forward-thinking approaches across both his professional work and personal ventures. He recently completed his MBA at MCLA and was honored to serve as the 2025 commencement speaker, an experience that deepened his appreciation for the institution and strengthened his desire to contribute to its community. Paul currently serves as Vice President of IT Infrastructure at Tenerity, where he leads a global technology team responsible for enterprise operations and major transformation initiatives.

If elected to the Alumni Association Board, Paul's goals are to strengthen alumni engagement, expand opportunities for alumni–student connection, and help align the association's efforts with the university's broader priorities, including increasing awareness of MCLA's programs, supporting enrollment growth, and contributing to the institution's long-term financial health. He is also committed to supporting alumni and students with entrepreneurial interests and helping to foster a more vibrant innovation ecosystem in the Berkshires. Paul hopes to help build a connected and active alumni community that advances the mission of the college.



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## Election Candidate Guide

### Fadia Rostom 2014

Founder Vision Scholar, Tecnology in Education Consultant

**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 want to serve on the MCLA Alumni Association Board because MCLA changed my life, and I'm ready to give back.

When I came to the United States from Syria, MCLA gave me more than an education. It gave me a community and a chance to rebuild my career. Getting my Bachelor of Arts in 2014 opened doors I never thought possible. MCLA believed in me when I needed it most. Now I want to help create that same opportunity for other students and alumni.

I founded Vision Scholar Consultation, where I help people and organizations use AI and technology to grow. I've worked in education for over 30 years—teaching in colleges, leading K-12 programs, designing professional development, and working internationally. My focus is on preparing people for a world that's changing fast, which feels like exactly what MCLA students and alumni need right now.

Here's what I think I can bring to the Board:

Fresh approaches to engagement. I know how to use AI and digital tools in ways that actually work. I can help the Alumni Association find better ways to connect with alumni, support students, and build community online.

A different perspective. My international background means I understand what it's like to navigate new systems and cultures. That can help us serve MCLA's diverse alumni population better.

Real connections. Through my work and speaking at conferences, I've built networks and designed programs that help people advance in their careers. I can help create meaningful opportunities for MCLA alumni at every stage.

Commitment to community. I serve on the BCC Foundation Scholarship Review Committee and BCC Alumni Board. I know how to work with others to make things happen.

Serving on this Board is my way of honoring what MCLA did for me. I want to help alumni stay connected, support current students, and make sure MCLA keeps being a place where anyone can succeed—no matter where they start.

I'm excited to work with the Board to strengthen our community and help MCLA keep transforming lives.

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

Recently First Gen Celebration

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

I came to the U.S. from Syria in 2003 and earned my BA from MCLA in 2014. That degree changed everything for me, and it gave me a foundation to build a career in education that I'm proud of. I have served as a school principal for almost a decade, and now I run Vision Scholar Consultation, where I help educators and organizations use AI and technology in practical ways. I've spent 30 years in education—teaching at colleges, leading K-12 programs, and working internationally. I also serve on the BCC Foundation Scholarship Review Committee and served on BCC Alumni Board.

MCLA believed in my potential when I needed it. I want to help extend that belief to others.

**Goals for My Term**

If elected, I'll focus on three things:

- Better alumni connections. I want to explore new ways to keep alumni engaged—whether through digital platforms, mentorship programs, and events that actually bring people together.
  - Support for current students. I'll work to build stronger bridges between alumni and students. Our alumni have knowledge and networks that can help students launch their careers. Let's make those connections happen.
  - Preparing for what's next. The world is changing fast, especially with AI and technology. I want to help MCLA alumni and students navigate these changes and turn them into opportunities.
- I'm here to show up, do the work, and help MCLA keep being a place that transforms lives.



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## Election Candidate Guide

### **James Rottler 1994**

Trugreen Branch Operations Manager

#### **Pronouns**

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.**

My children have all gone threw college just want to help others.

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

Rugby, Newman Club

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

I am a 53 year old now grandfather who wants to help his community and others. I wake up each day and say today I am not going to be a jackass. I have helped others by providing food for over 10 families and 12 homeless veterans since the games have been played with snap. I have helped a family raise 32,000 dollars for a dying 14 year old and made sure she had over 4 hundred birthday presents to open at her last birthday. I have made sure 4 of my employees have the means in their 401ks to purchase their first homes before they hit 30. I am a loving husband to Tanya fathe to Abby HARELY Danny and Hannah and grandfather to Jason.



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## Election Candidate Guide

### Laini Sporbert 1992

Director of CARE Team Outreach and Health Education

#### Pronouns

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 enjoyed my second round on the Alumni Board (served 2000-2012, and 2024 to present) and wish to continue serving on the Alumni Board of Directors. Being on the board has solidified my commitment to our alma mater, and its current students. Institutions of higher education face unique challenges during these times, and MCLA benefits from strong board leadership with members who are involved in supporting current students in a variety of ways. I hope to continue to serve with other dedicated alums.

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

Research assistant and teaching assistant in Psychology classes, Orientation Leader for several years, led first year seminar classes (called DIGS, back in the day), active in music and theatre groups, held work-study jobs in theatre, the library, and student services. As an alum, was on the Board of Directors for the Susan B. Anthony Women's Center. Currently serving on the by-laws subcommittee of the Alumni Board, and peripherally involved with activities of the Outreach subcommittee.

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

After graduating from NASC/MCLA, I continued studies in Psychology, ultimately completing a Master's of Education in Counseling Psychology with a specialty in addictions. I've worked in higher education most of my entire adult career in the area of Student Affairs with experience in health education, student support services and case management.

I wish to continue my service on the By-laws Subcommittee while supporting the Outreach Committee's initiatives. Furthermore, I am particularly interested in participating in the presidential selection process (in whatever way possible) and advocating for MCLA students as they navigate the complex political and financial landscapes of higher education.





2026 Alumni Association Board of Directors

## Election Candidate Guide

### April Wright 2001

Director of Civic Programs, MCLA

#### Pronouns

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 interested in serving on the MCLA Alumni Association Board of Directors because my professional work, civic values, and personal commitment to MCLA are deeply aligned with the mission of strengthening lifelong connections between alumni and the institution. As a scholar-practitioner in higher education and civic engagement, I believe strongly that alumni relationships are not transactional; they are relational, intergenerational, and rooted in shared experience, pride, and responsibility.

For the past decade, I have worked in higher education in student engagement, civic leadership, and institutional partnership-building, collaborating closely with students, alumni, faculty, and community organizations. Throughout my career, I have helped design and lead initiatives that foster belonging, leadership development, and sustained connection beyond graduation. These experiences have given me a strong understanding of how alumni engagement can support student success, institutional advancement, and regional impact, particularly in a public liberal arts context.

As an alumna, I am passionate about ensuring that graduates remain connected to MCLA in meaningful and accessible ways, whether they stay in the Berkshires or move across the country. I am especially interested in advancing alumni engagement strategies that support recent graduates, expand regional and affinity-based connections, and strengthen alumni involvement in mentoring, advocacy, and civic life.

Serving on the Alumni Association Board would allow me to contribute my experience in strategic planning, governance, and community partnership-building while giving back to an institution that has shaped both my personal and professional journey. I would be honored to help advance the Alumni Association's work and to serve alongside fellow Trailblazers in support of MCLA's future.

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

English TA, China travel course

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

Dr. April Wright is an alumna of Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts and a scholar-practitioner with over a decade of experience in higher education, student affairs, and civic engagement. Her work focuses on student leadership development, community partnerships, governance, and creating inclusive, high-impact programs that support student success and belonging. She holds a PhD in higher education and has presented regionally on topics including civic learning, institutional support, and student engagement. April is deeply committed to public higher education and to strengthening the connection between students, alumni, and the communities they serve.

**Goals for My Term**

If elected, my goals are to help strengthen alumni engagement in ways that are meaningful, accessible, and sustainable. I am particularly interested in supporting initiatives that deepen connections with recent graduates, expand regional and affinity-based alumni networks, and increase alumni involvement in mentoring, civic engagement, and advocacy for MCLA. I also hope to contribute to thoughtful governance and strategic planning efforts that position the Alumni Association as a strong partner in advancing institutional pride, student success, and long-term alumni connection.