Deborah Daniels served as president of Sagamore Institute from 2006-08 and her career epitomizes the think tank’s vision for local impact and national influence. As the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana during the President George H.W. Bush administration, Daniels helped pioneer the Weed and Seed program in Indianapolis integrating law enforcement, community policing, violence prevention and neighborhood restoration efforts. The success led to her being named the first Director of the Executive Office of Weed and Seed at the U.S. Department of Justice in 1992-93.

Daniels returned to Indianapolis in the mid-1990s to lead the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee which bolstered economic development and neighborhood revitalization during the national pace-setting administration of Indianapolis mayor Stephen Goldsmith. Goldsmith hosted then-Texas Governor George W. Bush in Indianapolis for his presidential campaign’s first policy speech in 1999 which was followed by a half dozen Sagamore board members eventually serving in the Bush administration.

The Honorable Daniel R. Coats served as U.S. Ambassador to Germany from 2001-2005. He currently represents the people of Indiana as a member of the U.S. Senate.

James T. Morris served as the Executive Director of the United Nations World Food Program, the world’s largest food aid organization, from 2002-07. He is presently President of Pacers Sports and Entertainment.

Dr. Leslie Lenkowsky was chief executive officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service from 2001-04 serving under the leadership of CNCS chair Stephen Goldsmith. Lenkowsky is now a faculty member at Indiana University.

Dr. Carol D’Amico served as Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education at the U.S. Department of Education from 2001-03. She is currently senior vice president at USA Funds. >>
Deborah Daniels was invited back to the Justice Department in 2001, this time to serve as Assistant Attorney General with oversight over the Department’s Office of Justice Programs. She returned to Indiana in 2005 and accepted an invitation from Sagamore’s board of trustees to serve as think tank president in 2006 when founding president Jay Hein was invited by President Bush to serve in the White House.

In addition to the Sagamore board members who served the President before returning to Indiana, two senior fellows also were named to senior positions in the Bush administration.

Don Eberly served in both the White House and State Department. Based on this experience, the Bradley Foundation awarded him a fellowship at Sagamore to produce a book called *The Rise of Global Civil Society*, named by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce as one of its top ten books “That Drive the Debate” in 2008. Eberly then put the book’s ideas into action as a senior official tasked with building civil society in Afghanistan.

Ryan Streeter served on Hein’s team at Hudson Institute where he and Eberly co-authored a book on the voluntary sector. Streeter was first assigned to a post at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development before becoming Special Assistant to the President and a member of the White House Domestic Policy Council. Following his federal service, Streeter helped launch a think tank in London before returning to Indianapolis as director of economic studies at Sagamore.

George W. Bush’s faith-based initiative was planted in rich Indiana soil. Early momentum was built by United States Senator Dan Coats’ Project for American Renewal promoting charitable tax credits, restorative justice and other effective compassion strategies. Next was Indianapolis mayor Steve Goldsmith’s Front Porch Alliance, a civic switchboard empowering faith-based charities to improve their neighborhoods. Texas Governor Bush used the Front Porch Alliance as the setting for his first presidential campaign policy speech in 1999 rallying America’s armies of compassion.

Following his 2000 election, the new president turned to Goldsmith as well as future Sagamore team members Les Lenkowsky, Don Eberly and Ryan Streeter to help launch his compassion agenda through the Corporation for National Service and faith-based initiative. Jay Hein was invited to lead the faith-based initiative during the Bush administration’s second term.

From his office in the White House, Hein looked past congress and instead focused on the nation’s governors and grassroots leaders to fulfill the faith-based initiative’s promise. This vision favored problem-solving over press coverage and results over rhetoric. It also fit the model born a decade earlier in Indiana that gave emphasis to private efforts—volunteers, philanthropy, charities—serving in the public interest. President Bush would often visit these community healers, drape his arm around their shoulder, and say “When you serve a neighbor in need, you’re serving your nation. And I’m here to say ‘Thank you.’”

When Amazon launched their faith-based publishing company in 2013 called Waterfall Press, they invited Hein to tell these stories in Waterfall’s first major book. He chose the title *The Quiet Revolution* because the work of serving neighbors in need is often done in obscurity. Yet, these countless acts of selfless service amount to hundreds of billions of dollars in charitable giving each year resulting in transformed lives and revitalized communities. Readers will see this revolution unfold from America’s prisons to Africa’s dusty village roads and from the White House to the Supreme Court and more.
Sagamore reaches deep in society through its participatory research model. Our fellows do not sit in an ivory tower but rather get their hands dirty working alongside policymakers and city-level innovators trying to make the world a better place. While the projects are often local, the locales stretch from our headquarters city of Indianapolis to over a dozen states and multiple nations. This is a result of what we refer to as a distributed network of scholars.

With a bias for action, we also have a passion for teaching and a responsibility to exercise our influence for a greater good. Sagamore fulfills this role through a series of events, publications and media strategies enabling its voice to be heard by elite decision makers as well as everyday citizens. From the National Press Club to London’s Westminster and from the op-ed pages to C-SPAN, Sagamore’s team members are making their voices heard.

One notable example is Sagamore’s partnership with Indiana Wesleyan University to conduct a series of National Conversations on the great issues of our day. The goal is to create an irenic dialogue in place of us-versus-them debates that dominate today’s discourse. It is not about smoothing over differences but rather illuminating them in the context of civility and respect to reach a deeper understanding of the challenges and a clearer line of sight to solutions.

Another strategic partnership Sagamore formed to widen its reach is the annual Weekend in Boca conference aimed at strengthening America’s nonprofit sector. Office Depot is a Fortune 200 company whose longtime slogan is “Taking Care of Business.” Sagamore’s Jay Hein produced a white paper for the company’s foundation that demonstrated that nonprofits are at the heart of small business by creating one in ten jobs in the American economy. Hein delivered a keynote address on these points at the inaugural Weekend in Boca in 2008 and he’s shaped the agenda for each subsequent conference.

Beyond the annual event, Sagamore designed a series of “Community Conversations” to extend the Weekend in Boca themes in such places as Atlanta, Detroit, Washington, D.C., Indianapolis, Boston and Charlotte. This regional focus enabled wider participation and shifted the focus to on-the-ground solutions befitting Sagamore’s “ideas into action” methodologies.

Sagamore’s primary contribution to the national conversation is its quarterly publication of its journal, American Outlook. Sagamore scholars and our network of leaders contribute timely articles and penetrating analysis on a wide range of subjects. In the information age, there is perhaps too much information and not enough discernment and wisdom. American Outlook seeks to remedy that problem by digging deep into the issues, giving context and offering solutions blending first principles and innovation.

The voices heard in past editions include the likes of Laura Bush, General Electric CEO Jeffrey Immelt, U.S. Senator Dick Luger, Tony Dungy, former U.S. Education Secretary William J. Bennett, renowned historian David McCullough, Donald Rumsfeld, Arthur Brooks and many other Sagamore fellows.