



FACES OF WID

Name: Nicole Dumas

Title: Director of Alumni Engagement and Philanthropy, Boston Latin School Association (Major Gift Officer to the Development world!) **WID Role:** Membership Committee

Hometown: Hyde Park, MA **Lives Currently:** Roxbury, MA **Education:** Harvard University

Hobbies: Reading, traveling, sports, and a bit of a performing arts junkie

When and how did you join the development field? What path brought you to your current role?

I joined the BLSA in March of 2016 after an 18-year career in Institutional Sales with Fidelity Investments. I had been considering a “career pivot” to the non-profit sector for a couple of years, but wasn’t sure if it would be in social services, health care or education. I had a skill set that was transferrable because my roles had largely been in a sales and relationship management capacity. After lot of research and self-reflection, I was made aware of an opportunity with the BLSA as Major Gift Officer. It was a natural fit because I am a proud alumna of Boston Latin School, had served as a volunteer while in Boston and chaired the Los Angeles Alumni Chapter when I lived there. Coming full circle to support the school in this fashion has been quite rewarding. I quickly learned that sometimes the things you seek are already in your “virtual backpack”.

Describe your biggest development success story to date, or your greatest challenge and how you managed this challenge.

Fundraising during a crisis. While I was no stranger to “selling through a storm,” BLS faced a crisis in 2016 which threatened our momentum during a critical time of our campaign. The normal cultivation and solicitation cycle was lengthened as donors were skeptical about the future of the school and therefore hesitant to commit philanthropically. I realized that the more efficiently I could tie donors’ gift intentions to the current needs at the school, the better our chances of more promptly securing funds, crisis notwithstanding. This challenge was also an opportunity to re-educate donors about the role of the BLSA and draw on my influencer skills to help regain the pre-crisis momentum with our fundraising activities.

What advice would you offer to someone new to the field of development?

Oh, there are many, but my guiding mantra is “It’s all about relationships.” People connect with people and the more you can humanize and demonstrate relatability, the better your chances in moving the relationship forward.

Why did you join WID and how long have you been a member?

I joined WID in the fall of 2016 upon the recommendation of a coworker. Because I am a relative novice to development, it was important for me to network with people from various aspects of this field to glean as much information as I can to add to my “virtual backpack.”

Do you have a favorite WID moment or memory?

I remember the warm welcome I received at my first WID event, the Welcome Breakfast. There atmosphere felt very genuine; it was nice to be in company with others who made “career pivots” and is what piqued my interest in becoming a WID volunteer.