



**MAJOR GIFTS OFFICERS**  
**SIDWELL FRIENDS SCHOOL**  
**Washington, DC**  
<https://www.sidwell.edu/>



The Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Sidwell Friends School in the search for two Major Gifts Officers.

Sidwell Friends School is seeking Major Gifts Officers to join an expanding School Advancement team. The Major Gifts Officers will be instrumental in the success of an aspirational comprehensive campaign currently in the leadership phase. The Major Gifts Officers will be responsible for identifying, qualifying, cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major gift prospects (\$100,000+) and Annual Fund leadership gifts (\$10,000-\$50,000). They will work with a manageable portfolio of prospective donors to align individual philanthropic interests with Sidwell's fundraising priorities including annual operating support, endowment, capital, and planned giving programs.

Sidwell Friends School is a dynamic educational community grounded in the Quaker belief that there is "that of God in everyone." Individually and collectively, Sidwell Friends challenges itself to pursue excellence in academic, athletic, and artistic realms. It is committed to the joys of exploration and discovery.

At Sidwell Friends, truth is not a rigid set of facts imparted from teacher to student. Instead, it is continuously revealed through dialogue, inquiry, and reflection. Whether in the classroom or in weekly silent worship, all voices are honored as the community of learners seeks truth together. By nurturing children's innate curiosity within a framework of Quaker values, Sidwell Friends encourages its students to live adventurous, imaginative, and ethical lives. Its students graduate not only with skills and knowledge but with an internal set of queries to guide them. In place of formal doctrine, students collaboratively generate guiding questions, or queries, as a means to examine their lives and measure their actions. Sidwell Friends students are actively engaged in the world and think critically about what is going on around them. Through a commitment to service, Sidwell Friends graduates students who are empathetic, collaborative, and reflective.

## **REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS**

The Major Gifts Officers will report to the Assistant Head of School for School Advancement.

## **PRINCIPAL OPPORTUNITIES**

The Major Gifts Officers will join a growing staff of committed, collegial, and enthusiastic team members working together to embark on the largest comprehensive campaign in the School's history. This is an exciting time to be part of an effort that will have significant impact on Sidwell's future and the future direction and success of its advancement program. Experienced Major Gifts Officers seeking to advance their fundraising careers have the opportunity to work with a portfolio of alumni and parents to accomplish something significant and meaningful in the nation's capital.

Sidwell Friends recently purchased two pieces of property adjacent to the main Wisconsin Avenue campus, and the School's recently published strategic plan, *Leading in the Light: Empowering Students to Let Their Lives Speak*, calls for the unification of its campuses. The project has already inspired two alumni to commit \$5 million each, record-setting gifts that double the size of what had previously been the largest in the School's history.

## **PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Major Gifts Officers will

- partner with the Assistant Head of School for School Advancement to determine strategies and action steps needed to identify, qualify, cultivate, solicit, and steward major gift prospects and donors;
- manage a personal portfolio of approximately 125+ parents and/or alumni to ensure that timely steps are taken toward cultivation, solicitation, and closure of major gift proposals;
- develop and implement individual strategies for cultivating and soliciting major and planned giving prospects for initiatives approved by the Board of Trustees including personal visits with and solicitations of prospects as per their own agreed upon annual targets;
- travel frequently to meet constituents and attend School related events;
- prepare and submit goals that contain specific timelines, projected results, and outcomes;
- work with donors on multiple giving methods including current and deferred giving;
- craft inspiring gift proposals reflecting a working knowledge of Sidwell Friends School's educational programs in order to effectively articulate the School's priorities and fundraising objectives to donors;
- document all activity in the database and track personal and program goals;
- achieve personal fundraising and activity goals monthly, quarterly, and annually;
- attend all appropriate Advancement team meetings as well as other school-related events as appropriate; and
- work collaboratively with colleagues on the School Advancement staff and other Sidwell personnel such as academic leaders and faculty to ensure appropriate coordination and communication.

## KEY COLLEAGUES



**Bryan Garman**  
**Head of School**

Bryan began his tenure as Head of School in 2015. He served as Head of School at Wilmington Friends from 2006 to 2015, after nine years at Sidwell Friends as a history teacher, department chair, director of the Summer Studies program, Upper School principal, and Assistant Head of School. Bryan received his doctorate in American studies from Emory University and is the author of *A Race of Singers: Whitman's Working-Class Hero from Guthrie to Springsteen*. He has been a trustee of the National Association of Independent Schools since 2010.



**Mary Carrasco**  
**Assistant Head of School for School Advancement**

Mary has 35 years of experience in development. She has served in a variety of advancement roles, with campaign and international responsibilities at two universities, two boarding schools, and two-day schools. Sidwell Friends is the third school for which she has served as the chief advancement officer. She is a graduate of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.



**Joe Painter**  
**Major Gifts Officer**

Joe began his career in fundraising in 2010 at McCallie School, an independent day and boarding school in Chattanooga, Tennessee, where he led the annual giving program and served as a major gifts officer. He holds an MBA from the University of Tennessee.



**Dia Ruocco**  
**Director of Development, Annual Giving & Leadership**

As Director of Development, Dia oversees the annual giving program and advancement services operations. Prior to Sidwell Friends, she served as a Major Gifts Officer at MedStar Health and as an Associate Director of Membership and Annual Giving at Ford's Theatre Society. Dia is a graduate of Penn State University and Boston University.



**Elizabeth Conley**  
**Director of Development, Alumni Engagement & Leadership**

As Director of Development, Elizabeth manages the engagement team overseeing alumni and parent relations, donor relations and stewardship and advancement communication. Prior to Sidwell Friends, she was the Managing Director of Alumni Engagement at Suffolk University, her alma mater.

## **CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITIES**

The successful candidates for the position of Major Gifts Officer should have

- a proven record of accomplishment in solicitations and cultivation of prospective donors, or sales and client development;
- knowledge of educational fundraising culture and experience with higher education moves management systems (preferred);
- an ability to work independently and as a member of a team in a fast-paced environment;
- the skill to prioritize and manage multiple tasks effectively and efficiently; and
- strong interpersonal, oral and written communication, and database skills.

A bachelor's degree is required for this position as is at least two years of experience in successfully cultivating and personally soliciting leadership or major gifts or at least five years of fundraising or related experience. Experience with planned gifts is preferred as is an advanced degree.

## **SALARY & BENEFITS**

Sidwell Friends benefits package supports employees through life's many stages with a combination of traditional and innovative benefits. The offerings include comprehensive health insurance options, generous retirement plans, on-site childcare, and access to fun and educational wellness programs. Sidwell Friends strongly believes that fully understanding employees' needs helps the school recruit, motivate, and retain outstanding employees.

## **LOCATION**

Sidwell Friends School is located in the upper northwest quadrant of Washington, DC.

## **DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

Sidwell Friends School affirms the centrality of diversity and inclusion in all aspects of academic and campus life. Honoring a multiplicity of voices, it celebrates shared joys and addresses tensions productively. It is guided by Quaker testimonies and seeks to answer the question, "How do we nurture a sense of belonging in our community and demonstrate our commitment to a just world?"

Sidwell Friends School provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, sex (including pregnancy), personal appearance, genetic information, economic background, political affiliation, marital status, amnesty, or status as a covered veteran in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. Before submitting your materials, please read them for accuracy. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

*To nominate a candidate, please contact Shelley Semmler:*

*[shelleysemmler@aspenleadershipgroup.com](mailto:shelleysemmler@aspenleadershipgroup.com).*

*All inquiries will be held in confidence.*

