

CELEBRATING A
95-YEAR LEGACY

**OF SCHOLARSHIP
AND FRIENDSHIP**

95 YEARS OF HISTORY



THIS YEAR, AS WE CELEBRATE THE 95TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF NORTHAMPTON SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, it's hard not to marvel at the bold vision of Sarah Whitaker and Dorothy Bement. Not only did they have the foresight to found a school at a critical moment in women's education (see school history, at right), but they also had the fortitude to stay true to their mission of academic excellence for nearly 40 years, and this despite challenges that ranged from campus floods to massive stock market crashes. I like to think that if they were here to celebrate with us today, they would be pleased to see how the merged school continues to have academic excellence and community at its core. I also think they would be amazed to see what, for them, would be an unimaginable concentration of young women walking the campus grounds.

Today's female students—and indeed all our students—strive to embody the qualities that the founders imagined. Each year at Commencement, I am privileged to award the Sarah B. Whitaker Prize—also known as the White Blazer Award—which originally dates back to the 1920s at Northampton School for Girls. Given to the young woman who distinguishes herself with the greatest contributions to the academic, athletic, and community life of the school, while exhibiting exemplary leadership and integrity, this award is a top prize for our female students, but its recipient does not stand alone. Indeed, I am proud that the school supports all our young women in academics, the arts, athletics, and student leadership. Following in the footsteps of their Northampton

School for Girls predecessors, young women who graduate from the Williston Northampton School today go on to do great things—becoming top scholars, Division I athletes, artists, physicians, engineers, journalists, political activists, volunteers, and more.

Fittingly for this celebratory year, the Williston Northampton School's history is inseparable from strong, visionary women: Sarah Whitaker and Dorothy Bement, as well as Emily Williston. In 1841 when Samuel and Emily Williston founded their school in Easthampton, it was coeducational and all the richer for becoming so once again in 1971. As I have met with Northampton School alumnae across the country for the past nine years, they have shared their memories of time spent in a small school by the river in Northampton, and how their lives were so powerfully shaped by that experience. Indeed, many alumnae have retained or renewed their connection to the school, ensuring that those seeds of change, planted 95 years ago by two intrepid women, will live on in the lives of generations to come. On behalf of our whole community, I join all Northampton School for Girls alumnae in remembering its legacy. As the Alma Mater goes, "We hold thee in our hearts forever."

Robert W. Hill III, Head of School

To understand the legacy of Northampton School for Girls, you must first understand women's education in the early 20th century. At that time, girls could not make assumptions about education. If a woman attended college at all, she might go to a state "normal school," and prepare for a career as a schoolteacher.

An ambitious young woman might attend one of the fine Seven Sisters colleges, whose mission was to provide an education equal in rigor to that offered to men, although there was certainly no guarantee, or even encouragement, that she could continue a professional life after college. By the 1920s, this was beginning to change. More than half a century of women's rights activism was having an effect, with women finally winning the right to vote in 1920. The women's colleges were determined to prove that they were the equal of their male counterparts. Thus their entrance requirements were stringent.

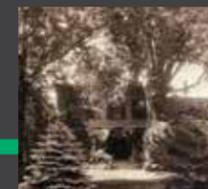
Enter Sarah Whitaker and Dorothy Bement. Distinguished teachers and veterans of the Capen School, a feeder for Smith College, Whitaker and Bement conceived Northampton School for Girls shortly after Smith subsumed the Capen campus in 1920. They envisioned a school offering an education that would prepare young women for college entrance exams. The new place would be built on a bedrock of teaching, and, like its founders, it would operate with grace and pluck. The women bought property on Pomeroy Terrace in Northampton, and in 1924 welcomed their first students. The school quickly established a reputation for academic excellence in an environment that emphasized simplicity and community.

On the surface, one wouldn't have thought the founders compatible. Sarah Whitaker was a woman of great warmth and patience, beloved by all her students. Dorothy Bement—well, if you were planning to get into trouble, it was best to be caught by Miss Whitaker. Whitaker and Bement retired in 1962. They would remain together until Sarah's death in 1976. It was a friendship and working partnership that lasted more than 70 years.

For nearly half a century, the school operated with verve, indelibly stamping the lives of women who passed through its doors and across its elegant lawns. By the 1930s, Northampton School was offering joint dancing classes with nearby Williston Academy, which had stopped admitting girls in 1864. Musical and theatrical collaborations followed, and the schools eventually shared academics as well—Northampton girls traveled to Williston for physics and German, advanced Williston boys came to Northampton for math classes. When the coeducation movement radically reshaped the boarding school landscape in the 1970s (Loomis merged with Chaffee in '70, Northfield with Mt. Hermon in '71, Choate with Rosemary Hall in '72), the two academies naturally looked to each other. The union was completed in 1971, and with it Williston came full circle, returning via Northampton to its roots as a co-educational institution.

Today, 95 years later, the legacy of Northampton School for Girls lives on, reflected in a shared mission of a community where great teachers turn challenges into opportunities for learning, and where young women are encouraged confidently to set out and forge their own paths of individual expression. —Rick Teller '70, School Archivist (adapted from a longer history at willistonblogs.com/archives/northampton-school-for-girls-and-after/)

NORTHAMPTON SCHOOL FOR GIRLS TIMELINE



1924

Sarah B. Whitaker and Dorothy M. Bement, seeking to fill a need left by the closing of Northampton's Capen School, found the Northampton School for Girls on Pomeroy Terrace, with a program emphasizing academic excellence and social simplicity.



1926

A devastating spring flood inundates the Northampton School campus, leaving much of it underwater (which happens again in 1936 and 1938). Undaunted, the school shovels out the mud, and begins a tradition of celebrating the worst flood's anniversary with a picnic on the riverbank.



1929

The stock market crash plunges the country into the worst economic Depression in history. Sarah Whitaker quietly waives tuition for an unknown, but substantial number of students. For some years she and Dorothy Bement accept no salary.

CAMPUS LIFE



1935

Coordinated activity begins between Northampton School and Williston, including dances. By the end of the decade, combined theater and music performances are an established part of the culture.



1940

During the years 1940-1945, several British girls, refugees from the Blitz, enroll at Northampton. Northampton students provide relief to the town of Montcel, France, and volunteer for local agricultural work.



1961

Construction begins on the Whitaker-Bement Building, NSFG's only new building, which contains a gymnasium, spacious science laboratories, and recreational facilities.



1962

Sarah Whitaker and Dorothy Bement retire to Sarasota, Florida, where they would remain together for the rest of their lives. They are succeeded by Doris N. Anderson, who is Headmistress until 1964.



1964

Alan B. McMillen serves as NSFG Headmaster until 1968, followed by Nathan A. Fuller, who becomes Headmaster from 1968 to 1971 (and then Associate Head at the Williston Northampton School, 1971-1972).



1971

An agreement to merge the two schools is signed in April. The following September, the Williston Northampton School opens as a fully coeducational single entity.

REMEMBERING CAMPUS



Northampton School's Angelus is rung today for important school events.

NORTHAMPTON SCHOOL FOR GIRLS NOTABLES

How to choose? Though we could not include all the 'Hamp heroes (Ruth Dunham, Beryl Wilbur, Angelo Tonet, Lorainne Teller, to name a few!), here's our short list of school luminaries.



Sarah B. Whitaker
1924-1962

A founding co-Principal, Sarah Whitaker taught religion and much more to NSFG girls. She is still fondly remembered for her special resources of warmth and empathy, and her indomitable spirit.



Dorothy M. Bement
1924-1962

As NSFG's other founder and co-Principal, Dorothy Bement taught French and was known for her exacting standards. Like her lifelong colleague, Sarah Whitaker, she was also an indefatigable advocate for the school.



Ivan Gorokhoff
1925-1947

A choral director at Smith, Ivan Gorokhoff established a singing tradition that lasted throughout NSFG's history, carried on by luminaries such as Mildred Bidwell, Ann Coon, Ruth Duncan, and Jean Diekoff.



Alice Logan
1924-1953

Bookkeeper, secretary, and irreplaceable provider of perspective, Alice Logan was the principals' confidante, administrator-without-portfolio, and trusted friend.



Helen Wallis
1924-1949

The first teacher to join the faculty, "Wally" headed Hathaway House, advised seniors, and taught physical education. According to Sarah Whitaker, Wally epitomized "good manners, hard work, and fair play."



Anna Kowalski
1927-1969

Anna Kowalski was a chef *extraordinaire*, as well as mother-confessor to generations of girls. Her simple meals—and oh, those wonderful desserts—remain memorable to many.

NORTHAMPTON SCHOOL FOR GIRLS NOTABLES



Viola Hussey
1956-1969

“With Miss Hussey, learning how to write one paragraph took *months* of practice over and over and over and over,” says Holly Alderman '67. While she was tough, many alumnae credit her with truly teaching them to write well.



Nelly Buker
1955-1966

Nelly Buker brought rigor to NSFG's science and advanced mathematics curriculum. Contrary to the cliché of the times concerning women and science, her chemistry and physics students often came away with a love for the subjects.



Grace Carlson
1953-1971

By all accounts formidable in her approach, Grace Carlson taught English and was an Academic and Senior Class Dean. Of all her many skills, she is best known for her extraordinary ability as a classroom teacher.



Marianne Brauch Kehrl
1956-1967

As a teacher of art and French, Marianne Kehrl was utterly committed to both subjects and to the craft of instructing students. Her love of the arts inspired a number of students to pursue them professionally.



Margaret Emerson
1957-1968

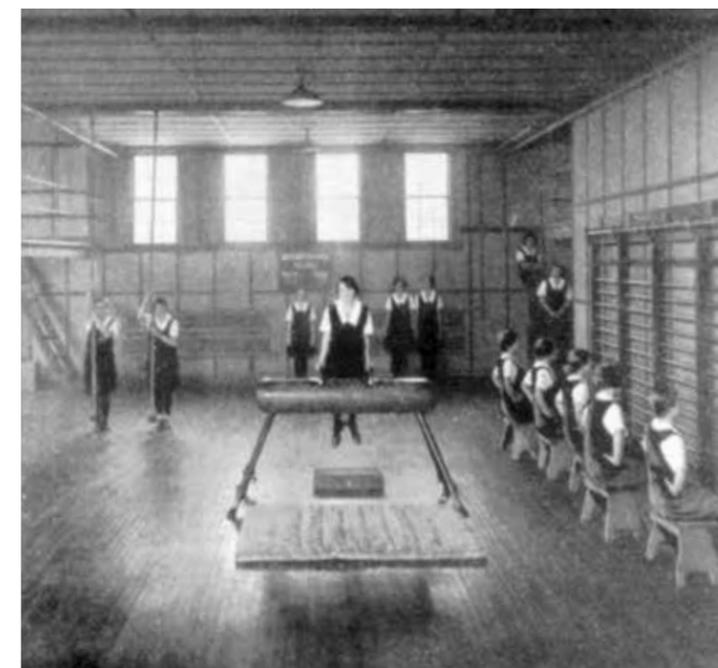
Teaching both mathematics and Latin, Margaret Emerson was known by her students as an instructor of infinite patience. To her, there was no such thing as a girl “who couldn't do math.”



Hélène Cantarella
1958-1969

Intense and demanding, Hélène Cantarella set seemingly impossible standards. Inspired (and a little terrified), her students rose to them. “I never felt so alive as in her classes,” wrote Polly Eskenasy '65.

SPORTS AND ACTIVITIES





FROM THE ARCHIVES

Thanks to thoughtful alumnae, the Archives hold many treasures from Northampton School history. (If you have artifacts to share, please contact Rick Teller '70, rteller@williston.com)

GREEN AND WHITE

Through the mid-'60s, many girls wore a green school blazer, often accessorized with class and athletic insignia. Consensus was that it looked best with a white pleated skirt (see opposite page, top right). Below: a class of '56 freshman beanie and a gym uniform tunic (which was worn with bloomers).



PINS AND RINGS

Clockwise from the bottom, below: a ski team badge, ca. 1970; a 1961 class ring; and a Northampton School bracelet charm.

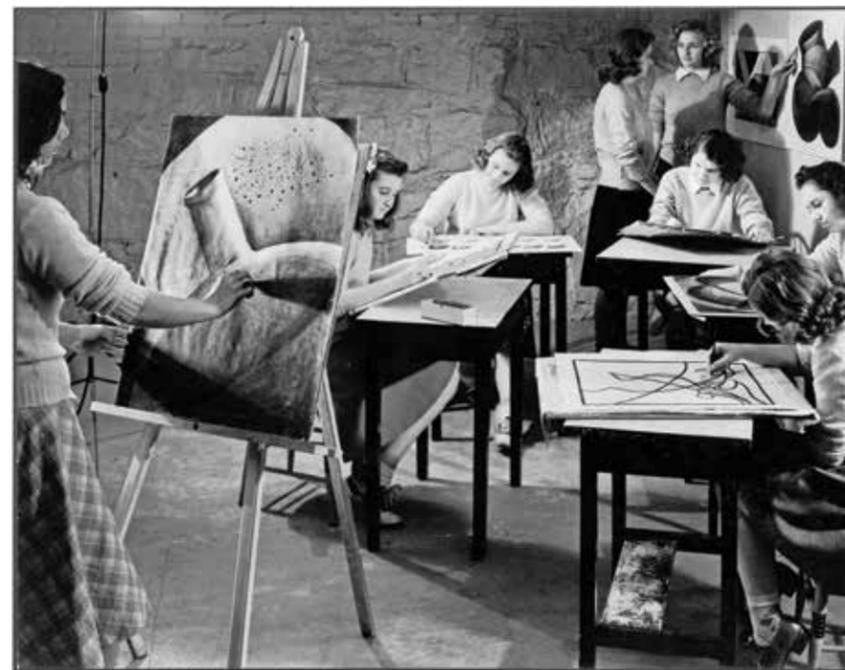


BANNERS AND SIGNS

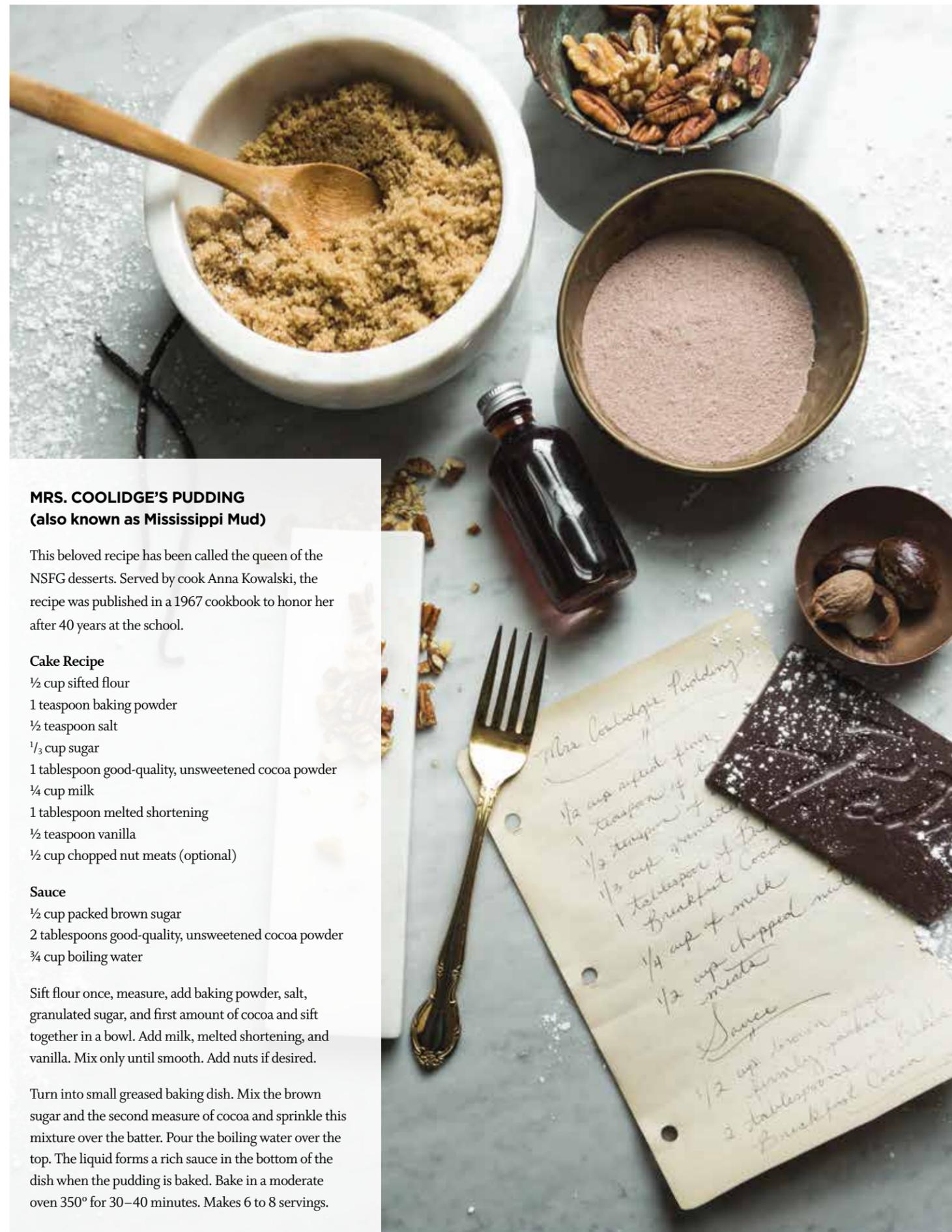
A classic Northampton School banner (above) and a brass nameplate from Montgomery House (left)—Northampton School's main building was named for a branch of Dorothy Bement's family.



THE ARTS



GRADUATION



MRS. COOLIDGE'S PUDDING (also known as Mississippi Mud)

This beloved recipe has been called the queen of the NSFG desserts. Served by cook Anna Kowalski, the recipe was published in a 1967 cookbook to honor her after 40 years at the school.

Cake Recipe

- ½ cup sifted flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ⅓ cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon good-quality, unsweetened cocoa powder
- ¼ cup milk
- 1 tablespoon melted shortening
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup chopped nut meats (optional)

Sauce

- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons good-quality, unsweetened cocoa powder
- ¾ cup boiling water

Sift flour once, measure, add baking powder, salt, granulated sugar, and first amount of cocoa and sift together in a bowl. Add milk, melted shortening, and vanilla. Mix only until smooth. Add nuts if desired.

Turn into small greased baking dish. Mix the brown sugar and the second measure of cocoa and sprinkle this mixture over the batter. Pour the boiling water over the top. The liquid forms a rich sauce in the bottom of the dish when the pudding is baked. Bake in a moderate oven 350° for 30–40 minutes. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

ACADEMICS



ALUMNAE OF NOTE

WHITE SWEATER/WHITE BLAZER AWARD RECIPIENTS FROM 1929—2019

Since the 1920s, the Sarah B. Whitaker Prize, also known as the White Blazer Award, has honored young women who have contributed to the academic, athletic, and community life of the school while exhibiting leadership and integrity. This tradition continues to this day by vote of the faculty.

- 1924-1928: Cannot confirm recipients
- 1929: Margery Goldsmith Engel *
- 1930: Cannot confirm recipients
- 1931: Jeannette Pond
- 1932: Henrietta Case Thomson *
- 1933-1938: Cannot confirm recipients
- 1939: Sarah Gavin See *
- 1940: Constance Moulton Mehegan *
- 1941: Shirley Fennebresque Bowring *
- 1942-1943: Cannot confirm recipients
- 1944: Marilyn Mailman Segal *
- 1945: Winifred Schnacke Cahn
- 1946: Claire Neiley Moss-Wood *
- 1947: Kathryn Wood Lamb
- 1948: Susan Bray Walker
- 1949: Constance Duane Donahue
- 1950: Janet Rowe Dugan
- 1951: Sophie Porter
- 1952: Katharine Cole Esty and Barbara Weschler Conner
- 1953: Harriet "Kim" Van Dusen Spitzer *
- 1954: Carolyn Bump Marsh
- 1955: Joanna Ewing Jones
- 1956: Dorothy "Lasses" Openshaw Naylor
- 1957: Anne Barroll
- 1958: Deborah Black Davis
- 1959: Linda Russack Tobin
- 1960: Karen Almdale Hill
- 1961: Kei Uramatsu Zehr
- 1962: Elizabeth Johnson Bolton
- 1963: Beverly Meck Groff
- 1964: None awarded
- 1965: Cannot confirm recipient
- 1966: Elizabeth Miller Grasty
- 1967: Virginia Donellen Eberhard
- 1968: Susan Sibley
- 1969: Melinda "Lindy" Brown McAra
- 1970: Andrea Madsen Gilmore
- 1971: Cannot confirm recipient
- 1972: Sheila Fisher
- 1973: Ann Futter Lomeli
- 1974: Jane Crawford
- 1975: Mary Burke
- 1976: Jennifer Greenspan Hurwitz
- 1977: Shannon O'Brien
- 1978: Tanise Edwards
- 1979: Lise Whytevan Stolk
- 1980: Denise Dumouchel
- 1981: Virginia Barrett
- 1982: Corinne Lussier Labrie
- 1983: Claire McGinnis
- 1984: Mary Alcock
- 1985: Martha Grinnell
- 1986: Victoria Steele-Perkins
- 1987: Penelope Duda
- 1988: Jennifer Lightsey
- 1989: Jennifer Lussier Johndrow
- 1990: Suzanne Burdick Gerrard
- 1991: Amy Rovere
- 1992: Carolyn Baker
- 1993: Jennifer Pelli Packard
- 1994: Meghan Searles Gardner
- 1995: Jodi Ryder
- 1996: Danielle Holtschlag
- 1997: Takeasha Henderson
- 1998: Alison Branch Meade
- 1999: Jae Miceli
- 2000: Sherrie-Ann Gordon *
- 2001: Katrina Yuen
- 2002: Katelyn Kennedy Garvey
- 2003: Courtney Spalding-Mayer
- 2004: Christina Costello
- 2005: Eleanor Etheredge Frame
- 2006: Sarah Bashiruddin
- 2007: Stacia Thompson
- 2008: Spenser Alloway
- 2009: Esther Ayuk
- 2010: Julia Midland
- 2011: Sarah Fay
- 2012: Katherine Cavanaugh
- 2013: Devon Greenwood
- 2014: Madeleine Stern
- 2015: Emily Grussing
- 2016: Caroline Borden
- 2017: Molly Zawacki
- 2018: Anabelle Farnham
- 2019: Amanda Shen

(While records from 1924—present are incomplete, this list indicates our best efforts at recognizing recipients. If you spot an error or have additional information, please contact the Alumni Relations office so we may correct our records.)

The tradition lives on! Ninety years after Margery Goldsmith Engel '29 was awarded the first confirmed white blazer at Northampton School for Girls, Amanda Shen '19 received the honor at this year's Commencement ceremony.



Note: * indicates alumna is deceased

NORTHAMPTON SCHOOL FOR GIRLS ALUMNAE TRUSTEES

Northampton School for Girls alumnae have given generously of their time, talent, and experience, serving as trustees on the boards of both Northampton School for Girls and the Williston Northampton School. We are grateful to these women for their contributions in sustaining the visions and missions of both schools.

- Anabel Burkhardt Murphy '33*
- Jean Douglas Miller '36 *
7/1/1973–6/30/1979
- Jane Greist Montgomery '38 *
- Patricia Bennett Hoffman '40 *
- Nancy White Jencks '41 *
7/1/1965–6/30/1970
- Ruth Jeffers Wellington '41
9/1/1971–6/30/1978
- Charlotte Heavens Bruins '47 *
7/1/1980–6/30/1985
- Lois Hicks Coerper '48
7/1/1970–6/30/1977
- Rebecca Williams Abraham '49
- Nancy Nutting Lane '51
- Maria Burgee Dwight LeVesconte '52 *
7/1/1988–6/30/1998
- Katharine Cole Esty '52
7/1/1984–6/30/1991
- Deborah Black Davis '58
7/1/1991–6/30/2001
- Mary Beth Adams Dorsey '59
7/1/1984–6/30/1990 and
7/1/2001–6/30/2003
- Ann Cummings Iverson '59
- 7/1/1976–6/30/1982
- Elisabeth Barrett Schalk '59 *
7/1/1984–6/30/1985
- Edith Nelson Milbury '60
7/1/1980–6/30/1987
- Joan Montgomery Mihalakos '61
7/1/1986–6/30/1992
- Margaret Griggs Anderson '61
7/1/1990–6/30/1996
- Barbara Curtis Baker '61
7/1/1987–6/30/1989 and
7/1/1990–6/30/1995
- Julia Jennison Washburn '66
- 7/1/1990–6/30/1992
- Diane Yelle Spence '68
7/1/1985–6/30/1995
- Jill Gordon Mark '71
7/1/1986–6/30/1996 and
7/1/2003–6/30/2007
- Judith Collen Fisher '73
7/1/2000–6/30/2004
- Deborah Leopold '73
7/1/1992–6/30/1994
- Ann Futter Lomeli '73
7/1/1986–6/30/1991 and
7/1/1998–6/30/2008

ELM TREE SOCIETY

Northampton School for Girls alumnae continue to support the educational mission of Williston Northampton School: unrestricted annual gifts to the Williston Northampton Fund provide for the school's immediate needs, capital gifts to support long-term priorities, and planned gifts to ensure the school's future. We thank you for your continued generosity.

As the Williston Northampton School continues to offer young women and men an excellent learning environment that will prepare them for college and beyond, we gratefully recognize those alumnae of Northampton School for Girls who are documented members of the Elm Tree Society. Through planned gifts and estate bequests, these alumnae ensure that future generations will benefit from transformational experiences of scholarship and friendship, carrying forward the legacy of the Northampton School for Girls.

- Katharine Doe Chalmers '30 *
- Henrietta Case Thomson '32 *
- Audrey Schooley '33 *
- Constance Hall Schell '35 *
- Janet Wittan Spear '35 *
- Constance Logan Pratt '37 *
- Ann-Carlin Borden de Murias '39 *
- Helen Anders '39 *
- Margaret Perkins Stiff '39 *
- Sarah Gavin See '39 *
- Nancy White Jencks '41 *
- Shirley Fennebresque Bowring '41 *
- Elizabeth Kridl Valkenier '44
- Lilian Cramer Randall '45
- Lucy Atwood Van Dusen '45 *
- Frances Abbott Reynolds '46
- Miriam Goldstein Sommer '46 *
- Kathryn Wood Lamb '47
- Lois Hicks Coerper '48
- Martha Peck Burgess '48 *
- Emily McFadon Vincent '49
- Priscilla Ruder Lucier '50 *
- Margaret Hill Greenberg '51 *
- Phyllis Perkins Adams '51
- Jean Young Harrison '52
- Kate Gregg '52 *
- Katharine Cole Esty '52
- Maria Burgee Dwight LeVesconte '52 *
- Elinor Backe Miller '55
- Sandra Bashore Mesics '55
- Margery Taylor Gallow '57
- Deborah Black Davis '58
- Cynthia Barrington '59 *
- Janet Taylor Berrier '59
- Alessandra Gleason Domina '60
- Edith Nelson Milbury '60
- Linda Cohen '60
- Barbara Curtis Baker '61
- Faith Barrington '61
- Joan Montgomery Mihalakos '61
- Martha Goman Wemett '61
- Nancy Blish '61 *
- Linda Stanton Maynard '62
- Susan Cummings '62
- Barbara Santaniello Brown '64 *
- Lois Benson Rosenfeld '65 *
- Phyllis Lockwood Geiger '65
- Susan Banas Dickson '65
- Diane Yelle Spence '68
- Marilyn Johnson Hall '69
- Marcia Booth Drinkard '70
- Sara Cornwall '70
- Jill Gordon Mark '71
- Nancy Lockwood Whitcomb '71

If you would like more information about making a legacy gift, please contact Patrick Burke at (413) 529-3305.

Note: * indicates alumna is deceased



THE ALMA MATER

When we've put long years behind us,
And our girlhood days are o'er,
Let there be some class to greet us,
When we come back to thy door.
Friendship's ties that cannot sever,
Though our ways be far apart,
Hold thee in our hearts forever,
'Twas from thee we made our start.

Thou it was who reared and taught us,
Sent us out upon life's way,
And to thee we'll e'er be grateful,
Though we've been long years away.
Now to thee our tribute raises;
We'll be with thee to the end,
And we'll always sing thy praises,
Alma Mater, school and friend.



