

SMITH COLLEGE®



Alumnae Relations

ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

SEPTEMBER 2026

A Letter to Our Alum Community

Dear Alum Community,

You know well how special Smith and its Smithies are. Alums' interests are numerous and vast; their energy seems boundless. Leading efforts to engage such a deeply invested and ever-evolving community is a complex, exhilarating privilege.

Our group is pleased to report some exciting results from these efforts, which we've achieved by focusing on a few core strategies over the years. These strategies are to: 1) deepen the experience for those Smithies who are already engaging; 2) overcome the simple barriers that keep other interested Smithies from participating; and 3) listen deeply to those who have felt disinclined to engage in the alum space in order to curate new, effective access points for them.

Here's a snapshot of how it's going:

In Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26), 15,762 alums made the choice to engage in at least one of these five actions: donate, participate in an event, interact on a Smith Facebook page, log into The Network, or volunteer. That's 34% of the undergraduate alum body, compared to 31% five years ago. When we take a closer look at one of these categories—event participation—we see how our core strategies are prompting both new engagement and reengagement. Of the 6,949 alums who participated in an event hosted by the Office of Alumnae Relations and Development, 633 attended events for the first time since graduation, and 1,609 attended events for the first time in five years.

Part of this success comes from the breadth of our programming and the range of our event formats; President Sarah was also a major draw, with 2,500 alums participating in events featuring the college's 12th president. Across the year, nearly 7,000 Smithies came together around a rich mix of intellectual topics including botanical collections in the digital age, the art of the novel, physical intelligence, black holes, the geology of Smith, folk practices of conflict management, and women's rights. More than 25 campus speakers were featured across events in nearly 20 locations worldwide. We staged our first-ever Smith homecoming, the [Come Home to Smith](#) event, on November 1, which drew around 700 alum participants. Reunion 2026 was the college's largest Reunion since 2013, with 2,537 alums and guests registered for the event and 1,427 of attendees staying in campus housing; 97% of attendees reported a satisfying experience.



In all areas of engagement, our staff team is listening, learning, and benefiting from the critical ambassadorship and advisement of the Alumnae Association of Smith College (AASC) Board of Directors. From Cohort Discovery Sessions and post-event surveys to informal feedback, we are responding to input and curating experiences that are interesting and accessible, and that bring alums closer to Smith. That guidance and feedback has contributed to a meaningful increase in overall engagement—and a huge leap for our graduates of the last 15 years (GOLD+5), with 30% engaging in at least one way in FY26, up from 20% in FY21.

Thank you, alums, for sharing your ideas and your enthusiasm, and for being in community with Smith this year. We hope you enjoy reviewing the enclosed highlights, and look forward to seeing you onscreen, on the road, or on campus in the year to come.

With our warmest wishes,

Amanda Rivera López

Executive Director of the AASC and AVP for Alumnae Relations,
on behalf of the entire Alumnae Relations and Development team

Lara Marcon '91

President of the AASC
2024-2029

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AASC Board of Directors

The Alumnae Association of Smith College (AASC) Board of Directors has a mission to *further the well-being of the college and its graduates by increasing their interest in the college and each other*. The AASC Board works closely with the AASC Executive Director, who leads the Office of Alumnae Relations. The AASC Board informs and advises the work of alum engagement through this central relationship, and through regular full-board meetings, project-specific initiatives, ambassadorships, and sustained communications throughout the year.

The outcomes in this annual report should be understood to reflect the depth and continuity of the AASC Board's partnership with the Office of Alumnae Relations—and by extension with the larger [Alumnae Relations and Development team](#), which also devotes substantial resources toward engaging Smith's alums.



Lara Marcon '91, Betsy Turrell Farrar '79, Earnestine Benford '79, Suzanne Kim Doud Galli '87,
Nichole L. Knight '07, Lisa Daniels '12, Zaineb Hamdan '15, Melodye Serino AC '89,
Nancy Earnshaw Kallusch '91, Amy Nutt '77, Alejandra "Alej" Ruiz '17, Stephanie Tangard '14,
Maria Wood AC '18, Cecilia Robinson Edwards '88, Ann Silverman AC '96, and Kimberly Wong '02.

Alum Engagement at Smith: Many Partners, Many Contributors

While the work of alum engagement at Smith is centered in the Alumnae Relations team, it is broadly supported by all teams across the larger Office of Alumnae Relations and Development (ARD). Our engagement initiatives are informed by ongoing conversations with and advisement from the AASC Board, and the alum feedback that we receive.

Signature events have been shaped, driven, and supported by the following ARD teams: Alumnae and Donor Relations, International Engagement, and Class Engagement and Annual Support.

Notable ARD events this year include *Connect with Smith: Boston*, where alums gathered at the Boston Public Library in March to see President Sarah Willie-LeBreton, and were welcomed by AASC President Lara Marcon '91 and AASC Director Alej Ruiz '17. The president followed up the Boston event with two international events in April, spending time with alums in Tokyo and Seoul. **Across these three in-person presidential events, 309 alums were engaged.** In the virtual space, ARD convened three all-alum webinars featuring President Sarah alongside key leadership at the college; **961 alums registered for these presentations, with 521 attending.**



Smith alums take part in a traditional Korean tea ceremony at Bukchon Hanok Village in Seoul.



President Sarah Willie-LeBreton speaks during Connect with Smith: Boston at the Boston Public Library.

Alumnae Relations Team Strategy

The Alumnae Relations team has defined a strategy to expand the percentage of alums who are engaging, while also deepening the ways that alums engage with the College. The Alumnae Relations annual engagement plan, endorsed by the AASC and supported by ARD partners, prioritizes our work around key goals that support the strategy, with defined tactics and measures for each goal. Our work this past year includes specific projects where we sought out and benefited from AASC insights and ambassadorship.

ALUMNAE RELATIONS FY26 GOAL 1:

Early Engagement

Stimulate Early Engagement Habits

ARD's focus on current students and recent graduates has yielded a 43% increase in GOLD+5 (graduates of the last 15 years) engagement over the past five years: 30% of GOLD+5 engaged in the alum space in 2026, versus 20% in 2021.

The initiatives that led to this increase include tailored activities from the Class Engagement and Annual Support team, in-person Welcome to the City gatherings, career events curated to meet young alum needs, and targeted incentives for Reunion participation. Offering a subsidized reunion meal and refining their class engagement activities has led to a **60% increase in GOLD+5 alum Reunion attendance from 2024 to 2026.**



Students connect at the Class of 2026 Cherry Bomb Soirée.

43%

Increase in GOLD+5 engagement over the past five years

EXTENDING THE IMPACT

The work with the GOLD population also extends to Smith students, via programming that builds a strong student-to-alum bridge. One example now spearheaded by the Class Engagement and Annual Support team is the Senior Soirée. Initiated by the AASC in 2023, the event is now a standing feature of our programming, with AASC involvement. The **Class of 2026 Cherry Bomb Soirée drew 224 attendees this year—our largest group yet.** Alum guests joined the celebration and welcomed seniors into their community, while staff and an AASC representative highlighted the ways that students can sustain and nurture their connection with Smith after graduation.

ALUMNAE RELATIONS TEAM FY26 GOAL 2:

Alum Cohorts

Develop and Strengthen Resources, Offerings, and Service to Alum Cohorts

A large number of alums prefer to engage outside of the traditional class-based model. To account for that reality, the Cohorts team provides support to regional cohorts (clubs) and other groups of alums who share common interests or identities.

This year the team continued conducting Discovery Sessions in order to build trust with alum cohorts and develop program concepts that align with their interests and needs. These individual and small-group sessions were open to all, and focused on First Gen, LGBTQIA+, GOLD, and BIPOC perspectives. Across eight sessions, the Cohorts team reached 40 participants.

In November, Smith launched the first-ever Come Home to Smith homecoming event. The **VOICES program (in which a Variety of Opinions, Interests, Cohorts, and Experiences are Supported)** nested within it was shaped to be of interest to alums with First Gen, LGBTQIA+, athlete, and BIPOC identities. More than 110 alums registered for the affinity-focused program, with 77 alums across generations attending. Notably, 11% of VOICES participants were engaged in a Smith event for the first time since graduation. AASC Directors were instrumental in shaping the program, and were on hand during the event to engage and support alums.

In January, the Cohort and Career teams co-hosted Financial Literacy for First Gen Professionals, a presentation by Smith Alum Career Coach and Industry Leaders Council member [Layla Ramirez '09](#) and [Ka'Neda Bullock '06](#). The webinar was part of an ongoing collaboration among ARD teams to reach alums interested in career programming through the lens of their identities. Of the 54 alums who registered, 21 attended. The webinar was recorded and posted to Smith's YouTube channel, where it continues to draw views.

Alums with campus-based affinities were engaged by the Cohorts team and campus partners through two events: a Botanic Garden Alum Panel and Luncheon on March 6, which had 40 participants, and the Smith Gamelan Ensemble 30th Anniversary program on April 18, for which 39 alums registered.



AASC Board members and Alumnae Relations staff welcome alums at the inaugural VOICES program.

110

Alums who registered for the inaugural VOICES program, with a 70% attendance rate.

Much farther afield, international alums were invited to join *Treasures and Traditions of Japan*, a 10-day trip in April highlighting the rich cultural heritage of Japan. President Sarah Willie-LeBreton and Professor of Japanese Language and Literature Kimberly Kono toured the country with 16 alums, with the president stopping in Tokyo and Seoul, South Korea, for *Connect with Smith* events shaped by colleagues in International Alumnae Engagement.

Another notable travel opportunity for alums this year was the trip to Antarctica (November 14–21), where 32 travelers adventured in the unique environment.



Smith alums during the Treasures and Traditions of Japan trip.

In the club space, the Cohorts team hosted a range of opportunities to connect with alum volunteers. Thirty volunteers attended meet-and-greets; 20 met with our staff liaison individually; and 36 volunteers registered for the March 31 quarterly meeting, with 27 attending. Four additional club volunteer meetings were held on Zoom. Volunteers also received assistance with their outreach to alum members, sending 343 club emails over the year with the support of the Advancement Communications team.



Welcome to the City events were convened in Seattle, Denver, and Portland, Oregon. Initiated by the AASC Board with a Boston event in the prior fiscal year, the Welcome to the City format is being repeated as a regional engagement strategy for young alums in coordination with local clubs.

FACULTY SPEAKER PROGRAM

This year, **11 regional faculty speaker program events** were supported in Atlanta, Baltimore, Cleveland, New York City, Philadelphia, San Antonio, San Diego, Maine, Michigan, Southeastern Connecticut, and Treasure Coast, Florida. Speakers came from an array of college departments and centers, including the Office of Admission, the Department of Athletics and Recreation, CEEDS (Center for the Environment, Ecological Design & Sustainability), SCMA (Smith College Museum of Art), the Botanic Garden, and the departments of dance, government, history, physics, and the Study of Women, Gender & Sexuality.

ALUMNAE RELATIONS TEAM FY26 GOAL 3:

Career Programs

Leverage Career Programs and Networks to Deepen Alum Connection to Smith and Engage the Unengaged

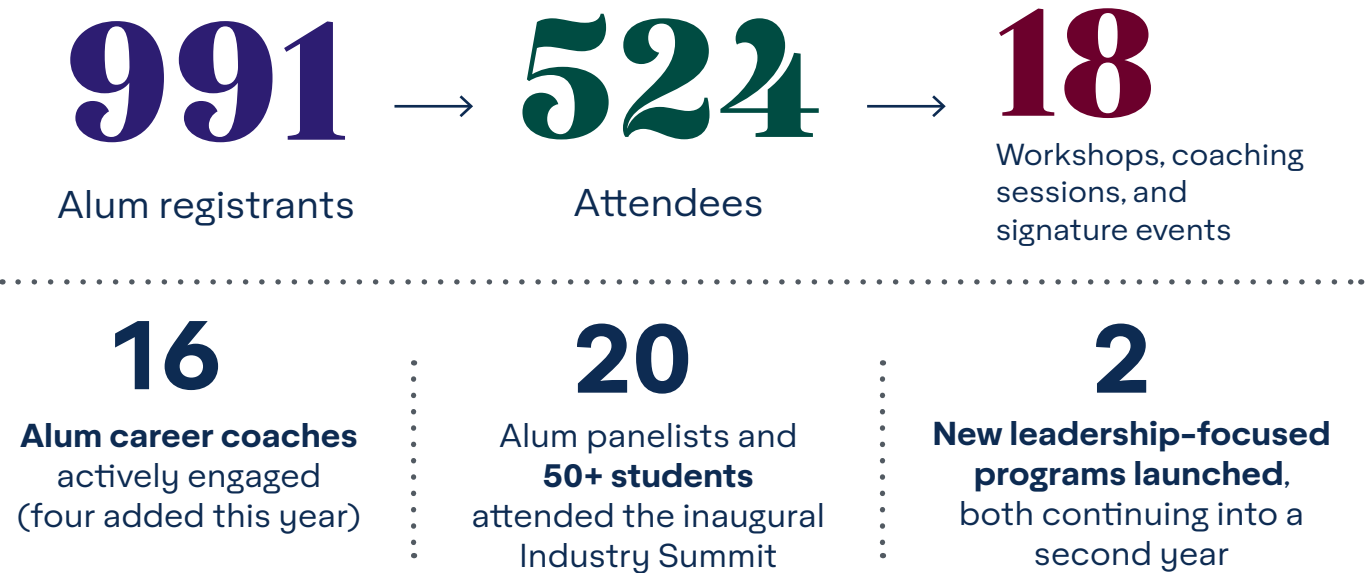
The AASC Board has identified the power of career programming to engage alums across generations, naming this strategy as a priority in 2019. Led by the Alum Career and Leadership team with the support of two alum volunteer groups, Smith's [Alum Career Program](#) is delivering on that promise.

The first alum group helping to refine and advise the Alum Career Program is the [Industry Leaders Council](#) (ILC), whose members bring insights from their individual industries as well as the perspective of senior leadership across fields. The ILC seeks to offer 1) industry-specific programs and connection points for alums at all career stages, and 2) industry-agnostic offerings targeting aspiring and current senior leaders. This year the council added members from four previously unrepresented industry sectors.

The Alum Career Program is also supported through partnership with Smith's [Alum Career Coaches](#), professional career coaches volunteering their time on behalf of the college. The roster of active coaches grew to 16 this year. This group focuses broadly on skillbuilding and leadership development, and several shared their expertise in an [article for Smith](#).

A highlight of the Alum Career Program this year was a brand-new partnership with the Wurtele Center for Collaborative Leadership, in which Alum Career Coaches and ILC members were matched with Smith students to co-produce a webinar on Leading through Moral Ambition.

A Year in the Alum Career Program



Industry Summit

The Alum Career Program is a hub for alum-to-alum professional support and growth, but it also serves to cultivate and prepare alums to successfully mentor current students. In April, the Alum Career Program partnered with the Lazarus Center for Career Development on the college's first Industry Summit, which featured 20 alum panelists—including Nicole Kenney '06, who gave the keynote—presenting and interacting with more than 50 student attendees.



Students and alums connect during the inaugural Industry Summit.

ILC Leadership Cohort Pilot

In July 2025, the ILC piloted a program for aspiring executives from any industry, its first offering in this category. The cohort has continued meeting monthly on its own initiative since the pilot concluded, and a second cohort launched in July 2026.

ALUMNAE RELATIONS TEAM FY26 GOAL 4:

Reunion

Maximize Reunion as an Opportunity to Enhance Alums' Understanding of Smith Today, Nurture Heartfelt Connections to Each Other and the College, and Provide an Excellent Experience and Customer Service

This year Smith welcomed 2,442 alums, guests, and children across two weekends of programs. With a 96% attendance rate, **Reunion 2026 became the second-highest-attended Reunion of all time** (just 20 alums shy of the record set in 2013). The classes engaged as part of the FY26 reunion cycle include: 2021, 2016, 2011, 2006, 2001, 1996, 1991, 1986, 1981, 1976, 1971, 1966, 1961, 1956, 1951, and 1946.

On average, nearly 1 in 4 alums from each reunion class attended, with a 23.59% average attendance rate by class. For 300 alums, Reunion 2026 marked their first-ever engagement in a Smith College event.

The team coordinated at length with partners in Facilities, Smith College Dining Services, and Catering to be able to **house 1,427 people on campus and serve 10,512 meals over the two weekends**, including 6,231 lunches and dinners and 4,281 breakfasts. Daily shuttle service was made available for attendees throughout both weekends.

Reunion programs celebrated long-standing traditions and elevated new experiences. Returning favorites included Night at Your Museum at SCMA, the Botanic Garden Tour with Director John Berryhill, and the popular all-alum tea at Alumnae House. President Sarah Willie-LeBreton's State of the College address opened with a special performance by the Smiffenpoofs, celebrating the group's 90th anniversary. Joined on stage by Smiffenpoof alums from the audience, the performance created an energetic and memorable start to the president's talk.

Reunion class volunteers also developed a variety of lively class-specific programs focused on connection and community, including Mini Mountain Days, Crafternoons, and even line dancing.



Alums hit the dance floor during a Reunion line dancing lesson.

College programming highlights included Erinn McGurn '94, AVP for sustainable capital programs, presenting on the Campus Use Plan; faculty talks on women's rights in the Arabian Gulf and practices of conflict management in the Philippines; and an exploration of Smith's geological history by John Brady, Mary E. Moses Professor Emeritus.

Informed by the work of the AASC, the post-parade Alumnae Gathering on Burton lawn during Reunion II drew an audience of nearly 1,000 alums (the largest in-person convening of Smith alums). In the second year of a new tradition, the event featured a trio of alum speakers. Introduced by Betsy Farrar '79, AASC vice president-elect Laura Crimaldi '01, Jane Casey Fleener '21, and Sonya Abdallah '26 shared remarks about their experiences at Smith and beyond. Rebecca Heath '11 also took the stage, contributing a special musical performance.

Reunion is truly a shared effort across ARD. For instance, while planning, implementation, and college programming is centered in the Alumnae Relations team, each class gathering and reunion fundraising strategy is developed between the Class Engagement and Annual Support team and nearly 200 volunteers across reunion classes.

Reunion remains a primary incentive for giving, with this year's Reunion giving total representing 17% of the total amount raised by ARD this year. Over FY26, alums—in conversation with staff across the Development team—leaned in with their generosity to give **\$12,731,816 in support of Smith College's student-facing mission**. A new option to donate online during registration resulted in \$48,545 raised through 491 donations.



Alums on Burton lawn during the post-parade Alumnae Gathering.

2,537

ALUMS, GUESTS, AND
CHILDREN REGISTERED

23.59%

AVERAGE CLASS
ATTENDANCE RATE

300

ALUMS MARKED THEIR
FIRST-EVER ENGAGEMENT
IN A SMITH EVENT



ALUMNAE RELATIONS TEAM FY 26 GOAL 5:

Volunteers

Strengthen Volunteer Stewardship, Enrichment, and Education

With added staff support available to the team, volunteer stewardship, enrichment, and education became a new goal for Alumnae Relations in FY26. During this fiscal year, **1,544 alums engaged in a trackable volunteer role**, a figure that held steady from the previous five years and increased slightly from FY25.

Our team worked hard to refine our volunteer engagement strategy for FY27: Staff members held 11 listening sessions with key volunteer managers across ARD and conducted a survey of all coded ARD volunteers. These findings have been distilled into a comprehensive summary that will guide future strategy and a concrete workplan.

Part of the engagement strategy this year was to identify and meet volunteers' current needs. One example was a review of five volunteer-facing webpages and subsequent updates to those pages, ensuring all information was accurate, current, and accessible.

1,544

ALUMS ENGAGED
IN A TRACKABLE
VOLUNTEER ROLE



RECOGNIZING OUR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer stewardship efforts included the gift of a special Smith calendar accompanied by a personalized thank-you note in recognition of their service. We also emailed a letter of appreciation to volunteers on National Volunteer Recognition Day; **the email achieved an impressive 69.85% open rate**. Additionally, volunteers were visibly celebrated at Reunion, as staff distributed “Proud Smith Volunteer” enamel pins to volunteers to wear throughout the weekend. President Sarah Willie-LeBreton also singled out volunteers for special kudos in her Ivy Day and Alumnae Gathering remarks.

ALUMNAE RELATIONS TEAM FY26 SHORT-TERM GOAL 6:

Fall Program

Pilot a Fall On-campus Program as an Anchor for Affinity and All-alum Engagement Opportunities

This year's pilot *Come Home to Smith* was successful in meeting its goals: The daylong event was a major catalyst for overall alum engagement and also served as an anchor for the affinity-focused VOICES program.

Come Home to Smith was largely supported by the Alumnae and Donor Relations team as well as College Relations as part of the 150th celebration. Setting the event during Family Weekend allowed staff to benefit from programming and infrastructure already in place, while alum-specific incentives including a capstone by President Sarah Willie-LeBreton encouraged broad participation. The event intentionally carved out a space for the cohort-based VOICES initiative: Both were held on the same day, were free to attend, and provided lunch.



More than 850 alums registered for Come Home to Smith, with nearly 700 attending. The attrition rate for both *Come Home to Smith* and VOICES was around 30%, which is relatively low for a free program. Both events saw participation that spanned generations. Across both events, 195 alums made donations to the college totaling \$9,868. Of those, 19 were first-time donors, while 85 were “re-activated,” meaning that they had made their last gift two or more years ago.

The success of the event has resulted in its inclusion in ARD's FY27 plan; the second *Come Home to Smith* will take place October 24, 2026. Five AASC Directors helped support the alum experience across VOICES and *Come Home to Smith* and provided feedback to strengthen future iterations of the program.



ALUMNAE RELATIONS TEAM FY26 SHORT-TERM GOAL 7:

Engagement Metrics

Develop a Set of Engagement Metrics with the Data Available to Us Now; Shape a Baseline and Create a Team Dashboard

The Alumnae Engagement team met this goal in FY26 by creating alum engagement metrics and a five-year engagement baseline with the collaboration of the Advancement Operations team. Engagement metrics offer ARD a supplemental way to determine the impact of our collective work in addition to the measure of dollars raised. Critically, such metrics help us understand whether and where our strategy, goals, and tactics are succeeding in moving the needle. Our team will include these metrics as part of our annual reporting.

The **Engagement Report** we created establishes a baseline of consistent and trackable engagement data from FY21 to FY26 and provides a comprehensive view of engagement trends. Going forward, this information will enable our teams to make data-driven decisions when setting goals, designing strategies, and evaluating programmatic tactics. The findings indicate a stable and growing engagement footprint, strong performance across key metrics, and continued alignment between our strategic priorities and alum participation.

The Engagement Report quantifies engagement by charting alum behavior across five measurable categories:



Participating in an alum event;



Logging into the Smith Network;



Interacting with a Smith College Facebook page;



Volunteering;



Making a donation to the college.

These categories have been selected because they can be tracked consistently over the five-year period, and because they demonstrate an intentional action by the alum. (Email opens are not included at this time, though we expect to continually refine our metrics—particularly as new, reliable measures of tracking intentional alum engagement become available.) An **engagement score** is calculated on the number of these behaviors an alum has demonstrated in a fiscal year. A score of five indicates participation in all five categories.

Overall Alum Engagement

This year we are pleased to submit the overall percentage of engaged alums and the average engagement score for each fiscal year.

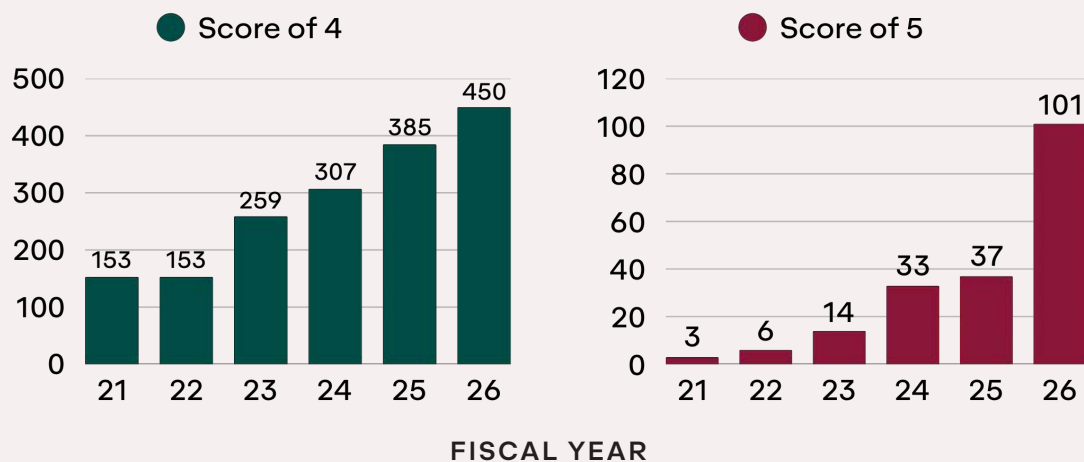
FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
31%	30%	31%	33%	32%	34%
1.39	1.36	1.42	1.36	1.47	1.50

● Engaged alums (%)

● Average engagement score

Engagement Score Comparisons

We are also pleased to share engagement score comparisons from FY21 through FY26. The two charts below show the number of alums with an engagement score of 4 or 5 over the six-year period.



Two alum engagement key performance indicators are a *consistent or expanding footprint of engagement* (a steady or growing percentage of engaged alums) and *deepened engagement* (increasing average engagement score year over year). Our new reporting metrics demonstrate that the work of ARD is having a positive impact in each area.

The team has also created a metrics report that can be run per event organized. This report helps measure the effectiveness of the tactics employed in each event to meet strategic goals. Measures such as the number of first-time event engagements or the number of reengagements help test an event's ability to reach new or targeted audiences. These data support the determination of whether a tactic is considered for repetition, expansion, or reevaluation.

Meet the Alumnae Relations Team



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