

Ilana D. Weinstein '88 2026 Golden Pegleg Honoree



Ilana D. Weinstein '88, Moving Talent Across the Board

Ilana D. Weinstein '88 founded The IDW Group in 2003 to address the global talent needs of the alternative investment community. Over the past two decades she has scaled the firm into a powerhouse, recognized as the thought leader on the acquisition of talent and what it takes to build and sustain world class teams.

The IDW Group was the subject of a 2023 Harvard Business School case study and Ms. Weinstein received the HBS Entrepreneurship Award in 2024. Ms. Weinstein has been called "One of the Most Powerful Women in Hedge Funds" by The Wall Street Journal, a "Winner in the Hedge Fund Poaching Game" by Bloomberg, "Wall Street's Hedgehunter" by CNBC and was named One of the Top 50 Women by Forbes in 2025.

She has lectured at Harvard and Wharton, is a frequent guest on Bloomberg and CNBC and featured on prominent podcasts and conference panels discussing her insights on identifying and attracting elite talent, the evolving landscape of high-stakes recruiting, market trends and the hedge fund universe.

Previously, Ms. Weinstein worked as a Consultant with The Boston Consulting Group and as a Financial Analyst with Goldman, Sachs & Co. She holds an MBA from Harvard Business School and a BA, magna cum laude, from The University of Pennsylvania. Ms. Weinstein grew up in New York City and graduated from Stuyvesant High School.

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You have called Stuyvesant one of the biggest influences in your life. Why?

I grew up in New York City, hustling from a young age — I worked in every store within walking distance of our apartment. Stuyvesant was the first place where scrappiness, intellect, and drive all mattered more than anything else. It was pure meritocracy. You earned your spot. That stays with you.

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What makes Stuyvesant different from every other school?

It is a world-class institution wrapped inside a public-school budget. The student body is an unbelievable cross-section of NYC — kids from every borough, neighborhood, and income level. Half are from immigrant families. Forty-plus languages spoken at home. No tuition, no privilege. Just talent, work ethic, and an intense desire to get ahead. That combination is rare anywhere in the world.

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2026 BENEFIT FOR STUYVESANT

honoring

Ilana D. Weinstein '88

The IDW Group, LLC



You built a career identifying exceptional people. Did that start at Stuyvesant?

Absolutely. I have spent 20+ years studying what "best in class" looks like – in hedge funds and in people. I was surrounded by curiosity, grit, and ambition at scale. You see potential everywhere. That has shaped everything I have done since.



What should people outside the Stuy community understand about the school?

That its outcomes are extraordinary despite – not because of – its funding. Stuy receives about \$12,000 per student, compared with \$50,000+ at elite private schools. Yet it outperforms all of them. I recently saw a list of the Top 40 Most Cutthroat High Schools in America – Stuy was #1 ahead of schools like Phillips Exeter, Deerfield, and Harvard-Westlake. That is because of its unique, take-no-prisoners student body. These kids do not have a "plan B." Private support is what allows the school to meet the needs of these incredible and deserving students.



How does the Alumni Association fit into this picture?

It fills the gap between what public funding covers and what a world-class education requires. The Alumni Association runs mentorship pipelines, funds research and technology, provides scholarships, and supports families who would otherwise be shut out of this path. It is the infrastructure behind the meritocracy.



What excites you most about the work the Association is doing now?

StuyPrep. It's a free, high touch tutoring and mentorship program for underrepresented students. Enrollment has jumped from 25 to 150 kids; test scores are improving by more than 20%. It's not just test prep – it's opening doors for families who never imagined Stuyvesant was for them. That is how you widen the funnel of opportunity.



You've scaled IDW around the idea that people are the differentiator. Do you see parallels here?

Completely. In hedge funds, the advantage is human capital – curiosity, judgment, humility, resilience. Stuyvesant cultivates those traits early and at scale. It is one of the strongest pipelines of talent in the country. You're not investing in a building; you're investing in future innovators, founders, public servants, and leaders.



The hedge fund industry is known for being data driven. What's the "data point" about Stuyvesant that closes the deal?

Twenty-six thousand eighth graders compete for just over 800 seats. Half of those admitted come from low-income or immigrant families. And from that group emerge some of the top minds in STEM, finance, tech, medicine, and the arts. The ROI on a Stuyvesant student is extraordinary.



What is the Association's long-term vision?

We are building an endowment that matches the caliber of the school – a \$25M+ fund that ensures stability, equity, and world-class programming for generations. Think of it as giving Stuyvesant the financial infrastructure its outcomes already justify.



Why should someone with no personal connection to Stuyvesant care?

Because this is what meritocracy looks like when it actually works. When you support Stuyvesant, you are backing kids who will shape the future of New York and beyond – kids who work hard, think big, and do not take opportunity for granted. That is an investment worth making.



How do you decompress when you're not assessing talent?

Anything that gets me out of my head and away from my phone: long bike rides, swimming, and spending time with my son. He is a junior in college and runs a 12-person company. His entrepreneurship and grit started at home – which I link back to my own experience at Stuy.

