

# 2024–2025 WSMS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The primary responsibility of the Board of Trustees is to see that the School operates in the best interests of its students, teachers, and parents. The Board sets the purpose and policies of the School, ensures its financial stability, plans for its future, and hires the Head of School, who is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the School.



**Nikki Chase-Levin,  
President**

Nikki Chase-Levin is a board member and former parent who served as the WSMS Events Director for five years.

A graduate of Michigan State University with a BA in Journalism, Nikki's 30-year marketing career started at an entertainment publicity firm in Los Angeles in 1995 and continues here in New York City. Nikki has worked for some of the most recognizable consumer brands in the marketplace, including Captain Morgan Original Spiced Rum, Sony, Morgan Stanley, Discover Card and Miller Brewing Company. Her responsibilities included strategic planning for new and existing products, television advertising development, marketing communications, crisis communications, public relations programming and event planning. As the co-founder and president of Straight Line Marketing, Inc.—her independent consulting firm—she has counseled clients such as Pepsi, Smirnoff, Discovery Networks, and the lifestyle marketing agency, MKTG. Nikki and her husband Dave are the proud parents of Max (WSMS '14), Zach (WSMS '16), and three dogs ... Bubbles, Pepper, and Bear!



**Dana Bliss,  
Vice President**

Dana Bliss is Executive Editor at Oxford University Press, where he oversees a book publishing program in

social work, counseling and I/O psychology. Prior to joining OUP in 2012, Dana worked at Taylor & Francis, another scholarly publishing company in New York. Dana was born and raised in downtown Manhattan, and began his educational journey at a Montessori preschool in Tribeca, before attending Friends Seminary and then Colgate University, where he earned his BA in philosophy and classics. He is a Fellow of the Library of America, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the publication and preservation of the nation's cultural heritage through America's greatest writing. At WSMS Dana has served as co-chair of the Fall Festival, Class Rep Coordinator, and Class Rep, and has pitched in at the Auction and Hooked on Books events. Dana and his wife, Saya, live on the Upper West Side and are the proud parents of two WSMS alumni, Nami (WSMS '17) and Emi (WSMS '21).



**Iva Mills,  
Vice President**

Iva Mills is the mother of twin WSMS alumni (2016). Iva served as co-president of the Parents Association

for two years and assisted with the Annual Fund, Auction, Spring Fair and Admissions Committee. Iva grew up in San Diego, CA, and received her BA in political science from the University of California, Los Angeles, and her JD from American University Washington College of Law. Iva practiced law for ten years, first at a law firm, primarily in the area of advertising and marketing litigation, and later in-house litigating intellectual property disputes. Iva is also a Trustee of Trinity School, Edible Schoolyard NYC, and Roundabout Theatre Company, and serves on the Acquisition Committee of the Studio Museum in Harlem.



**Tenille Skelton,  
Treasurer**

Tenille Skelton and her husband, Travis Skelton, are the proud parents of two WSMS alumni. During her time at

WSMS, she was an active parent volunteer, serving on many committees, including two years as Parents Association co-president. Tenille received her BS in finance and accounting at Tulane University. She has ten years of experience in real estate finance and capital raising, having spent her career at The Carlyle Group, Goldman Sachs and TPG. Tenille is a member of the board of Grand Street Settlement, a nonprofit organization that provides programs and services to over 10,000 under-served New York children, families and seniors, and serves on its Executive Committee and Ad Hoc Real Estate Committee. Tenille is also a member of the board of Rise Outside, a guiding organization that provides adventure programming for groups who have traditionally encountered barriers to the great outdoors.



**Geoffrey Karapetyan,  
Secretary**

Geoffrey Karapetyan and his husband, Jay Serpe, are the parents of two WSMS alumni. In addition to being a dad,

Geo is the Senior Vice President of Partnerships at NBCUniversal, where he focuses on Peacock and manages digital and new media partnerships for the Olympic Games. He earned an MBA from New York University, and a BA in Comparative Literature from Columbia University. He served as a Class Rep during his time as a WSMS parent, and is grateful to continue to serve the community. Geo and his family live on the Upper West Side.



### Michael Capilouto

Michael Capilouto and his wife Christine are parents of Cassis and Tristan, both alums of West Side Montessori School. Michael was an active volunteer while his kids attended WSMS, serving as a Class Representative and volunteer at many school events. Michael spent 30 years as a partner at the professional services firm EY, where he helped develop two service lines and served clients executing complex transactions including capital raising, acquisitions and sales. Michael also spent several years abroad working with non-US-based SEC registrants. Michael continues to stay involved with EY in a partner mentorship role. Michael and family are avid travelers and explorers.



### Kristin Crawford

Kristin Crawford is the Lower School Principal at Trinity School. She has spent four decades dedicated to the lives, wellness and happiness of young children. Kristin started her career as a teacher at Springside School in Philadelphia, an all girls school. She taught Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, Second Grade, and Lower School Science and worked to change the environments of children's learning spaces. As a science teacher, she initiated a stewardship relationship to the woods adjacent to the school, teaching children about caretaking of the natural world and fostering the courage of young children to explore and take healthy risks. Her interest in learning spaces and science intersected when she co-designed a physics lab for four-, five- and six-year-olds. After teaching, she moved onto Admissions and worked as a Lower School Admissions Director of an all boys school. Missing the daily connection to children, she became the Lower School Principal at Westtown School, a day and boarding Friends school. Her work at Westtown focused on reversing a steep attrition pattern, and over her tenure, the Lower School rebounded with more robust enrollment. At Trinity, Kristin turned her attention to supporting families and faculty in order to build curious, empathetic relationships, as schools continue to be impacted by global events. In addition, she is the Lay Chaplain of Lower School. Every day she feels grateful for the work of helping children thrive—intellectually, emotionally and spiritually. She is the mother of two daughters, Kelsey (34) and Leise (31), and the grandmother of Alice.



### Julia Emanuel, MD

Julia Emanuel, MD, is a general pediatrician at Manhattan Valley Pediatrics, an independent outpatient pediatrics practice on the Upper West Side. She received her bachelor's degree from Yale University and her medical degree from The George Washington University School of Medicine before completing her pediatric residency at Columbia NewYork-Presbyterian, Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital. Prior to medical school, Julia earned a master's degree in Global Public Health from the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, and worked for the international humanitarian organization, Doctors Without Borders, advocating for expanded access to medicines in developing countries and other health policy initiatives. Julia focuses her pediatric practice on helping children and their parents thrive in all aspects of their lives and communities. She and her husband, Eric Feinstein, are the parents of Noa (WSMS '23), Wesley (current WSMS student), and Mae.



### Gregory Feldman

Gregory Feldman is a Partner at Davidson Kempner Capital Management, where he's a member of the U.S. Corporates team overseeing global transportation and private investments. At DK, Greg has worked in New York and London. Greg also worked at Goldman Sachs on the bank loan investing desk. He is a sponsor of Airlink, a global humanitarian organization that provides airlift solutions to communities in crisis. Greg and his wife, Inyoung Hwang, live in the Upper West Side and are proud parents of Theo (1W) and Iris (T3). He's been an active member of the WSMS community, including as a volunteer at the Fall Festival. Greg is a native New Yorker and received an M.B.A. from Harvard Business School and an A.B. in Economics, with high honors, from Dartmouth College. He's also been a part of Dartmouth's Young Alumni Campaign Advisory Committee.



### Steven Han

Steven Han has 20 years of investment experience across public and private equities and credit. He is currently a Portfolio Manager at Sypher Capital, which is focused on public and private growth investments. Prior to this role, he was a Portfolio Manager at Quent Capital, a global, small cap hedge fund, and

held investment roles at Hudson Bay Capital, Freshford Capital, and H.I.G. Capital. Steven began his career in management consulting for the technology sector. Steven holds a BA from Stanford University and an MBA from Northwestern University. Steven and his wife, Gee Young, currently live on the Upper West Side with their daughter, Lina, a WSMS alum.



### Avner Husen

Avner Husen and his wife, Tashmin Ali, are dedicated members of the WSMS community and proud parents of Sophia (Garden) and a son in fourth grade. Avner currently leads the Real Estate Credit business at Farallon Capital Management. Before joining Farallon, Avner was part of the Real Estate Group at Blackstone, focusing primarily on the Blackstone Real Estate Income Trust (BREIT). Prior to his tenure at Blackstone, he spent 14 years at Fortress Investment Group as a Partner and Investment Committee Member in the Credit and Real Estate business. Avner holds an AB in Economics with honors from the University of Chicago, where he remains actively involved with the Alumni Association. He also served as an advisor for the Francisco Park Conservancy, which recently transformed an abandoned reservoir in San Francisco into a vibrant community park. In 2022, Avner and his family relocated from San Francisco to New York.



### Ankur Keswani

Ankur Keswani and her husband, Rohit, are proud parents of current WSMS student Rishi, and alumni students Isha and Saavan. While at WSMS, Ankur has truly enjoyed working with our amazing parent community. She had the honor of serving as the Co-Chair of WSMS Gives in 2020 and the Co-Chair of the Annual Fund in 2021, co-heading the Gratitude Campaign in 2020, and being a Class Rep. Currently, Ankur serves as an independent director on the board of Kennedy Lewis Capital, a BDC, and a variety of nonprofit boards. Prior to focusing full-time on raising her family, Ms. Keswani spent over 20 years in portfolio management, credit investing, trading, research and risk management. From 2012-2020, she was the Head of Corporate Credit at Serengeti Asset Management, where she helped manage over \$1 billion in assets and led several successful turnarounds and post-bankruptcy workouts. Prior to joining Serengeti, Ankur spent more than nine years at Goldman Sachs, mainly as a High Yield and

Distressed trader. Prior to moving to trading, Ankur was a II-ranked High Yield Healthcare research analyst at Goldman. In 2017, Ankur was added to the Hedge Fund Journal's Top 50 Women in Hedge Funds. She received her BA with Honors from Oxford University in Philosophy, Politics and Economics. Ankur grew up in India, Hong Kong and Singapore, but New York is where her heart belongs.



### Annie Kim

Annie Kim has been at Citi for almost 18 years working in a variety of functions. She is currently a Senior Vice President and Credit Officer for the Commercial Banking business, providing risk oversight for the Commercial Bank's derivatives and investment products portfolio. Because this role is part of a global office, Annie has had the opportunity to work with colleagues in the US, EMEA, Latin America and Mexico, and Asia Pacific regions. In this role, Annie is also a Risk approver for the small business banking portfolio for North America. Annie actively supports mentorship initiatives at Citi, including running the Global Risk Mentor Program for the Commercial Bank, serving as a mentor for the Risk Analyst Mentor program, and participating as a steering committee member of the Citi Women's Network New York chapter focusing on professional development. Annie received a BS in Finance and Economics at the Leonard N. Stern School of Business at New York University. Annie and her spouse, Jeff Lin, are current WSMS parents of Max, and have two WSMS alumni children, Samuel ('19) and Clara ('22).



### Scott Li

Scott Li is a partner with CRG, a healthcare-focused investment firm. Scott has been dedicated to the healthcare industry as an investor, advisor, and executive for over 20 years. Prior to joining CRG in 2015, he worked as an investment banker for the healthcare industry, and also previously served as the chief financial officer of a venture-backed health IT company. He and his wife, Vernaliz, have been committed WSMS volunteers; they co-chaired the WSMS Bulb Planting, and Vern co-chaired the Fall Festival. A New Jersey native and long-time resident of New York, Scott lives on the Upper West Side with his family, which includes two children who attended WSMS. He received an AB in economics from Princeton University and an MBA from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.



### Liz Martorella

Liz Martorella has been a part of the WSMS community since 2013. She was an active parent volunteer in the years that her daughters attended WSMS, including two years as co-president of the Parents Association, and as a co-chair of the Auction and Fall Festival. Liz has over ten years of experience in pharmaceutical marketing and advertising, including her time at well-known specialty agencies Sudler & Hennessey and LM&P. As an account manager, Liz was a key player in the strategic planning and conceptual development of promotional and educational programs directed at medical professionals and patients. Her marketing experience spans many therapeutic categories, including Parkinson's disease, osteoporosis, prostate cancer, antibiotics, antivirals and osteoarthritis. Liz received her BA in psychology from SUNY Geneseo, and her MA in psychology with a focus on cognition, perception and neuroscience, from NYU. She was part of a research team investigating the intersection of memory and emotion in the brain, and published findings in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, a peer-reviewed scientific journal. Liz and her husband, Ben Swinburne, are the proud parents of Josephine ('16), Vivian ('19) and Isabel ('22).



### Kurt Miller

Kurt Miller and his wife Melissa are parents of two WSMS alumni. Over the years, Kurt has had the pleasure of serving as Auction co-chair, as well as volunteering at multiple other events, including the Fall Festival and the Auction. Originally from northern Virginia, he moved west for undergrad at Stanford. After graduation, he taught English in Japan for a year before pursuing a PhD in Computer Science at UC Berkeley. He and Melissa moved to NYC in 2011 for Kurt's job at PDT Partners, a quantitative asset management firm. From 2014–2018, Kurt was also an adjunct at the NYU Center for Data Science.



### Yasmin Nozari

Yasmin Nozari and her husband, Mike Lefferts, are the parents of current WSMS student, Kaveh, alum, Cyrus '23 and future student, Lucie. Yasmin has been an active volunteer at WSMS since her family joined the school in Fall '20. She has served as a Class Rep, is a member of the WSMS Admissions Com-

mittee, chaired the yearbook, and Auction events, and participated in numerous other projects. She loves being involved in our school community. Yasmin has worked in tech for over 10 years—in product roles and as an entrepreneur. Prior to working in software, Yasmin was a middle school math teacher in New York with Teach for America. She holds a BA from Connecticut College, and a MS in Education from Hunter College.



### Charlene Su

Charlene Su has been a part of the WSMS community since her family moved from California to New York in 2021. Charlene served as co-president of the Parents Association for two years, co-chaired the 2022 Auction, and assisted with the Annual Fund and Admissions Committee. Charlene was born in Los Angeles and received her degree in Business Administration from the University of California, Berkeley and her MBA from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. Charlene has over ten years of experience in management consulting and marketing. As a consultant with L.E.K. Consulting, Charlene advised media and entertainment companies such as Disney, Universal Studios and the Motion Picture Association. As a brand manager with the Clorox Company, Charlene oversaw the strategic planning and marketing execution of two business units. Charlene's priorities and interests changed when she learned that her first child was born deaf and began supporting the rehabilitation of her daughter's hearing through the use of cochlear implants. She is an advisor to families who desire for their deaf/hard-of-hearing children to communicate using listening and spoken language through her continued involvement with Weingarten Children's Center, Baker Institute for Children with Hearing Loss, and the Center for Hearing and Communication. Charlene and her husband, David Su, are proud parents of Natalie (10), Olivia (WSMS '24), and Claire (3), who will be starting her WSMS journey this year.



### JF Thye

JF Thye and his wife, Jessica, are parents to two children currently at WSMS (Loren and Lexi), and Julien, who is a '22 alum. They are active participants in the WSMS community, having had roles in the Fall Festival and as class rep. JF is Operating Partner at Alder Point Capital Management where he invests in farm and timberland via a climate and rural development strategy. Previously, JF co-founded

Deskpass, a company that helps decarbonize office properties and was merged with Industrious in 2023. Before, JF worked in engineering and finance for design, investment, and clean tech companies. He co-founded NIAM Expeditions, a conservation research group supporting the UN and Wildlife Conservation Society global oceans programs. JF is a board member of The Cumberland Forest Project, the largest conservation and rural investment initiative in the US. JF received a BS from Cornell University, an MBA from the Yale School of Management, and an MEM from Yale School of the Environment.



**Elizabeth Tyndell**

Elizabeth and her husband, Matthew Lifshutz, are the proud parents of a current WSMS student and a WSMS alum, Dorothy ('23). Elizabeth has been an active parent volunteer since joining the WSMS community in 2019. She has enjoyed partnering with other parents and supporting the school as a Fall Festival co-chair and Class Rep for multiple years, Annual Coat Drive co-chair, along with various other volunteer opportunities. Outside of her time at WSMS, Elizabeth serves as the Head of Talent Acquisition at New York Life, a Fortune 100 financial guidance provider. In this role she is responsible for creating an innovative and competitive enterprise talent acquisition strategy that promotes New York Life's employment brand and competitive position in the market. Prior to joining New York Life, Elizabeth spent 15 years at Goldman Sachs as a part of their Global Recruiting Leadership team, most recently as the Global Recruiting COO. Elizabeth graduated with a bachelor's degree from Hope College in Holland, MI.



**Christina Wang, MD**

Christina Wang, MD, is the Clinical Quality Director of Cancer Prevention at The Institute for Family Health, one of the largest community health centers in New York State, with a mission-driven focus of providing high quality, affordable health care, and addressing racial and ethnic health disparities in medically underserved populations. In addition, she manages medical partnerships with local organizations, including Care for the Homeless and the American Cancer Society. Prior to moving to New York from San Francisco in 2018, she worked at Kaiser Permanente, where she was a Physician Partner serving as Medical Director of Acupuncture for the East Bay region. She received her BA in biology from

Rice University, and her MD from Baylor College of Medicine. Christina and her husband Henry are proud parents of Preston, Thompson (WSMS '20) and Estella (WSMS '22). She has been an active parent volunteer, serving on many committees, including the Admissions Committee. She co-chaired the Auction, Fall Festival and Hooked on Books, and was the PA co-president in 2021–2022.



**Alex Wasch**

Alex Wasch serves as the Chief Operating Officer at Figure Skating in Harlem, a globally recognized and award-winning youth development organization dedicated to empowering girls through education and access to the sport of figure skating. Prior to her tenure at Figure Skating in Harlem, Alex held roles in Corporate Responsibility at JP Morgan, and served in various leadership capacities at the UJA-Federation of NY. Before transitioning to the nonprofit sector, she worked in marketing and global brand partnerships at leading companies including the National Basketball Association and JetBlue Airways. Alex has previously served on the Board of the Friends of Tranquillity Camp among other NYC-based nonprofits. At WSMS, Alex co-chaired 2023 End of Year Lawn Party and previously served as a Class Rep. Alex holds a BA in Rhetoric and Communications Studies and History from the University of Richmond. Together with her husband Evan, they have two daughters, Kaia ('23), and current student, Zoe.



**Jordan Blitzer, Parent Representative**

Jordan Blitzer is Director of Admission at Columbia Business School overseeing strategic projects across the various degree-bearing programs offered at the school. She also serves as a senior member of the admissions committee for the Full-Time and Executive MBA programs. Prior to her transition to higher education, Jordan worked in corporate human resources and talent acquisition for companies including BlackRock and Baked by Melissa. Jordan graduated from Brandeis University with a BA in Sociology and Anthropology and obtained an MA from Teachers College, Columbia University in Organization & Leadership with a focus on adult learning. Growing up on the Upper West Side, Jordan is a graduate from WSMS herself. She is extremely grateful to serve as co-president of the Parents Association this year, in what feels like a very full-circle moment. Last year, Jordan was co-

chair for the Diamond Anniversary Auction (2023), Class Representative for her son's class, and assisted with other activities, including the Yearbook, Admissions Committee, and Fall Festival. Jordan and her husband, Noah Blitzer, will have both of their two children at WSMS this year. Dylan, who is returning for his third year, and Olivia, who will be in the Twos Program starting on the WSMS journey!



**Ellie Burrows Gluck, Parent Representative**

Ellie Burrows Gluck is an entrepreneur, advisor, certified personal development coach, Vedic Meditation teacher, and the cofounder and former CEO of MNDFL. After graduating magna cum laude from Northwestern University, Ellie served as an executive in the film business. Over time her activities and interest evolved into a formal coaching practice centered on effective communication and interpersonal relationships. In 2014, she co-founded MNDFL, New York City's premier meditation company. During her tenure, Ellie also completed an extensive 2000-hour Vedic Meditation teacher training program. Now Ellie is focusing on new endeavors, including angel investing, providing advisory services for female founders and, most importantly, raising her daughters, current WSMS student, Luna, and Goldie with her husband, Simon Gluck. Ellie co-chaired the 2023 Groovy Gala, and is currently co-president of the Parents Association. She serves on the board of At The Well, which enhances women's well-being through ancient Jewish practices.



**Shayna Gatling, Faculty Representative**

Shayna Gatling started at WSMS as a teacher in the Twos program in 2017. In 2018 she moved to the Multi-Age program and became a head teacher in 2023. Shayna received her bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education from Long Island University Post and is Montessori certified through WSMS-TEP.