

NEW BEGINNINGS

Summer 2019 | Special Edition



**Mercy
McAuley**

IN THIS ISSUE:

Students Create New Legacy	3
The Mercy McAuley Seal	5
Congrats Class of 2019!	6
Alumnae News and Events	7

Q & A with President Patty Ragio

In lieu of a letter from our President, we asked Patty Ragio to sit down and reflect on a few questions that arose from the alumnae survey sent out last fall.

How have alumnae supported the new school?

We have been thrilled and humbled with the amount of alumnae support in this first year. Alumnae have been invited to events specifically created for them as well as many school events, and they attended, participated and offered excellent feedback. The fundraising support we have received from our alumnae has been nothing short of extraordinary. In fact, 71% of our donors this year are alumnae from one of our legacy schools. Mercy McAuley is incredibly blessed with dedicated alumnae who are committed to seeing the Mercy education legacy continue to thrive.

Alumnae can continue to support Mercy McAuley by becoming involved—being present at events and reunions, encouraging friends and family to attend, volunteering to serve on committees, and recommending Mercy McAuley to prospective students. Lastly, you do not have to live in the Cincinnati area to have an impact. We have alumnae living all over the country, and your support and involvement are not only important, but crucial to our future success.

What traditions continued from the legacy schools?

While we are a new school, Mercy McAuley continued several significant events and customs from our legacy schools including: the student raffle, father daughter dances, class rings, senior sweatshirts and May crowning.

What happened with clubs at Mercy McAuley?

We made an intentional decision to empower the students to create clubs that they really wanted, and our students responded to this “call” with great enthusiasm! We asked students to take initiative and submit brief forms describing the club they wanted to start or bring back. As you can see from the following list, our Wolves brought numerous clubs to fruition based on the interests of their fellow Wolves. Some of the clubs for the 2018-19 school year included: Student Council, National Honor Society, Key Club, Women in Diversity Club, InterAlliance, History Club, Debate Club, Mock Trial, Respect Life Club, Writing Club, Book Club, Art Club, Drama Club, Certamen, and many more.



What about the rumors?

During times of change, rumors often surface. Let me assure you that Mercy McAuley is on strong financial footing. In fact, we have exceeded expectations and fundraising goals and will have met or exceeded budget goals by the end of June. The Sisters of Mercy have provided tremendous support throughout our transition and first school year. On July 1, we joined all other Mercy schools in the U.S.A. and around the world as part of the Mercy Education System of the Americas (MESA). We also have begun the strategic planning process to create a vision for the school in the year 2030. Our upward trajectory is strong, and that is thanks to the support of our families, alumnae and community. Mercy education is alive and thriving at Mercy McAuley!

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Students Come Together to Create a New Legacy

By Lynn Schutte, McAuley '14

Both McAuley and Mother of Mercy High Schools celebrated school spirit with song—McAuley with the Alma Mater and Mercy with the Fight Song. Ask just about any alumna and she could recite her school's tune off the top of her head in an instant. To continue this rich and spirited tradition, the new Alma Mater and Fight Song of Mercy McAuley needed to come from the creativity of the students.

To capture the students' passion for these songs, the administration assembled a committee of eight volunteer students led by Mary White, music teacher; Greg Bouman, English teacher; and Kathy Dietrich, consumer sciences teacher, to write the lyrics and compose the music for both songs. Freshman Ariea Bess, Sophomore Jenna Daria, Juniors Francine Crowe and Lizzy Schutte, and Seniors Shannon Bronson, Cassie Duker, Audre Frigge and Emily Parsons met weekly during the spring semester, working tirelessly to create such important pieces that will impact the school's spirit and culture.

“These will be the final pieces to help create the new school,” explains White. “I felt a strong calling to help and encourage these young women on the journey to create both songs.” Frigge volunteered for this position to make an impact on future generations of Wolves, like the Alma Mater did for her friends at McAuley.

“I hope the Fight Song and Alma Mater are used as full-heartedly as they were at the legacy schools,” says Frigge. Many members of the committee shared the same feelings.

“I wanted to make sure that the Fight Song for Mercy McAuley was something that would get people excited and create school spirit, just as it did at Mercy,” agrees Duker.

The goal, she says, is that other schools come to recognize the song and know “the Wolves are on the prowl!”



(left to right, back row) Mary White, Emily Parsons, Cassie Duker, Lizzy Schutte, Ariea Bess, Greg Bouman, (front row) Francine Crowe, Audre Frigge, Shannon Bronson, Jenna Daria, and Kathy Dietrich.

This year's transition has created a bond in the student body, adds Parsons, and these songs will help further that feeling. “We wanted to make sure we honored both legacy schools while still having a new product at the end of this process. I hope the songs help the students have greater pride in the school.”

“I wanted to make sure that the Fight Song for Mercy McAuley was something that would get people excited and create school spirit.”

—Cassie Duker, '19

These students come from both legacy schools and all four grades, and they have worked incredibly well together, says White. Throughout the process, someone would read a line or finish a thought and the group collectively and excitedly exclaimed, “that's it!”

The writers knew that they were creating something permanent. They were establishing a legacy that would long-outlast today's students and faculty members. “Every person on this committee is contributing to something much bigger than any of us,” maintains Schutte. “The Alma Mater and Fight Song are pillars of a school community, promoting school spirit and our core Mercy values.”

On March 28, the committee presented the Fight Song to the student body during an all-school assembly to cheers and applause from their fellow students. They presented the Alma Mater on April 30 during the Academic Awards Celebration. Students heard the song played twice, then sang along a third time to learn the melody and lyrics.

These legacy pieces will build a stronger sense of community and help Mercy McAuley become a place where Catherine McAuley's legacy is shared for years to come.

NEW BEGINNINGS

Patty Lusheck Ragio
President

Brigitte Foley
Managing Director of Advancement

Julie Raleigh
Director of Annual Giving and Donor Engagement

Kelsey Niehauser
Alumnae Engagement Coordinator

Karen Williams
Strategic Events Manager

Tracy Carl
Advancement Services Specialist

Pictured on the Cover are Mercy McAuley's first Valedictorians and Salutatorians: (left to right) Katelyn Freese, Rose Hoemoelle (Salutatorians), Lucie Kneip, and Danielle Nissen (Valedictorians)."

Focusing on the Future: How One Family Embraced Mercy McAuley High School



The Olding Family: (left to right) Judy Cappel Olding, Kate Olding, Caroline Seitz, Abby Seitz, Maggie Olding, and Martha Olding.

By Kelsey Niehauser, Mercy '12

The Olding Family has a rich and unique history of Mercy Education in Cincinnati. The Matriarch, Ruth Bywater Franey, Class of 1920, was one of three graduates of the first class of Mother of Mercy High School. They also have a Sophomore, Anna Olding, Class of 2022, who will be one of Mercy McAuley High School's first students to spend her full high school career as a Wolf. In between, there are generations of women who graduated from both Mother of Mercy and McAuley High Schools.

Their love and praise for their times in high school seemed endless when they began talking about their experiences. I sat down with members of the family to discuss how they have come to honor their legacies as alumnae of Mercy and McAuley, while supporting and identifying with the new school, Mercy McAuley.

"I remember all of the fun I had," remarks Kate Olding, McAuley '14, when thinking about her Alma Mater. Some of her fondest memories included the Raffle, senior pranks, and Mercy Day. She continued, "as long as Mercy McAuley students are having fun and making similar memories, I'm happy that a Mercy education is continuing, despite a new name and mascot."

When each member of the Olding family thought back to hearing of Mercy and McAuley's plans to close, they each remembered exactly where, when and how they heard the news.

"I was shocked. At that time, no one around me truly understood how I was feeling," explained Abby Seitz, Mercy '12. "At first, I wondered why I was so upset, and I realized it was because I felt like I was losing my home. I thought of some of my fondest memories, like the Mercy Walk and GAA Dance, and felt sad that those traditions might not continue."

"I felt the same way," adds Maggie Olding, McAuley '16, "but, ultimately I thought, I'll still have those memories, and no one can take that away from me."

"We did our best to help the other classes get excited for this new opportunity and wanted to make it the best school we could."

— Caroline Seitz '17

Caroline Seitz '17 and Martha Olding '18 were both students at Mercy when the announcement was made. Seitz recalled, "There were a lot of tears initially, but within a couple of days, the students took a potential negative and chose to see it as a positive. We did our best to help the other classes get excited for this new opportunity and wanted to make it the best school we could."

"We all started to work together with our friends at McAuley and were genuinely excited for what the next years would bring," added Martha

Olding. "Honestly, it seemed like some of those complaining the most about the schools closing were those who weren't the most affected by it."

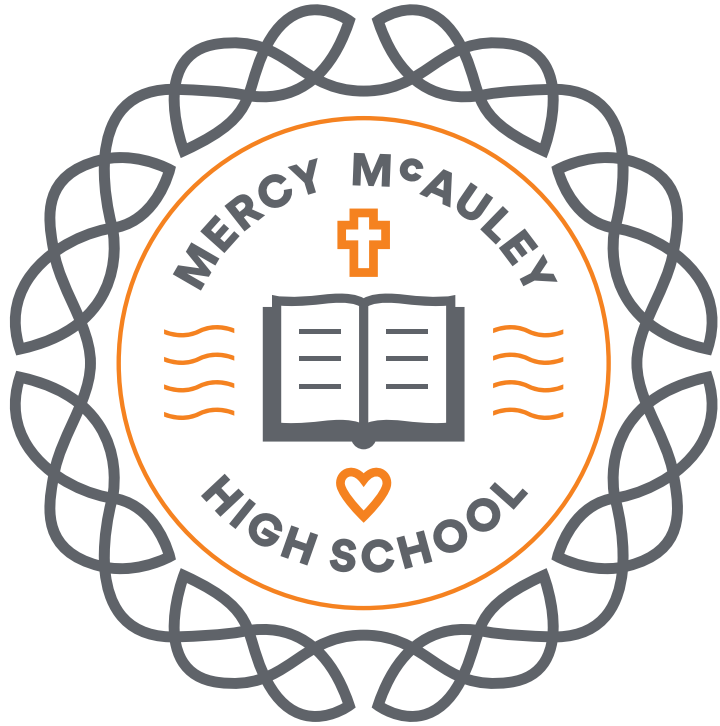
Judy Cappel Olding, Mercy '87, had a unique perspective to the news, as her daughter, Anna, would be a potential student of Mercy McAuley at the time. "I ended up seeing it as a new opportunity for my daughter. Since becoming a Wolf, she has been able to take on new leadership roles and has really grown into her own. She is not in her family's shadow as much as we assumed she would be and is better at handling change than most high school freshmen."

Each member of the family remarked on how they enjoy asking Anna about Mercy McAuley, and how happy they are to hear that she is making plenty of similar memories to their own, while carving out her own legacy and learning new lessons.

Judy mentioned an additional lesson she learned through this whole process; how to be more engaged with her Alma Mater. As a parent and alumna, Judy is active at Mercy McAuley—attending events, communicating with the administration, participating in fundraisers, and encouraging her daughter to be active in school as much as possible. "My philosophy is if a Mercy education means something to me, I need to support it constantly, not just when the need is critical."

She and the rest of the family, especially Anna, are excited to see so many alumnae stepping up in similar ways to make Mercy McAuley a strong blend of the fun traditions they had, while creating new ones for the future.

Introducing the Official School Seal



Mercy McAuley needed a new school seal for use at formal occasions such as Mass and Graduation. Staff members Lisa Fluegeman (Mercy '78), Brigitte Foley (McAuley '89), and Patty Thelen (McAuley '93), along with Sr. Cheryl Erb, RSM, took up the challenge. They gathered input about the significant symbols to include and gave direction to the design firm which offered several versions. Then through a survey, all students, faculty and staff provided valuable and critical feedback about two draft options. The final design exemplifies the essence of Mercy McAuley.

A Celtic knot surrounds the circular design, easily recognizable as a reference to Ireland, the birthplace of Catherine McAuley and the Sisters of Mercy. The book places emphasis on our school's academic excellence and mission as an educational institution. The wavy lines on either side of the book are a common symbol for water and refers to our location in Cincinnati on the Ohio River. The heart represents compassion; the cross symbolizes both Christianity and our Catholic faith, and together make additional references to the Sisters of Mercy. Lastly, the seal incorporates the school colors of orange and grey.

Congratulations, Mercy McAuley Class of 2019!



238 students in the
Class of 2019

90 colleges and universities

accepted members of the Class of 2019, including:

The Senior Class came from

37 local grade schools

32 local zip codes

96 Seniors took
174 AP exams



The Class of 2019 earned
\$14,071,194
in offered scholarships.



- o Belmont University
- o Boston College
- o Bowling Green State University
- o Butler University
- o University of Cincinnati
- o Clemson University
- o Cleveland Institute of Art
- o University of Dayton
- o DePaul University
- o Duke University
- o Indiana University at Bloomington
- o Kent State University
- o University of Kentucky
- o Loyola University Chicago
- o Marian University
- o Marquette University
- o Miami University, Oxford
- o Michigan State University
- o University of Michigan
- o Mount St. Joseph University
- o University of Notre Dame
- o Ohio Northern University
- o Ohio University
- o Purdue University
- o Saint Louis University
- o Savannah College of Art and Design
- o School of the Art Institute of Chicago
- o Seton Hall University
- o University of South Carolina
- o The University of Tampa
- o The Christ College of Nursing and Health Sciences
- o The Ohio State University
- o Thomas More College
- o Villanova University
- o West Virginia University
- o Wittenberg University
- o Wright State University
- o Xavier University

ALUMNAE NEWS & EVENTS

Our Condolences

Please remember the family and friends of the following alumnae in your prayers:



Janet Beckman Fisher
Mercy '51
March 3, 2019



Ann Flick Lampe
Mercy '55
May 1, 2019



Sue Phelan Johnson
Mercy '56
April 13, 2019



Joanne Benvenuti Scheible
Mercy '59
April 2, 2019



Roberta Knepfle Ackerman
Mercy '62
May 18, 2019



Kathleen Delaney Allen
McAuley '64
June 1, 2019



Sue Schwienher Clark
McAuley '64
May 14, 2019



Dolores Aylward Brossart
McAuley '66
April 16, 2019



Gail Burman Sweeney
Mercy '75
March 4, 2019



Sharon Griffith Danemayer
Mercy '77
January 19, 2019



Karen O'Donnell
McAuley '83
March 24, 2019



M. Bridget O'Connell Summerwill
Mercy '83
March 24, 2019

Upcoming Reunions

You are Invited to our 2019 Mercy Day Celebration

All Alumnae are welcome to join us for Mass on September 24, 2019, with our school community. A reception for the Mercy and McAuley classes of '69 will take place immediately following Mass. Kindly RSVP to Kelsey Niehauser at (513) 681-1800 ext. 1147 or email niehauserk@mercymcauley.org to attend.

Mercy Class of 1969 Reunion

We hope you have received a Save-the-Date in the mail! The 50th Reunion will take place on September 14, 2019, at Receptions Western Hills. The cost is \$40. For any questions or additional information, contact Kathie Brown Currier at Kathie.Currier@CBWS.com or 513-687-3161.

McAuley Class of 1969 Reunion

The 50th Reunion will take place on September 27, 2019, at Pebble Creek Event Center. The cost is \$50. Invitations will be sent to you soon! Contact Rose Wolterman Putnick at rputnick@starone.com for additional information.

McAuley Class of 1989 Reunion

The McAuley Class of 1989 reunion will take place on October 12, 2019. Invitations are coming soon!



A group shot of the 2019 Golden Guild. Alumnae who graduated 50 or more years ago joined us for a Prayer Service and Brunch on June 1. To see more photos, visit mercymcauley.org/alumnae/news/e-news.

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Upcoming Events

Save the dates for our upcoming alumnae events and reunions. More information can be found on our website at mercymcauley.org/alumnae.

Alumnae Sip 'n See	September 3, 2019
Mercy Day	September 24, 2019
Women Who Inspire	October 3, 2019
Alumnae Father Daughter Dance	October 19, 2019
Trivia Night	October 29, 2019
Fall Play	October 25-27, 2019
Open House	November 10, 2019
Alumnae Networking Night	November 12, 2019
Thanksgiving Mass	November 26, 2019
Christmas Concert	December 15, 2019
Alumnae Cabaret	December 27, 2019

Thank you to those of you who attended events in 2018-19. Stay tuned for even more happening in 2019-20!



Stay up-to-date with
all our alumnae events
and publications!

Visit us:

mercymcauley.org/alumnae

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-  @MercyMcAuleyHS
-  @mercymcauleyhighschool