

Dr. Barbara K. Kinder 1963
2013 Distinguished Alumnae Award

“I was blessed to go to a school of such high caliber at a time when it was really important for women to have a sense of empowerment,” says **Dr. Barbara Kinder ’63** as she reflects on her education at Hathaway Brown. “I am a fan of single-sex education to the extent that it allows women to select and fill all the roles in the community.”

When Kinder entered Hathaway Brown in seventh grade, her family already had deep roots there. Her mother, Barbara Cole Kinder, and sister, Emily Kinder Farmer, are alumnae, as are several aunts and cousins.

Today, Kinder is a retired surgeon and professor, as well as a wife, mother, outdoor enthusiast, lifelong learner, community healthcare advocate, and poet. Tracing her enthusiasm for these activities back to HB is not a far stretch. “The science classes with Ms. Reeve and Ms. Kuerti were terrific. You couldn’t keep up with Ms. Reeve on a bird walk – even though she was in her 80s! I came out of HB with a very strong science preparation,” remembers Kinder. “Miss Bruce, my English teacher, was amazing – terrifying, but amazing. She taught me how to write and instilled in me a love of poetry, which I have now come back to in retirement.”

After HB, Kinder went on to Smith College, where she graduated magna cum laude, and entered Yale University School of Medicine. She finished cum laude with an MD, completed her surgical residency there and joined the faculty in 1977 as an assistant professor.

Kinder also rose through the ranks to become Chief of Surgery at the West Haven Veterans Affairs Medical Center (1985-1989) and Chief of the Division of Endocrine Surgery (1987-1992) at Yale University School of Medicine. During her tenure, she performed a broad range of general surgery, including trauma and gastrointestinal procedures and treatment of breast cancer. At Yale, she developed the then-nascent field of endocrine surgery and was a founding member of both the International Association of Endocrine Surgery and the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons, where she was elected the first woman president in 2001. Throughout her career, Kinder received numerous academic awards, and was listed in *Best Doctors in America* for endocrine surgery from 2000-2003. She also participated in multiple research activities, was a contributing member of numerous professional societies and has authored more than 40 professional papers for publication.

In 2004, Kinder retired as William H. Carmalt Professor of Surgery, Emerita, but she didn’t leave the world of medicine too far behind. She now serves on the Board of Trustees at a small medical center in her current hometown of Vinalhaven, Maine, a lobstering island in Penobscot Bay. Her influence has helped move the rural community center forward with Quality Assurance programs and electronic medical records.

Even though a world of opportunity has been opened since her early years at HB, Kinder says that she would still choose the path of science and medicine. “I have never lost my sense of wonder at the workings of nature and the human body,” she says. “Nor my conviction that each of us, as individual members of a just society, has an obligation to contribute in some way to the welfare of all.”