

## **Alumni-Elected BVG Candidate Nominee**

### **Caroline Gorman SF11**

Caroline Gorman SF11: Despite growing up in El Paso, Caroline had never heard of St. John's until April of her senior year of high school, when she fell in love and promptly discarded all other college plans.

She interned two summers with the Santa Fe Reporter, and upon graduation moved to Austin, where she immediately became involved in the local alumni group, eventually becoming President of the Austin chapter from 2013-2018. During this time, after a brief stint in the editorial department at a romance novel publishing company, Caroline worked in nonprofit management and was heavily involved in local politics. In 2015, Caroline took a six-month round-the-world trip before entering University of Texas School of Law. In 2018, she moved to Houston to begin work at Baker Botts L.L.P., an international law firm. She specializes in litigation with a focus on energy and construction.

In her personal life, Caroline has performed improvisational theater for five years now, and has been in multiple troupes and limited-run shows at the Hideout Theater in Austin and the Station Theater in Houston. When she was at St. John's, Caroline led a study group on Adam Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments, served on Polity, took jiu jitsu, and more or less lived at either the Teahouse or Kakawa Chocolate. She spent her junior year in Annapolis, but began and ended in Santa Fe. In summer 2019, she and two friends started a book discussion podcast that uses St. John's-style discussions to share their love of reading and encourage others to begin the work of interpreting everything for themselves.

### **SJCAA president-elect**

#### **Gigi Escalante A92**

Gigi Escalante is a 1992 Annapolis graduate. After college, she has been an active alum, working as a Decade Chair for the first capital campaign and as a reunion class volunteer. Since 2016, Gigi has served on the St. John's Alumni Association Board, as a leader of the Career Services Working Group and co-leader of the Alumni Leadership Forum Working Group. In addition to actively volunteering for Career Services programs and events, Gigi has helped organize the first regional Alumni Leadership Forum in DC focusing on the job-shadowing program, the "Johnnies in the Arts" career panel at the 2018 Annapolis homecoming, and the March 2019 "Johnnies in the Arts" career panel in NYC.

As a St. John's student, Gigi was actively involved in the Sports Program and earned a sports blazer in her junior year. From 1989-92, she worked as the Special Projects Aide to the Vice President for Advancement, helping to start and run the student alumni interview program. Gigi also initiated the tradition of a student-led senior class gift with

the Class of 1992, which has now evolved into the Senior Legacy Gift.

Gigi is a copyright and trademark attorney in Washington, DC and graduated from Northeastern University School of Law in 2001. Gigi is most proud of her work fighting for the rights of Filipina domestic workers and “mail-order brides.” Before becoming an attorney, she was the founding executive director of the Filipino American Human Services, Inc. where her work garnered the Banaag Award presented by the President of the Philippines for exemplary service to the Filipino diaspora. While working as a labor attorney, Gigi co-founded the DC chapter of GABRIELANetwork, a Philippine-US women's rights organization. She helped to draft and secure enactment of the International Marriage Broker Regulation Act of 2005 which helps to protect foreign fiancé(e)s from domestic abuse.

Gigi also actively volunteers for the Mt. Pleasant Village, a non-profit that supports the elderly in her neighborhood and is on the board of the Parent Association of the Washington International School. She is married to fellow Johnnie Camilo Arbelaez A94 and has three children.

### **SJCAA At-Large Directors**

#### **Michael Busch A00**

After graduating from the Annapolis campus in 2000, Michael returned to New York to join the inaugural cohort of the New York City Teaching Fellows program. He taught Kindergarten and first grade in the South Bronx for five years and worked as a social studies after-school instructor for fourth and fifth graders. Michael also served as an instructional specialist in mathematics and science where he designed curricula and provided professional development for faculty and staff. He has also been a selector of new Teaching Fellows for the program. After that experience, Michael taught middle school math and science teacher in Harlem for a year before beginning his doctoral studies in political science.

For the past ten years, Michael has taught political science, sociology and international studies at The City College of New York. He has also served until 2017 as CCNY's Associate Director of the Office of Student Success. In that role, Michael oversaw the college's most prominent scholarship and fellowship programs, academic support initiatives, and advising in the social sciences. He also worked closely with the president's office and across divisions on matters of student retention and support.

For the past three and a half years, Michael has been a founding trustee and Vice-Chair of the Board of South Bronx Community Charter High School. In this role, he has been responsible for: helping shepherd a charter successfully through Albany; fundraising; liaising with community stakeholders; helping manage the construction of a new campus facility; and holding the school's leadership to account.

Michael has attended and led alumni chapter seminars and events in New York City, helped at recruitment sessions of high school juniors and seniors, returned to Annapolis for Homecoming and croquet, and taken part in the annual Alumni Leadership Forum gatherings in Annapolis and Santa Fe. He has also participated in the annual Banned in Boston croquet tournament at Homecoming.

### **Elisabeth Long A86**

Elisabeth Long is the Associate University Librarian for IT & Digital Scholarship at The University of Chicago where she is part of the senior leadership team providing strategic direction, transforming services to meet the changing needs of the University community, developing priorities for fund-raising, and working on local, national, and international collaborations that leverage shared expertise and resources to further research and teaching.

As director of the technical infrastructure that serves both the Library and research projects across campus, she brings over nineteen years of experience managing digital library programs, ensuring the sustainability of digital content, and applying creative, user-centered thinking to the development of web resources and interfaces.

Ms. Long also provides leadership for community outreach projects including the Black Metropolis Research Consortium with cultural institutions across Chicago and previously the eCUIP Digital Library with the Chicago Public Schools. In addition to her Masters of Library Science, Ms. Long holds an M.F.A. degree and is a practicing book and paper artist, exhibiting internationally and occasionally teaching.

As a St. John's alumna, graduating from the Annapolis campus in 1986, Elisabeth has served on the SJCAA nominating committee, as a chapter leader in Chicago, and has served as At Large Director chairing the Strategic Communications working group since 2016.

### **Melissa Novotny SFGI13**

After receiving her Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy and Mathematics from the University of Virginia, Melissa worked for Houston non-profit Urban Harvest as a market manager for the city's local produce markets. She discovered St. John's via her ancient Greek tutor and moved to Santa Fe to enroll in the Graduate Institute shortly thereafter. During her time in Santa Fe, she was an active member of the AVID tutoring program in local Santa Fe schools and eventually became a full-time mathematics teacher. She also volunteered for several local Santa Fe farms and CSA's.

Upon graduation from the GI, Melissa began to self-study for the Society of Actuaries' entrance exams. After passing her first exam, Melissa took a job in the pension plan consulting space at Willis Towers Watson, where she is now a Senior Associate. As a retirement actuary, she uses mathematical probability models to value future pension liabilities and provide insight into risk exposure and mitigation strategies for her clients. In addition to her technical work, she also takes an active role in the mentoring of junior

associates, drawing on her Socratic experience at St. John's and in the classroom and contributes to several employee-led morale and culture-improvement initiatives.

Melissa and her husband Justin SFGI13 live in Houston, TX with their twin toddlers. When not studying for actuarial credential exams, or playing with her twins, she enjoys cooking, gardening, writing poetry and digital photography. She continues to be involved with local agriculture efforts in Houston and has recently begun to volunteer with the Houston St. John's Alumni chapter.

### **Macarena Olsen A13**

Macarena (“Maca”) Olsen is a graduate of the St. John’s undergraduate program, class of 2013. Her background includes years of experience as a philanthropic consultant, providing expert services to nonprofit clients in the areas of messaging, design, branding, executive searches, and foundation and major gift strategies.

Maca is also involved in various entrepreneurial small businesses. She and her brothers established a boutique winery, Casa Carmen, based out of their family vineyard in Chestertown, MD, adding to the long tradition of St. John’s-related wineries. With the direction of their award-winning winemaker, they have just released their second vintage of handcrafted dry wines. With her husband Jeremy (SJCA11), she also assisted in the founding of The Commons, a co-working space in downtown Annapolis’s Design District that provides a community of collaboration for professionals by sharing amenities, relationships, space, and most importantly, ideas.

She currently serves on the board of the St. John’s College Alumni Association, where she co-leads the Association’s working group on regional chapters. Among other projects, she is finalizing the first comprehensive “how-to manual” to help guide SJC chapter leaders across the country in their efforts to improve their regional chapters.

In her spare time, Maca enjoys reading and writing book reviews and commentary on a wide range of topics. She has written and spoken at popular journals and academic institutions, including *America Magazine*, *First Things*, *Philanthropy Daily*, the University of Notre Dame’s Center for Ethics and Culture, and the Association for Core Texts and Courses at Shimer College of Liberal Arts.

Macarena and her husband live in downtown Annapolis, where she enjoys staying active in local politics. She has assisted the mayor’s office in improving their economic development efforts and serves on the City Dock Action Committee to help make downtown Annapolis a more vibrant, walkable, and greener public space.

### **Sheila M. Virgil A88**

Sheila Virgil has more than twenty-five years of professional experience with nonprofit organizations. Her experience includes executive leadership, fundraising campaign planning and management, volunteer management, sponsorship acquisition, strategic

planning and organizational transition. She currently serves as the Assistant Dean of Development for the School of Divinity at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, NC, where she has been for almost 6 years.

Sheila began her career in philanthropy with the Omaha Symphony and continued it with The Cleveland Orchestra where she held a progression of fundraising positions over a span of seven years. Sheila has held similar positions with Opera Omaha and the Winston-Salem Symphony.

Sheila is a member of the St. John's College Class of 1988. She spent two years in Santa Fe and two years in Annapolis. She also holds a Master of Nonprofit Organizations from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH.

Sheila is president-elect of the Board of Directors of the YMCA-Robinhood Branch in Winston-Salem and a flutist in the Winston-Salem Civic Orchestra. She and Steve have served as Class Chairs for SJC Class of '88 during the College's Campaign for our Third Century and during reunion years. Sheila is currently serving on the Career Services Working Group and, previously, the Admissions Working Group of the Board of the SJC Alumni Association.

Sheila married her classmate, Steve Virgil, in 1991. They have two sons, James and Ethan. She loves hiking and travel.

### **Katarina Wong A88**

Katarina Wong is an artist, writer, and curator based in New York City. After St. John's, she went on to earn an MFA from the University of Maryland at College Park and a Master of Theological Studies focused in Buddhism from Harvard Divinity School.

Katarina is the Program Director for the Arts Administration program at Columbia University. Prior to joining Columbia, she founded MADE, an art consultancy to help collectors discover and collect contemporary art. Katarina's [own art work](#) has been shown nationally and internationally, and she has curated numerous projects in London, Miami, and Santa Fe. Her most recent project Hecho en Transito / Made in Transit, a U.S. - Cuba art exchange project was exhibited in two locations in New York City. Katarina has written for [Entrepreneur](#), as well as art-focused online publications including the [Arts Business Journal](#) and the [Two Coats of Paint](#) art blog.

Before launching MADE, Katarina was the Director/VP of Community and Curatorial Engagement at Edelman, the world's largest communications agency, based in the New York office. In that position, she worked collaboratively with senior management, as well as built teams across all divisions and levels to lead programs that included: creating and implementing award-winning communications campaigns; developing a multi-year partnership with Junior Achievement, an educational non-profit; launching the NY agency's first dedicated intranet site; establishing and managing their art collection and on-site art gallery; and producing its annual multimedia conference for 750+ employees.

Katarina is a member of the St. John's College Alumni Association Board and the co-lead for the Alumni Leadership Forum (ALF) working group, which held its first regional ALF in DC in Spring 2018. Katarina moderated the "Johnnies in the Arts" career panel at the 2018 Annapolis homecoming and helped organize and moderated the March 2019 "Johnnies in the Arts" panel in NYC, a collaboration between ALF and the SJC NY Chapter. In addition, Katarina is a member of the Advisory Board of NURTUREart, a non-profit arts organization dedicated to fostering arts education in public schools and creating opportunities for working artists.