



2018 Board Nominations

Vice-President



Homa Hanjani - SF Region

San Francisco Day School

My name is Homa Hanjani and I have been the Director of Admission at San Francisco Day School for eight years. Prior to that I worked and taught children in kindergarten through 6th grades for 12 years, both in and out of the classroom. Between my teaching years and the start of my administrative role, I took four years to spend more time with my two boys. During those four years, I developed a small yoga program teaching children ages 3 to 13 years in several after-school programs, SF parks, and in yoga studios around San Francisco.

My desire to continue my engagement with the BADA Board is to both contribute and gain professional insight while collaborating with a great group of committed and dedicated admission professionals. I am eager to see the BADA Board and its mission grow in ways we support families and schools in the admission process. Having gone through the admission process myself both for K and for high school, I have a deeper respect for the work we all do. The collegial aspect of this work makes it a moral obligation to be mindful of the best practices. In support of all families and schools, we must reflect on how to make the process more equitable and inclusive for all.

Secretary



Amy Pearson - North Bay Region

Mount Tamalpais School

Amy Pearson serves as the Director of Admissions and Marketing at Mount Tamalpais School in Mill Valley, CA. For over 14 years, Amy has worked in admission offices in various Bay Area independent schools including The Nueva School, Presidio Hill School, and Brandeis Marin. She started her educational career as a 2nd/3rd grade teacher at Marin Horizon School and spent a few years in advertising as a project manager and copywriter. She recently spent two years as a recruitment & retention coach, consulting with admission directors, administrative teams, and boards in several Jewish Day Schools in the US and Canada. In a volunteer capacity, Amy has served on non-profit boards, been a faculty member at AISAP summer institutes, served on BADA committees (Symposium Planning, Policy & Guidance, Membership, etc.), led diversity & inclusion committees, and co-chaired an auction. She lives in Mill Valley with her husband and three children (ages 2, 10, and 13) and sneaks in runs and cycles when possible.

North Bay Region Nominees



Mandy Tachiki
Mark Day School



Lauren Miller
Presentation School



Kara Diaz
Marin Country Day School

South Bay / Peninsula Director Nominees



Joe Connolly
Hillbrook School



Meeta Gaitonde
Phillips Brooks School



Taryn Grogan
The Nueva School

San Francisco Director Nominees



Dunja Solari
La Scuola International School



Brooke Jenkins
Town School for Boys



Peter Lavaroni
Kittredge School

North Bay Region Nominees



Mandy Tachiki
Mark Day School

Since becoming Director of Admission at Mark Day School two years ago, I have learned so much from my fellow BADA colleagues. I have truly enjoyed being a member of such a collegial group and would love to contribute in any way that I can to continue its success. Our office has been active in the preschool and statistics committees and on the BADA board - I hope to continue this work.

Prior to joining the Mark Day admission team, I served on the Mark Day Board of Trustees where I was active on the development and finance, advisory and governance committees and chaired the indexed tuition task force. Admissions was a career shift for me from corporate law where I advised corporations and venture funds on governance and legal matters. I can bring a legal lens to the BADA Board.

I currently serve on the Board of the Brown Alumni Association where I am an active member of both the regional strategy committee and first-generation low-income committee. I also serve on the Brown Women's Leadership Council, where I am a member of the membership committee and diversity subcommittee. For the last 13 years, I have also taken on various leadership roles with the Brown Admission Alumni Interviewing Program. I am currently the global chair for the program, overseeing interview assignments for over 35,000 Brown applicants around the world.

North Bay Region Nominees



Lauren Miller
Presentation School

My name is Lauren Miller and I am the Director of Advancement and Admissions at The Presentation School in Sonoma. I have been with The Presentation School for eight years, six as a classroom teacher and two in my current position. Presentation is the only K-8 independent school in Sonoma, 25% of our current student population of which is now commuting from neighboring towns as early as kindergarten.

At The Presentation School, I oversee the full advancement cycle that stems from converting interested prospects into engaged, committed families. I am intrigued with the studies around advancement and how all departments can work together to foster and guide these families up through the stages of re-enrollment, donor cultivation, new alumni, and ultimately, into lifelong stewards of the school.

I have been part of the BADA organization for the last three years, connecting with colleagues, tracking trends, and using the on-line forum as a constant guide post. This year, I served on the program committee helping to vet our key note speaker and organize the symposium. If elected to the board, I would love to represent the north bay and continue my work with the program committee.

North Bay Region Nominees



Kara Diaz
Marin Country Day School

BADA continuously inspires me; the collaboration, mentoring, and space for reflection provided has been an incredibly positive resource for me. Being one of only a few women of color in administration at my current school, I also appreciate how seen, mirrored, and instantly supported I feel by the diverse and inclusive nature of BADA members. There is a clear opportunity to evolve and deepen the levels of support BADA can offer and I'm called to serve at the board level in any way I can be found useful. I bring a rare perspective shaped by growing up in both parochial and public schools, having lived all over California, Mexico, and Guatemala, and having a career rooted in development work. I hope to share my passion for building community, improving institutional practices, and supporting underrepresented families.

I currently serve as Associate Director of Admission & Indexed Tuition at Marin Country Day School where I am dedicated to creating more connection and access to resources. My team at MCDS will tell you some of my valued contributions are open communication, engaging families, partnership building, and translating big picture goals to effective action.

South Bay / Peninsula Region Nominees



Joe Connolly
Hillbrook School

As the Chief Advancement and Enrollment Officer at Hillbrook School I oversee advancement, enrollment/admissions, alumni affairs, communications and marketing, community involvement and support, transportation, and summer and after-school programs. I have the pleasure of leading the Office of Advancement and Enrollment team consisting of the Director of Enrollment Management, Director of Annual Giving and Alumni Relations, Director of Communications and Community Engagement, Director of Transportation, Summer and After School Programs, two advancement and enrollment associates, the Middle School Assistant and the Front Desk and Lower School Assistant. Under my leadership, Hillbrook has experienced unprecedented enrollment growth, fueled by an innovative and collaborative Advancement Model that fosters a research-based synergy among all advancement and enrollment efforts. Before taking on this current role, I was the Middle School Head at Hillbrook.

Prior to joining Hillbrook, I served several roles for independent and private schools, including Dean of Students, Wellness Director, Athletic Director, Coach, and Teacher. After a few years of teaching and coaching directly out of college, I enjoyed a 20-year career as a sales and marketing specialist, including co-founding and being CEO of two companies. I believe I can bring a unique brand of leadership to the board and provide needed strategic vision.

South Bay / Peninsula Region Nominees



Meeta Gaitonde
Phillips Brooks School

Hi! My name is Meeta Gaitonde and I am currently the Director of Admission at Phillips Brooks School in Menlo Park. PBS has been my second home since 2002, when I started as a 3rd-grade assistant teacher. Since then, I have been a lead teacher, a specialist and most recently serve on the administrative team. Most importantly, I'm a parent of a 6th and 3rd-grader. The most important part of my job as Director of Admissions is to help families understand the independent school admission process and guide them as they navigate through it. It has been really important to me that I have strong relationships with and understanding of my peer schools so that I can be as helpful to families as possible. I feel that this has allowed me to build authentic and trustworthy relationships with prospective parents and whether they end up at PBS or not, they feel that the admissions process was a useful experience. I have appreciated my conversations and relationships with other admissions folks that I've met through BADA and have found that working together has only enhanced the admissions process for our families as well as for my work. I'd love to help mentor new admissions folks and help foster collaboration between the BADA schools.

South Bay / Peninsula Region Nominees



Taryn Grogan
The Nueva School

My relationship with BADA began 16 years ago as the Program and Outreach Director at A Better Chance. I was a BADA partner then, and after joining The Nueva School, as the Director of Admissions, I became a member and have been active for 12 years. I've served on multiple committees, hosted BADA and DASBP meetings, and sat on the BADA Steering Committee. I was instrumental in launching the original ISSFBA website and assisted in paving the path for BADA's current evolution.

While at Nueva, I have managed the admissions process to achieve enrollment and expansion goals, and served on board level committees such as finance, branding, and diversity, and co-chaired the CAIS/WASC accreditation. I am also a Trustee for The Berkeley School (Pk-8) in Berkeley, CA. Additionally, as a member of the BAAD (Bay Area Admissions Directors, 9-12) Steering Committee, I am abreast of the changing 9-12 admissions and enrollment trends throughout the bay area. Serving on both leadership teams creates great potential to strengthen partnership and communication between the Pk-8 and 9-12 independent school communities.

I am thrilled with the possibility to serve on the BADA Board, I feel my career experiences and insights will add great value.

San Francisco Region Nominees



Dunja Solari
La Scuola International School

My name is Dunja Solari and I'm the Director of Admissions at La Scuola International School, a Preschool through 8th grade school in San Francisco. I live with my husband and 2 children in the Haight Ashbury and I bring an international perspective to BADA: I was born in Croatia, grew up in Germany and went to University of Durham in the U.K., before coming to San Francisco in 1998. In my 6 years in admissions, financial aid and marketing, we've grown La Scuola from 99 students to over 270 students.

My BADA colleagues have been such an important part of this journey and I don't take the collegiality and generosity of this group for granted. I appreciate BADA for the its collective knowledge, friendship and sense of humor! I would like to give back to BADA by joining the board of directors. The effort to increase diversity and inclusion at independent schools is close to my heart, and participation in the diversity and inclusion committee at my own school is some of the most rewarding work for me personally. Prospective parents often ask me what I like most about working at my school, and I always answer that I love the people I work with. I feel lucky to get to work with an amazing group of faculty and staff every day and I feel BADA is an extension of this team spirit!

San Francisco Region Nominees



Brooke Jenkins
Town School for Boys

I am interested in joining the BADA board because the organization has been so helpful as I have navigated my first three years as a Director of Admission and Tuition Assistance. The support I received from the other directors in BADA has been invaluable. I have positive relationships with other directors; I have learned from them and been able to ask questions when things arise that I am unsure of. Now that I have been in this role for 3 years I have a fuller understanding and would like to take the next step in helping my colleagues, especially those new to the profession, identify and implement best practices in independent school admissions. I have been fortunate to have good relationships with many of the San Francisco preschools and preschool directors, as I have been in the SF independent school world for 18 years, 15 of which I spent in the classroom, primarily in kindergarten. This has enabled me to relate to directors and bring a perspective to the work we all do. I look forward to continuing to build relationships with my fellow admissions colleagues in a way that allows me to play it forward and support those who are newer to the profession.

San Francisco Region Nominees



Pete Lavaroni
Kittredge School

My name is Pete Lavaroni. I have worked at Kittredge School in San Francisco since 1981, first as a teacher and later transitioning to my current position of principal in 1998. As principal of a very small independent school I have many roles. However, I consider none more important than admissions.

Like all of our BADA schools, Kittredge's success is determined by the success of our students and admissions is key. Director of Admissions each must completely and thoroughly understand our school so that we can identify the students that we best serve. The uniqueness of each of our schools is important as this allows us to best serve the diversity of students within our communities.

My long tenure in a SF independent school has taught me a lot about the education offered at BADA schools. Also the different roles of teacher, head of school and one-time parent allows me a lens with a unique perspective from many different angles that could be of service for the Board.

I am a true believer in the good that BADA does and thankful to be a member. I would be honored to be on the BADA board to assist the growth of this exciting and worthwhile organization.