

# SAINT MARY'S SCHOOL

## Alumnae Profile Series

by Margaret McGlohon '81C

### Julia Walker Barge '82HS '84C

**Assistant to the Chief Development Officer  
Habitat International, Atlanta, Ga**

#### A Four Year Girl

Well-traveled, confident and organized are three words that describe alumna Julia Walker Barge '82HS '84C of Atlanta, Ga. Like many alumnae, she says that being at Saint Mary's was life-changing, and she credits much of who she is and what she has accomplished to all the life lessons learned while a four-year girl.

#### Finding Saint Mary's

Julia's father's career as an engineer took the family from Newport News to Arlington, VA and ultimately Hickory, NC where she grew up. She is the middle child, with both a younger and older brother.

"It was mostly the boys in town who went to boarding school, but it was my mother who encouraged the opportunity to go to Saint Mary's because she wanted me to broaden my horizons and give me more opportunities for growth," explains Julia.

Though just a teenager, she was excited for such an adventure. "This probably was because my family loved to travel, and by the time I was in high school, I'd been to two-thirds of the states in the U.S. My Mom always said we could see the rest of the world on our own."

Julia recalls all the girls on Third West Smedes where she lived but had the pleasure of a single room. Her hall counselors were Bonny Harris (Herrington '81C) and Ann Tyler Edmunds (Allen '81C), both college sophomores. She remembers fondly a lot of "hanging out on the hall" during her first year and she credits this time together for the life-long friendships and girlfriends she still has today.

"I think it was at our 20<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> Reunion that our group truly reconnected, and we've been gathering once or twice a year ever since," she says.

While at Saint Mary's, Julia also lived on Second East Smedes, in Cruikshank, and then returned as the Hall Counselor to Third West Smedes. She also served as an acolyte, was a Hall Counselor and President of WATTS.

"I didn't play sports," says Julia, "But, I loved tennis, so that was my PE class each semester."

#### Life After Saint Mary's

After Saint Mary's, Julia and twelve other Saint Mary's girls transferred to the University of Georgia, and several of them joined the same sorority and/or lived next door. "I'm so appreciative that our group of college friends also remained close over the years," she adds.

While at Georgia, she studied Fashion Merchandise and History. Julia recalls joining a couple of her mother's friends on a buying trip to New York City during this time.

"I told my parents after returning from that trip that I was going to move to New York when I graduated and that my Saint Mary's friend, Louise Marlowe (Andrews '82HS '84C) was also going and we could live together," she recalls and laughs. "My Dad was not too keen on this idea and didn't believe I'd make it happen."

But, Julia was determined and found a program in fashion merchandising in New York, was accepted, and made the move. While there, Julia worked part-time at Lord & Taylor. After the year was up, Julia decided to head to Atlanta and admits she was a bit home-sick for the south.

"And, it was very expensive in New York City!" she explains.

Julia worked a variety of retail jobs, including six years at Abercrombie Fitch. But, soon a new opportunity arose.

"My next career step came when I was approached by a coworker with a very interesting job



#### 5 QUESTIONS FOR

**Julia Walker Barge '82HS '84C**  
Assistant to the Chief Development Officer  
Habitat of Humanity

#### BEACH OR MOUNTAINS?

Beach. (And, also wonderful memories from my summers at my grandmother's cabin in the mountains.)

#### SECRET TALENT?

Flower arranging.

#### DOGS OR CATS?

Dogs (A crazy dachshund named Rufus!)

#### CHOCOLATE OR VANILLA

Chocolate

#### FAVORITE 70S JAM?

"Ain't No Mountain High Enough"  
by Diana Ross

Learn more about Julia on our website:  
[WWW.SMS.EDU/ALUMNAEPROFILES](http://WWW.SMS.EDU/ALUMNAEPROFILES)

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opportunity. I was introduced to a small company called EurAupair," she remembers. "I spent an amazing seventeen years with this firm of just seven employees."

Julia was responsible for placing au pairs throughout the southeast. "I think perhaps I placed around 200 a year and managed about another 200 volunteers who assisted with the placements," she recalls.

This career afforded Julia, and at times her husband Mason, the opportunity to continue to travel the world. In reflection, Julia says, "Maybe a career in Psychology would have best suited me in this position."

### *A New Career and Giving Back*

For the past six years, Julia has worked as the Assistant to the Chief Development Officer for Habitat International. "I've thoroughly enjoyed this work, which makes a difference in the lives of others. And, it's the perfect position for me at this stage of my life."

Julia says Habitat International doesn't build homes but oversees our affiliates in the USA and other countries to establish programs. "My work has taken me to South Africa, Cambodia, and Canada with our Board of Directors where they have the opportunity to build homes and see the programs first hand," she explains.

She's also come to realize the importance of helping others and giving back, something engrained in her by her grandmother. Outside her work with Habitat, Julia finds time to volunteer at her home church, St. Phillips, where she is on the wedding and flower guilds. When asked about her "secret talent," Julia chuckled. "Now, my secret is out and I'll get asked to do more flowers for more events and friends!"

Julia is a member of Saint Mary's Heritage Society, which recognizes those alumnae and friends who have made a planned gift or other estate plan that includes Saint Mary's. She also remains engaged with her alma mater through attendance at the school's regional events in Atlanta and comes back to campus for reunions when she's able.

"I give back to Saint Mary's because I feel I owe Saint Mary's for the confidence instilled in me and for giving me the support to try new things, which continues through to this day," she explains. "I would love for current students who are thinking about their futures to not worry so much if they don't know exactly what they want to be when they grow up, or what they want to study in college. Instead, I'd tell them to be open for when the 'right thing comes along' and then hold on for the ride!"

Saint Mary's is a very special place to Julia, and also to many of her friends, she notes. "I hope Saint Mary's continues to grow, work hard at remaining relevant, and keep up with what the future brings."

However, she never wants Saint Mary's to lose its values or commitment to remembering its history and traditions, which have been so important since its founding. "And, I never want to lose our mission to educate and create the all-girl experience. It's our core values that keep alumnae giving and coming back."

Julia has been married to Mason Barge for 19 years and they enjoy traveling – having been to all states in the U.S., except North Dakota and Oregon, and to all continents except Antarctica. She truly embodies the spirit of Saint Mary's women who are resilient, intelligent, resourceful, passionate, and nurturing, and who are educated to make a difference in their communities and the world. And, we are inspired!

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