

# SAINT MARY'S SCHOOL

## Alumnae Profile

by Margaret McGlohon '81C

### Harriet Adams '86HS '88C

*Owner*

*Integrated Therapy, LLC | Atlanta, GA*

### Every Road Has Its Curves

Growing up in Nashville, N.C., Harriet Adams knew at a young age that she wanted to "go off" to school. While in the 10th grade, Harriet's cousin Jane Lynn Townsend Britton '85HS was attending Saint Mary's. Without telling her parents, Harriet initiated the application process and set up an interview. Since she wasn't yet a driver, she told her Mom who agreed to drive her to campus. And, one might say the rest is history!

### From Saint Mary's to Atlanta

Harriet arrived at Saint Mary's in the fall of 1984 and has fond memories. "I lived in a two-girl room on Third Middle Smedes with Annie Gray Sprunt '83HS '85C and Anne Duncan Bailey Weaver '83HS '85C who were our hall counselors. In my senior year, I lived on Second Middle Smedes with Patty Blich Harris '86HS, and during college I lived in Cruikshank and Penick where I was as a Hall Counselor."

As a student, Harriet was a member of the basketball and soccer teams, a Sea Saint, and a member of Beacon. She also enjoyed being a member of the Cold Cuts, the campus wash-tub band.

"At Saint Mary's, I learned the value of hard work," she explains. "My dad's agreement to allow me to attend Saint Mary's was that I would have to get a part time job while I was in school, so I did just that!"

Harriet had several jobs. She worked at a Law Firm in Cameron Village, as a swim coach for Coach Robbie Knotts at Saint Mary's, as a basketball coach for Mary Lida Alexander at Saint Mary's, and as a swim coach at the YMCA. "I also did a lot of babysitting," she says and laughs.

She also recalls learning how to write a business plan and is thankful for Dr. Gilbert's Latin class. "It was there that I learned a lot of the basis for medical terminology that would help me later in my career."

After graduating from Saint Mary's, Harriet enrolled at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. "I graduated with a degree in Political Science and then headed to Washington, D.C., to work on Capitol Hill."

However, she made a career change in 1990 and relocated to Atlanta. There, she went to work for Rich's Store. "I lived with my Saint Mary's roommate Patty Blich Harris '86HS."

Harriet's career took another turn after reading the book "What Color is Your Parachute?" – one of the most highly regarded career advice books in print and written by Richard Nelson Bolles. The book, which was intended for job seekers, offers readers the opportunity to follow a test to discover the "color" of their "parachute." After Harriet took the test, she became aware that she had a strong skill set



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for pool management and therapy. Her work at the YMCA led her to then enroll at Georgia State University and Gwinnett Technical College where she received a degree in Physical Therapy.

"I went to work for The Shepherd Center in Atlanta, which was the premier hospital for spinal cord rehabilitation," she recalls. "Then, I was off to Switzerland where I studied in Bad Ragaz, the home of a famous natural spring and popular spa and health resort destination. There, I became an expert on the benefits of water therapy."

### **To Be Successful, You've Got to Pay It Forward**

As a board member of the American Physical Therapy Association Aquatic Section, she then traveled and spoke about this therapy for over seven years. In 2000, Harriet embarked on what is now her current life's work, creating an outpatient aquatic physical therapy (AQPT) practice called Integrated Therapy ([www.Aqua-PT.com](http://www.Aqua-PT.com)).

"One of my first cheerleaders for Integrated Therapy was my college roommate McLean Bradshaw '86HS '88C," Harriet says. "She recruited her sister-in-law, Susan Bradshaw, as a marketing rep to help us launch the business."

Based in Atlanta, Harriet has grown from one office with two staff members to 28 offices – 16 of which are in Atlanta, five in Raleigh, N.C., five in Athens, Ga, and two more are opening in Florida this year. She also partners with her Saint Mary's college friend, Stephanie Yelton Williard '86HS '88C, who is now a marketing rep for the practice.

"I credit most of my success to my parents who taught me the art and value of hard work and to those I have hired to work with me," she says. "I've worked hard to build a team of great managers."

Harriet's patients are referred by their physicians to her practice. "Most patients have some sort of neurological or orthopedic issue," she explains. "Our licensed physical therapists create an individual patient plan of care utilizing the physiological effects of immersion to assist with reaching each patient's rehabilitation goals. After 30 days, progress reports are sent to doctors, tests for improvements are conducted, and patients are discharged to continue their exercises at home."

The practice also encourages patients to continue to be in the pool/water and continue individual healthy habits.

Harriet co-authored a book, "Aquatics Exercise Toolbox" and has won many awards including The Physical Therapy Association of Georgia "Outstanding Physical Therapist Assistant" award in 2004. She also served on the Board of the Junior League of Atlanta and was the recipient of the 2003 Fidelity award from the American Red Cross. She was also honored as one of the 2005 "Women to Watch" by her Junior League peers. Currently, Harriet served for seven years on the Board of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah, Ga, and she and her husband, Jeff Harvey, were very involved in saving the historic Paces Ferry United Methodist Church. They also have volunteered for the Trinity School and The Lovett School.

"I want nothing more than to pay it forward," she explains.

Today, Harriet, Jeff, and their two children Anderson (12-year-old son) and Hattie (seven-year-old daughter) enjoy Ocean Isle Beach, travel, and watching UNC basketball with family and friends. She shares her alma mater with younger sister Olivia Adams '90C, who graduated from Saint Mary's Junior College, and also enjoys serving as a mentor for Saint Mary's graduate Caroline Fountain '15 who was provided an internship with Harriet during her senior year.

"I believe this work would be a great career for young women," Harriet explains. "And, I want all girls to

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know that to be successful, you need a strong work ethic, have pride in yourself and in your outcomes, and then be sure to do for others.”

We hope to get Harriet back to Saint Mary’s to talk with our students soon. Until then, Harriet wants Saint Mary’s students to be aware of the power of a thank you note, to know their own worth, that your daily actions matter, and how important it is to set goals and to be able to read financial statements – all are important keys to being successful in life and career.

Saint Mary’s alumnae like Harriet Adams ’86HS ’88C graduate with the skills, knowledge, and integrity they need for success. Whether furthering their education, pursuing professional careers, raising their families, or leading as volunteers, our alumnae are agents for positive change in their communities. Harriet’s story demonstrates the ability Saint Mary’s women have to change their career paths, make an impact by paying it forward, and to be successful in any path they choose.

Harriet lives out her dreams every day and we’re thrilled to share her story.

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