The College owes a debt of gratitude to admission volunteers, a dedicated corps of alumni around the world who help to bring prospective students and Williams together.

Each year the Fred Copeland Award honors one graduate who has worked tirelessly to carry out this mission. A member of the Class of 1935, Fred served as the College’s dean of admission for 31 years — a time of significant change in the makeup of the student body, including the introduction of co-education.

This year’s Copeland Award recipient is described by the Williams Office of Admission as our “go-to and get-it-done person.”

As an undergraduate, our honoree was an avid rugby player, serving as the club’s treasurer during her senior year. Amid a host of other campus activities, including an internship at the Williamstown Art Conservation Center, she began what has become an enduring commitment to recruiting students to Williams, hosting candidates for admission during campus visits.

Upon graduation, she began a career in the arts, attending NYU’s Institute of Fine Arts in a dual program for art history and art conservation. From there she moved into higher education administration. Working at Northwestern University to help put her husband through business school, she discovered a love of the law. She is now enrolled in Northwestern University Law School and is spending this summer clerking at a Chicago law firm.

Along her winding career path, our honoree has maintained her love of Williams and since 2002 has served as Admission Chair for the Chicago region, succeeding our 2003 Copeland Award winner, David Futransky.

This “Windy City Whirlwind” always searches for new opportunities to spread the word about Williams at college fairs and other venues throughout Chicago. For many students, she is there every step of the way, patiently and enthusiastically addressing every detail of the admission process.

For her love of Williams College and her unflagging support of its admission efforts, the Society of Alumni is proud to honor, from the Class of 1996:

Claire Kelly Finando