

# Alumnae Awards Ceremony

*Celebrate the impact of Mercy!*

**Trocaire Leadership Awards**

**Margaret Beirn Barger '35  
Distinguished Alumna Award**

**Athletic Hall of Fame Award**

**Maria Lutz McHugh '46 Award for Outstanding  
Commitment to Gwynedd Mercy Athletics**



**Saturday, October 23, 2021**

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## About the Alumnae Awards



*Celebrate the impact of Mercy!*

### **Trocaire Leadership Awards: Service to the World**

Trocaire is the Gaelic word for compassion or mercy. The Trocaire Leaders embody the success and spirit of a Gwynedd education. They inspire and motivate others, exhibit outstanding leadership in their professional lives and throughout the community, and are committed to personal growth, social responsibility, and global awareness. During the 150th Anniversary Celebration, eight women from various fields were honored with Trocaire Leadership Awards. Each year since then, women are honored in their fields.

### **Margaret Beirn Barger '35 Distinguished Alumna Award: Service to the School**

This annual award is named for Margaret Beirn Barger, a 1935 graduate of the Academy of the Sisters of Mercy, who had a life-long dedication to the Alumnae Association. Margaret served as the backbone of the organization for more than 50 years. In the past, this award was given to graduates who represented commitment to the works of Mercy. With the growth of the Alumnae Award program, this recognition now specifically focuses on Alumnae who epitomize the qualities of loyalty, service, dedication, and devotion to the school, all demonstrated by Margaret Beirn Barger '35.

### **Athletic Hall of Fame Awards**

To preserve and honor Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School's successful athletic history, the Alumnae Association along with the Athletic Department honors outstanding athletes, teams and coaches. The Athletic Hall of Fame is designed to maintain memories and inspire young women to compete with perseverance and the utmost Mercy Spirit.

### **Maria Lutz McHugh '46 Award for Outstanding Commitment to Gwynedd Mercy Athletics**

This prestigious award, named in honor of Maria Lutz McHugh '46, recognizes an adult (alumna, coach, athletic trainer, faculty member, staff member, parent, community member, etc.) who has made an outstanding commitment and demonstrated extraordinary leadership to advancing Gwynedd Mercy Athletics. A proud alumna, Maria promoted women and sports at Gwynedd for more than three decades. She taught health and physical education; coached basketball, field hockey and tennis; and provided visionary leadership as the Academy's first athletic director. She established many sports programs at GMA, including cross country, gymnastics, lacrosse, swimming, track and field, and volleyball. Today, we honor her legacy with this award.

# Reunion 2021

## Alumnae Awards Ceremony

### Welcome

*Erin Reimel '12*

*Director of Alumnae Engagement*

*Denise Corkery Marbach '72, P'05, '09*  
*President*

*Anna Skoien Lall '02*  
*Alumnae Association President*

### Presentation of Awards

*Erin Reimel '12*

### Singing of Alma Mater

## Mix and Mingle Reception

### Gather with classmates, family, and friends.

*Cocktails and light fare  
served immediately following  
the awards ceremony.  
Reconnect and mingle while  
exploring the familiar  
red and gold corridors.*



### Trocaire Leadership Awards

*Julie Eble, Ph.D. '71*  
*Business/Entrepreneur*

*Kate Daniels Imbesi, Esq. '92*  
*Philanthropy/Nonprofit*

*Karalyn McGrorty Derstine, Ed.D. '01*  
*Education*

*Mary Ott, Ph.D. '75*  
*Government/Legal*

*Allison Zaucha '10*  
*Arts*

*Clare Cherney, M.D. '75*  
*and Sheila Nolan, M.D. '90*  
*Healthcare*

*Sister Virginia Hasson, R.S.M.*  
*Religion/Vocation/Volunteer:*  
*(posthumous)*

### Margaret Beirn Barger '35 Distinguished Alumna Award: Service to the School

*Marita Sommar Osborne '66*  
*and*  
*Michele Corkery Hanes '72*

### Athletic Hall of Fame Award

*Emma Keenan '13*

### Maria Lutz McHugh '46 Award for Outstanding Commitment to Gwynedd Mercy Athletics

*Coach Larry Wilson*

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## Julie Eble, Ph.D. '71

### 2021 Trocaire Leadership Award—Business/Entrepreneur

Julie Eble, a semi-retired scientist and successful serial entrepreneur, lives in Delaware County, Pennsylvania, where she writes plays and novels, participates in local politics, and supports non-profit organizations and small business.

After obtaining her M.S. and Ph.D. in analytical chemistry, Julie enjoyed success at DuPont Crop Protection from 1986 through 2001 as a scientist, Project Manager, and Research Manager. In 2001, Julie followed her dream to start her own company, Critical Path Services, LLC, (CPS) focused on the regulatory field studies needed to assure the safety of agrochemicals. As the years passed, clients asked for other services, so CPS added key staff, both at the CPS office and working on-site for clients. By January 2006, Julie reinvested in the company by opening a trace-level analytical laboratory and purchasing High-Performance Liquid Chromatographs with Mass Spectrometers capable of measuring a few parts per trillion, the equivalent of less than one drop in all the combined water of the Great Lakes. Later that year, Delaware recognized her as the Woman Entrepreneur of the Year Award in Delaware for rapid growth and impact in the community.

In 2008, Julie set up a real estate company, Eble & Associates, to purchase her own facility in Pennsylvania. By its tenth anniversary, CPS revenues had grown ten-fold. As the client list expanded, Julie set up another office in North Carolina, adding a variety of services, including registration and toxicology. By 2013, her company mushroomed to almost 100 scientists and staff with locations in three states, supporting numerous Fortune 500 companies.

In June 2013, Julie sold CPS to an international regulatory company. She continued to run Critical Path Services as CEO for the new owners for another three years and supported safety in agrochemicals by rotating through the various leadership positions (Vice-chair-2017, Chair-Elect-2018, Chair-2019, Past Chair-2020) in the AGRO Division of the American Chemical Society.

In 2016, Julie created Eble Group LLC, a personal consulting and writing company. Though she now limits her client list, she is an active board member for a nationally known consulting company as well as a Founding Member of the non-profit organization, Project W, defined by “women supporting women.”

In 2020, as the Managing Member of Eble & Associates, LP, a real estate company with a limited commercial holding, Julie sold the assets and retired from commercial real estate. Now, you're likely to find Julie working the polls during election time, crafting a new murder mystery, playing tennis, hanging out with her grandkids, or traveling with her husband of 30+ years.



*In the fifty years since the Class of 1971 embarked from GMA, I've looked back on those years—often tumultuous, usually impassioned, and ultimately formative, with fondness and thanks. I gratefully accept this Trocaire Award for Business—Trocaire meaning Compassion—with an odd mix of pride and humility.*

*As a leader, I tried to measure tough decisions by my Mercy yardstick, that is, to do the right thing because it is the right thing to do and to face the world with, though it sounds an odd mix, a steely-eyed compassion for all I worked with and for.*

*Thank you, my friends, for this award and thank you, GMA, for a lifetime of principles and friendships.*

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## Kate Daniels Imbesi, Esq. '92

### 2021 Trocaire Leadership Award— Philanthropy/Nonprofit



Kate Daniels Imbesi lives out the legacy of mercy each day in all areas of her life. Kate is a Child Advocate and President of The Montgomery Child Advocacy Project (“MCAP”), a non-profit organization which provides free legal representation to Montgomery County’s abused, neglected, and trafficked children. MCAP has served nearly 8,000 children since 2004, and Kate has been an Attorney Advocate, active Board Member, and Fundraising Chair since the organization’s founding. Kate gives voice, healing, and security to children involved in the court process.

Prior to MCAP, Kate was an Assistant District Attorney for The Montgomery County District Attorney’s Office where she prosecuted sex crimes and crimes against children. While at the DA’s Office, Kate was commended for her commitment to victims of child abuse.

Kate is an Alumna of both Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School and Gwynedd-Mercy Academy Elementary, where she serves as Chair for the Development Council. She considers her Gwynedd Mercy education the greatest gift her parents could have ever given her. While at GMAHS, Kate’s love of music, theater, and tennis lead her to Glee Club, Chorale, performing in the musicals and plays, and playing on the tennis team. The Sisters of Mercy and teachers instilled a love of God and a passion for helping those in need, and Kate made loyal friendships during her Gwynedd years which continue to this day.

A current parent and active alumna, Kate served on GMAHS’s Board of Trustees from 2012-2016. She is also a member of the Enrollment Committee, Gwynedd Parent Ambassadors, The President’s Leadership Council, and serves as Co-President of the Gwynedd Crew Parents Association.

Kate holds a Bachelor of Science from Boston University, where she received a Trustees Award, and a Juris Doctor from Suffolk University Law School, where she was Class Representative and a legal intern for Social Justice for Women.

Kate’s time at GMAHS ignited in her the passion for service, love of God, and gave her the courage to lead in advocacy and provide a voice to victims. Kate and her husband, Tony, are devoted and loving parents to three daughters: Rose, a senior at GMAHS, Catherine, a freshman at GMAHS, and Mary, a 6th grade student at Gwynedd-Mercy Academy Elementary. She considers it an immense blessing to be able to educate her three daughters at Gwynedd and to continue in the legacy of mercy with her own children. Kate’s daughters, husband, and family are her greatest blessing and joy, and Gwynedd Mercy has provided the base and the foundation for a life committed to family and devoted to mercy.

*I am honored to receive this award. The real honorees are all of you: the Alumnae, Mercy Sisters, teachers, parents, and students who make up this wonderful community and who work tirelessly to continue the legacy of mercy for future generations. I feel so blessed to be in your presence. I would like to thank my dear family. My husband, Tony, and our cherished daughters, Rose, Catherine, and Mary— you are my reason for everything. I would also like to thank my parents, Cathie and Ed Kane, who made the decision to send me, the 7th child they were raising together, to Gwynedd. Mom and Ed, you gave me the gift of a Mercy education and it has lasted me a lifetime. To be able to send my daughters to this school and continue in the Legacy of Mercy is one of my life’s greatest gifts. I have no doubt the education, inspiration, love of God, and empowerment they receive at Gwynedd will continue for generations to come. Thank you all for this blessing.*

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## Karalyn McGrorty Derstine, Ed.D. '01

### 2021 Trocaire Leadership Award—Education

Karalyn McGrorty Derstine teaches American History at Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School. Her courses examine American history through the lens of the Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy: Racism, Women, Immigration, Earth, and Nonviolence. Additionally, Kara frequently collaborates with leadership and DEIJ initiatives and moderates several service projects. She is deeply committed to Mercy education and works to be part of the continued legacy of Catherine McAuley and service to others is at the center of all that she does.

During her time as a student at Gwynedd, service to others became center to her life. Kara worked with Project Home, Women of Hope, and Mercy Neighborhood Mission, and as Art club president, she completed a mosaic as part of a patio renovation at an elderly and special needs day program.

Following graduation, Kara earned two bachelor's degrees from Temple University in History and Secondary Social Studies and a Master of Liberal Arts with a certificate in African American Studies from the University of Pennsylvania. During her time at Penn, she studied the international Abolitionist movement at Exeter College, Oxford University in Oxford, England. She is a 2010 recipient of a National Endowment for the Humanities Award entitled "Winston Churchill and the Anglo-American Relationship." In collaboration with the Churchill family, Kara earned a grant that took her to Churchill College, Cambridge University to complete research in the Churchill Archives Centre.

Kara earned her Doctorate in Education from Gwynedd Mercy University with her dissertation entitled, "Framing Future Academic Success While Teaching the Past: Improving Skills Literacy in a Social Studies Department." She served as a fellow at the Historical Society and is a presenter at the National Council for the Social Studies 2020 and 2021 conferences with her presentation, "Interjecting into the Narrative: Black Women's Voices Through Primary Documents."

In her desire to continue to carry on the legacy of Catherine McAuley, Kara co-founded Mercy Effect with Amy Cymerman and Sister Maureen Christi. This student-run advocacy organization organizes events like the Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Breakfast and Superhero Breakfast to support a yearly Mercy-focused global initiative. The team was founded on the premise that when women support women, great things are possible.

Kara combines her own passion and creativity through her work outside of GMA. She travels extensively and brings those experiences into her classroom. Kara also works as a speaker/lecturer/facilitator/educator for the Institute Office of Anti-Racism and Racial Equity for the Sisters of Mercy, manages and develops a public health social media campaign for a pediatric medical group, is an advocate for early intervention and special education, and she sits on the advisory council for an Equity, Diversity & Inclusion group.

Kara is beyond grateful to her parents who saw the importance of a Mercy education so many years ago, and for the love and support from her husband, Pete, and three children, Nolan, Emilie, and Wilden.



*My mom, an alumna of Gwynedd Mercy University, raised my sister and I in Mercy by encouraging us to be brave and assertive, fight for social justice, and pursue education endlessly.*

*At Gwynedd I learned that there is no such thing as a barrier, only challenges that beg for solutions. Sr. Christi taught me that Mercy was a verb, not a silent noun of compassion and forgiveness; it is the essence of who we are and the core of all we do.*

*I am inspired by the teachings of Catherine McAuley, a woman who overcame adversity and taught women to "speak as your mind directs and always act with more courage when the 'mammon of righteousness' is in question."*

*The Circle of Mercy is timeless, it is inspirational, and it is transforming. I'm proud to be part of and share in this tradition every day.*

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## Mary Ott, Ph.D '75

### 2021 Trocaire Leadership Award—Government/Legal

Mary Ott joined the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) as a Foreign Service economist in 1984 and retired as a Career Minister in 2016. Her early years were spent both in Washington and overseas in Central America (Guatemala, Panama, and El Salvador) and the Eastern Caribbean as an economist, undertaking analyses of macroeconomic trends, developing project feasibility, and overseeing programs to support economic policy reforms.

She served as Deputy Mission Director in two large USAID posts — Bangladesh and Egypt. Back in USAID's DC headquarters, in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment, she held several positions including as Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator. Mary also spent a year detailed to the Office of the United States Trade Representative, where she worked on trade capacity development in USAID-supported countries.

As Mission Director for USAID in Egypt, Mary was responsible for overseeing a large assistance program whose roots date back to the Camp David Accords. Mary's tour of duty coincided with a period of political upheaval and change in Egypt. U.S. assistance programs in Egypt emphasized support for public health, early-grade reading, girls' education, water and sanitation infrastructure, tourism industry development, and small business development.

During one of her assignments, Mary visited a village in the Egyptian governorate of Sohag. Most Egyptians live along the Nile River, where the water table has been rising. In many communities, their water and sanitation systems have greatly deteriorated as a result. With USAID support, the village now has a new system. Mary visited Sohag in 2014 to learn from the community how this U.S. program had affected their daily lives.

Her final career assignment was as Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Middle East Bureau, which is responsible for USAID programming in a challenging part of the world. Mary's work supported USAID missions implementing development programs across the region, including in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, West Bank/Gaza, Yemen, Morocco, and Iraq.

Prior to joining USAID, Mary spent a year teaching in the Economics Department at Georgetown University, after pursuing a Ph.D. in agricultural economics at the University of California-Davis. She studied economics as an undergraduate in the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University.

While enjoying retirement (but still working part-time), Mary misses the travel and opportunities to explore new countries that came with being in the Foreign Service. While her work took her to many different corners of the world, one constant joy was the opportunity to collaborate with local leaders and public and private groups who seek to improve living conditions and opportunities for their country's most vulnerable families.



*I am honored to receive the Trocaire Leadership award. My time at Gwynedd Mercy influenced my career aspirations and helped me build the study skills necessary to succeed. While at GMA, I was involved in Model United Nations, loved my history and foreign language classes, and I took an economics class at Montgomery County Community College and discovered a discipline which continues today to be endlessly fascinating for me.*

*Development economics tells us that one of the most profound investments a society can make is educating its girls. In the countries where I have lived and worked, when mothers are educated, their children are healthier, stay in school longer, have more earning potential, and contribute more to their communities.*

*Our parents knew this, which is why they sacrificed to be sure we received the best high school education. I am thankful for strong grounding I received at GMA, and for the many dedicated teachers who inspire girls to achieve.*

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## Allison Zaucha '10

### 2021 Trocaire Leadership Award—Arts

From President Biden to Covid-19 ICU units, California wildfires to schools in India, Olympic athletes to celebrities in Hollywood—Allison Zaucha photographs a wide variety of stories as a photojournalist based in Los Angeles, California.

Allison works on a range of stories, mostly focused on social justice issues for clients such as The New York Times, The Washington Post, and The Wall Street Journal. Her goal is to bring empathy, sensitivity, humility, and connection to every story.

Upon graduating from GMA, Allison attended East Carolina University, earning a Business Management degree and art minor (something she would encourage all young artists to consider). She received her journalistic education by working as photographer and photo editor at the bi-weekly college newspaper, where she met her husband Mike who was a reporter there. It wasn't until her senior year when she won a national award in photography that she gained the courage to embark on working independently as a photographer.

After graduating in 2014, Allison began working with fellow alumna Juliana Bellitto Laury '09, helping her photograph weddings as Allison built out her journalism portfolio and connections.

In 2016, Allison developed, fundraised, produced, and photographed an international project for nonprofit Givology, where she traveled to Tamil Nadu in South India and Benin in West Africa telling the stories of children in a project titled "Dreams That Could Be." The work was shown in New York and Allison produced a book with all proceeds going to the children.

This project was formative in Allison's development as a photographer, giving her the start in story development, relationship building, and an understanding of what it takes to see a story from start to finish.

During this time, Allison was based in Maryland and documented much of the activity in Washington, D.C., resulting in her work depicting the Women's March being published in the historical book *Together We Rise: The Official Oral History of the Women's March by the Organizers*.

Allison looks back through the years and was fortunate to have many opportunities to learn from some of the most thoughtful, respectful, and talented photojournalists to date and she hopes to always pay it forward. Allison constantly shares her experiences and lessons along the way with photographers through workshops throughout the country. She is passionate about having the chance to share insights with colleagues and aspiring photographers and her email is always open for those looking to get into the industry. To stay updated on her work, be sure to sign up for her monthly newsletters at [www.allisonzaucha.com](http://www.allisonzaucha.com).



*I am incredibly honored to be receiving this Trocaire Leadership Award. It was at GMA where I developed my voice, determination, and confidence to believe in myself and my work.*

*I credit the friendships I made, some of the amazing teachers I had who let me push boundaries and explore opportunities (shoutout to Mrs. Hohenstein), and the chance to see the world through travel.*

*I owe a lot of gratitude to my mom, who not only made my education and pursuit in all my creative endeavors a top priority, but who has always served as a role model as a strong woman.*

*And a big thank you to my sister Christina Zaucha Schmidt '95 and my husband Mike for championing me every step of the way.*



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## Clare Cherney, M.D. '75

### 2021 Trocaire Leadership Award—Healthcare



After graduating from Mercy, Clare Cherney attended St. Lawrence University, graduating with Phi Beta Kappa and Honors in chemistry. She went on to attend Pennsylvania State University School of Medicine where she graduated with Alpha Omega Alpha and the Lange Memorial Award for Academic Excellence. During medical school, Clare was honored to be chosen by the Head of Medicine to accompany him to Ludhiana, India to experience and observe what life and medicine were like in rural India.

Clare completed her Internship and Residency in Internal Medicine at George Washington University Hospital in D.C., an epicenter for the newly apparent AIDS epidemic. She cared for many HIV+ patients when, early in the epidemic, it was a horrible death sentence often associated with families abandoning their infected relatives. Inspired by this work, Clare went on to her fellowship in Infectious Diseases in Philadelphia where it brought her much joy to reconnect with many of her Mercy friends again.

After many years in clinical practice, mostly caring for those with life-threatening infections in the hospital and HIV+ patients as well as teaching younger doctors, Clare took time off to be a stay-at-home mom to her two young sons and work as a subject matter expert for her husband's performance improvement business consulting company. During this time, the team she worked with won an international award for innovation in the development of a medical billing audit software system. Clare enjoyed this work, but soon felt drawn back to her patients and longed for clinical care again.

On returning to clinical work, Clare was able to better define and pursue her real love in medicine: hospice and palliative care. During this time, Clare became Board certified in Hospice and Palliative medicine and was part of a multi-disciplinary team of nurses, social workers, LPNs, and clergy hoping to address many aspects of suffering in those with serious life-threatening illnesses and those patients moving closer to death. She cared for patients and families anywhere they called home—including homeless, under bridges, in hotels. She loves hospice work and was awarded Physician of the Year Award by her hospice company's Leadership Council.

Clare's last five years of clinical care involved palliative care in multiple hospitals. This mostly entails helping seriously ill patients and their families/decision makers fully understand what is happening with the medical issues and truly becoming part of the healthcare team through shared medical decision making. The Palliative Care Multidisciplinary Team usually holds many family meetings, inviting all members of the healthcare team so a complete understanding of the issues can be discussed, patient-centered decision making can take place, and hopefully all aspects of suffering can be addressed.

Clare began her career with the start of the AIDS epidemic and retired last year in the face of the COVID pandemic. Currently she is enjoying her family—both sons are engaged to be married this year. She's enjoying living on the water, kayaking, reading, and doing all the things she never had time to do, including deciding on opportunities to give back.

*I am so grateful and humbled to receive this award. Having attended GMA from kindergarten through 12th grade, it has always been the rock-solid foundation of my education—truly inspiring and allowing for a life-long commitment to others and learning. GMA created an environment that inspired and nurtured me to pursue all my interests (without the distraction of boys, which I have come to appreciate). I was so lucky and am so grateful for the education I received at Mercy.*

*Throughout my medical career, my Mercy education inspired me to live a more giving life each day. The GMA core values of compassion, justice, service, and respect for the dignity of all persons are very easy to practice each day in a medical environment.*

*I'm so thankful and grateful for everything the school has given me and the life it prepared me for. Thanks to everyone!*

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## Sheila Nolan, M.D. '90

### 2021 Trocaire Leadership Award—Healthcare

Sheila is the Chief of Pediatric Infectious Diseases at the Maria Fareri Children's Hospital and Boston Children's Health Physicians in Westchester County, New York. Sheila earned her B.A. in Biology from LaSalle University, her medical degree from Temple University, and completed her residency in pediatrics at the University of South Florida. Following her residency, she accepted a research fellowship at the National Institutes of Health in the Respiratory Viruses Section of the Laboratory of Infectious Diseases working on vaccine development for respiratory viruses.

Sheila then completed her Infectious Diseases fellowship training at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, during which she received a Master's Degree in Clinical Epidemiology from the University of Pennsylvania. While at CHOP, Sheila studied vaccine effectiveness of the rotavirus vaccine and, in 2009, worked on the pandemic influenza response team. In 2011, Sheila moved to New York for a position with Pfizer as a Global Medical Monitor in the Vaccine Clinical Research Division, where she oversaw clinical studies for *Neisseria meningitidis* B and *Clostridium difficile* vaccines.

For the past eight years, Sheila has been in her current position as Division Chief of Pediatric Infectious Diseases. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Sheila has overseen infection control at Maria Fareri Children's Hospital and at more than 60 outpatient practice locations for Boston Children's Health Physicians. She was responsible for establishing guidelines to ensure the safety of her physicians, staff, and patients so that they could continue to provide and receive necessary care during the pandemic. Sheila was also a frontline care provider herself, and was responsible for coordinating a multi-specialty collaborative team who created guidelines to identify and treat children with the new COVID-related multisystem inflammatory syndrome. In May 2021, Sheila was recognized as one of Westchester County's Healthcare Heroes.



*It is truly an honor to be named a Trocaire Leadership Award Recipient. I have always tremendously valued my Gwynedd Mercy Academy education and felt it gave me an incredibly strong foundation to build my career. At Gwynedd, we were taught to always strive to be our best selves and encouraged to follow our passions in the context of compassion and mercy.*

*I am grateful to my parents for recognizing the special educational experience that GMA would provide and to all my family for their never-ending love and support. I am also especially grateful to my wonderful husband, Bill, and our three amazing children, Catherine, Tommy, and Johnny, who bore the extra burden at home during the last 18 months, allowing me to help at work and in our community.*

*There are so many "Mercy Girls" in the healthcare field, including many of my 1990 classmates, who I am sure have worked tirelessly throughout this pandemic. I am proud and grateful to share this award with all of them.*

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## Sister Virginia Hasson, R.S.M., Ph.D. *(posthumous)*

### 2021 Trocaire Leadership Award— Religion/Vocation/Volunteer

Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School is fortunate to have been the beneficiary of the exceptional expertise and experiences of Sister Virginia Hasson, R.S.M., Ph.D. who served as a member of the School's Board of Trustees, not once but twice. Her hope was "to be of some assistance in providing an environment which nurtures competent and compassionate leaders for the future." She did just that.

Sister Virginia entered the Sisters of Mercy in 1955 after graduating from West Philadelphia Catholic High School for Girls. She earned her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Humanities from Villanova University. As an elementary school teacher, she taught students with special needs and served as Vice Principal at St. Katherine School in Overbrook.

She went on to earn a Master's in Counseling Psychology at Marywood College in Scranton before joining the faculty at Gwynedd Mercy College (now University) where she served for 12 years, eventually becoming chairperson of the Education Department. She also received her Ph.D. in Educational Administration from Fordham University.

Sister Virginia's influence as an "educator of educators" extended from Philadelphia to Thailand and Africa. As an education coordinator for Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS) for six years, she ministered at camps for Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Sudanese refugees and started an overseas tutorial program to further their education. She also served as a consultant to the JRS International Office in Rome and as a program officer for six countries in Southern Africa.

In 1994, at Georgian Court University in Lakewood, New Jersey, Sister Virginia taught then served as Interim Dean of their graduate school. In 2000, she was elected Vice-President of the Regional Community of Merion. More recently, she volunteered as a grant writer for the Sisters of Mercy Mid-Atlantic and as a tutor at Mercy Neighborhood Ministries in Philadelphia.

Dedicated to the mission of Mercy, Sister Virginia also served on the boards of Mercy Catholic Medical Center, Mercy Health System, Project HOME, Walsingham Academy, Conference for Mercy Higher Education, and Gwynedd Mercy College (now University).



At the time of her passing in April 2020, Sister Virginia was serving on GMA's Board of Trustees. As chair of the Student Experience Committee, she recruited educational experts who continue to help the school enhance and develop educational programs in support of GMA's strategic plan *She is the Future*.

Gwynedd Mercy and the Alumnae Association are honored to recognize Sister Virginia with this Trocaire Award.

*Sr. Mary Hasson, Sr. Virginia Hasson, Sr. Antoinette Zimmerman '57 and Sr. Margaret Donohue '56 (left to right) from a 1979 trip to Greece that they chaperoned.*

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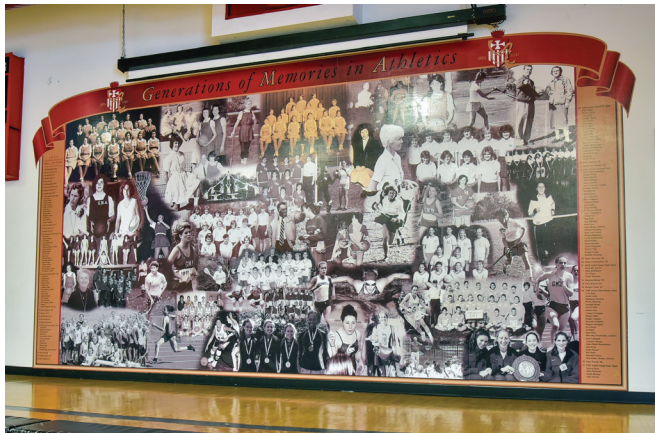
## Marita Sommar Osborne '66 and Michele Corkery Hanes '72

### Margaret Beirn Barger '35 Distinguished Alumna Award—Service to the School

Marita Sommar Osborne '66 and Michele Corkery Hanes '72 are a dynamic duo when it comes to serving Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School. Notably, Marita and Michele, both accomplished student athletes at Gwynedd Mercy, have played significant roles as alumnae in advancing and celebrating the school's Athletic Program and student athletes over the years.

The women co-chaired the Athletic Committee of the School's Sesquicentennial Celebration to establish an "Athletic Wall of Fame" honoring eighty years of athletic achievement at Gwynedd Mercy, from the 1928 Championship Basketball Team to the 2008 PIAA State Championship 4 x 800 Relay Team and all the outstanding individuals and teams in between. A mural recognizing the honorees was installed in the gymnasium and continues to be a historic record of pride at GMA.

*The Athletic Wall of Fame, found inside Gwynedd Mercy's gymnasium*



More recently, Marita and Michele served as co-chairs of the Maria Lutz McHugh '46 Initiative for Gwynedd Mercy Athletics to ensure the legacy of GMA's first Athletic Director. Maria promoted women and sports for more than three decades as an educator, coach, and administrator at GMA. The committee raised over \$120,000 in her honor to help GMA upgrade and maintain athletic facilities and equipment, retain and hire the best coaches, and support operating budgets for the school's 13 sports teams. Donor support also led to the naming of GMA's existing gymnasium and an award for outstanding commitment to Gwynedd Mercy Athletics in Maria's honor.

Marita also serves on the committee for the school's Golf Classic—an annual fundraiser for GMA, and just this year joined the Alumnae Association Board. She now chairs the



*Maria Lutz McHugh '46 Gymnasium, named after Gwynedd's first Athletic Director*

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Association's Scholarship Committee which administers the Legacy Scholarship—a four-year scholarship awarded each year to an incoming freshman with familial relationships to graduates or current students of Gwynedd Mercy. An important goal of the scholarship is to assist students who might otherwise be unable to attend the school. Michele is a longtime class representative for the Class of 1972 and a frequent volunteer who helps wherever and whenever she is needed at the high school.

Both women also are accomplished in their professions. Marita served as General Manager of the iconic Wanamaker Building and the Curtis Center in Center City Philadelphia. She also was Vice President of Administrative Operations for the Philadelphia Life Insurance Company.

Michele worked for 30-years with Quakertown Community School District as an adapted physical education coordinator to develop skills and provide modifications to improve inclusion in physical education, athletics, and community recreational activities for students with disabilities. She also coached five sports in the Quakertown Bucks County Special Olympics program for over 20 years.

Marita and Michele, your alma mater and fellow alumnae are grateful for your outstanding service!



**Michele Corkery  
Hanes '72**

*I humbly accept this award. It is my honor to serve in gratitude for all that my classmates, faculty and fellow alumnae have given me. Special thanks to my partner, Marita Sommar Osborne '66 and all our project committee members whose teamwork made our success and this award possible.*

*Beyond the wings given by Gwynedd Mercy Academy, I could not have accomplished any of my life's work or life's joy without my family: Brian, my senior prom date and husband of 42 years; my daughter and son-in-law, Denise and William; my son and daughter-in-law, Kevin and Nicole; and my beloved grandsons, Patrick and Finnegan. Last, but certainly not least, I especially thank my twin sister, Denise Corkery Marbach '72, for the happy times, past and present, at GMAHS.*



**Marita Sommar  
Osborne '66**

*This is a very nice honor. I'm fortunate that I learned the Mercy values from my family, through education and "spirited 1966 classmates."*

*Michelle and I appreciate the tireless efforts of our committee members. They joined us in the initiative to recognize outstanding alumnae athletic contributions and achievements through the Wall of Fame and naming the McHugh Gym. I'm extremely grateful for the love and support of my husband, Michael, and our son, Jim. They enable me in whatever opportunities I want to pursue.*

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## Emma Keenan '13

### Athletic Hall of Fame Award

Emma followed in the footsteps of her two older sisters, Megan '08 and Haley '10 in her attendance at Gwynedd Mercy Academy. As a passionate runner prior to Gwynedd, Emma was eager to join the GMA Track team.

She completed her freshman year with the District 1 AAA 800m title, a bronze medal in the 800m at the PIAA State Meet, and a fourth-place finish in the PIAA AAA 4x400m Relay. Relays were one of Emma's favorite parts of competing, and receiving the baton from her sister, Haley, in the 2010 State 4x400m will always be one of her favorite GMA Track memories.

As a sophomore, she took home a silver medal at the PTFCA Indoor State Meet and continued that momentum into the Outdoor season with a gold medal in the District 1 AAA 800m, a gold medal in the PIAA AAA Outdoor 800m, and a bronze medal anchoring the PIAA AAA 4x100m.

There was no slowing down Emma's Junior year! She finished the Indoor season with the PTFCA State Title in the 800m and a 6th place finish at the New Balance Indoor National Meet. Ending another tremendous season, she won the District 1 AAA 800m in a new meet record (formerly held by Kim Gallagher, who was also coached by fellow awardee Larry Wilson), captured the gold in the PIAA AAA 800m, and took home a bronze medal in the New Balance Outdoor National Meet.

Emma repeated that success her senior year, again winning the PTFCA State 800m, PIAA District 1 AAA 800m, and PIAA State AAA 800m.

Emma also competed on the GMA Field Hockey and Cross Country teams that qualified for both Districts and States, making her a three-sport State qualifier.

Off the track, Emma was an active member of the Student Council as well as a member of the National Honor Society. The achievements Emma earned and the support she received at Gwynedd Mercy led her to similar success at Georgetown University, where she became an NCAA DMR National Champion, NCAA All-American, Penn Relays Champion, and BIG EAST Champion.



*It is such an honor to be recognized by GMA with this award! The environment at Gwynedd encouraged me to test my limits both athletically and academically. I am forever grateful for my GMA running experience and for the incredible support system I had. I cannot thank Mr. Wilson enough for his encouragement every step of the way. He believed in me at times I did not believe in myself, and I owe much of my success to him. Thank you for teaching me to always dream big.*

*Thank you to my parents for showing up to every race throughout the entirety of my running career and for instilling in me the confidence that led to much of my success. I could not have done any of this without you!*

*Thank you to my sisters Megan and Haley for being the most incredible role models. I had some pretty big shoes to fill once I got to Gwynedd. I am so fortunate to have you both to constantly look up to.*

*Thank you to my GMA teammates and the extended coaching and athletic staff for always making the sport fun! Finally, thank you to Gwynedd Mercy Academy for creating a space where I could always be myself.*

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## Coach Larry Wilson

### **Maria Lutz McHugh '46 Award for Outstanding Commitment to Gwynedd Mercy Athletics**

As founder of Gwynedd Mercy's Track & Field and Cross Country Programs, Larry Wilson has inspired generations of young women as an educator, coach, and mentor for more than 43 years—as head coach for 40 seasons beginning in 1978 when GMA's Athletic Director Maria Lutz McHugh '46 brought him aboard, and as Coach Emeritus since 2018.

With Larry's leadership, Gwynedd Mercy's teams and student athletes became legendary, posting 21 Pennsylvania Division AA high school championships, earning 62 district crowns, winning five consecutive State high school Class AA championships for the 4x800-meter relay, and capturing the Penn Relays' 1500-meter event. "Rare indeed is the year in which his team doesn't make the 4x800-meter finals at the Penn Relays," wrote the National Scholastic Athletics Foundation.

As one of the founders and a head coach of the Ambler Olympic Club (AOC), Larry made possible a great partnership between Gwynedd Mercy and the AOC. Recognized nationally for providing opportunities for youth runners to develop and compete in track and cross country, the AOC boasts several National and State Champions and Olympic contenders. Together, Gwynedd Mercy and AOC share a track on GMA's campus named in Larry's honor.

Larry increased GMA's visibility through his decades of leadership with the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), serving as region two director (30 years), Middle Atlantic district chair for track and field and cross country (40 years), and national cross country chair (25 years). He also served as assistant track coach for several Junior Pan American women teams in the various countries (Sudbury, Canada, Santa Fe, Argentina and Havana, Cuba) and as head coach for the 1991 National Sports Festival.

A track standout at Ambler High School and Morgan State University, Larry graduated from college in 1957 with a B.S. Degree in Physical Education. He served two years in the U.S. Army and was a member of the Army track and field team before being named Director of Physical Education and Recreation at Eastern Pennsylvania state school and Hospital. In 1969, he began his long association with Drexel University as Industrial Coordinator, retiring in 1998 after nearly 30 years.

Many in our community also remember Larry with his beloved late wife, Mercedes. They are blessed with four children, six grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.



*It is an honor to have been selected to receive the Maria Lutz McHugh '46 Award. I can recall the phone call I received from Mrs. McHugh in 1978 asking if I would be interested in coaching. Of course, I replied yes. It was in 1966 that my dear friend Leon Hill and I founded the Ambler Olympic Club and we had a young talented runner named Marisa Schmidt competing for us. She was a freshman at Gwynedd and I had to persuade her parents to let her run for the School. Marisa, as a freshman, won the PIAA cross country and 3000-meter track championships. The rest is history. Today, we also honor Emma Keenan for the Hall of Fame Award. Emma was the most talented runner I had the opportunity to coach. She won eight PIAA state championships in the 800 meters. I must thank my coaching staff who did an outstanding job in contributing to the success of our program—Gil Bainbridge, Joe O'Connor, Marie Meehan, Holly Murray, and Cristin Meehan. The support I received from the Athletic Directors—Mrs. McHugh, Sr. Rosemary Powers, and Terry Fasano—was outstanding.*



## Trocaire Leadership Award Recipients

### 2019

**Elissa Gore '68**

*Arts*

**Eileen Maguire Maginnis '75**

*Business/Entrepreneur/Engineer*

**Maura McLaughlin, Ph.D. '90**

*Healthcare/Science/Technology*

**Lori Fanelli Butrus '79**

*Religion/Vocation/Volunteer*

### 2018

**Catherine Wilson, Ph.D. '90**

*Education*

**Lisa Heilbronn, Ph.D. '72**

*Government/Legal*

**Angela Amarhanov '08**

*Philanthropy/Nonprofit*

**Sr. Rosemary Herron, R.S.M.**

**Sr. Susan Walsh, R.S.M.**

*Religion/Vocation/Volunteer-Religious*

### 2017

**Melissa Maddonni Haims '90**

*Arts*

**Ann McKernan Robinson '54**

*Business/Entrepreneur/Engineer*

**Julie Tippens, Ph.D. '97**

*Healthcare/Science/Technology*

**Rev. Marianne Robbins '75**

*Religion/Vocation/Volunteer-Layperson*

### 2016

**Susan Baumher Mitchell, Faculty**

*Education*

**Sallyanne Harper '72**

*Government/Legal*

**Kristina Wahl '93**

*Philanthropy/Nonprofit*

**Sr. Monica Sheehy, R.S.M. '63**

*Religion/Vocation/Volunteer-Religious*

### 2015

**Jen Creed Rego '94**

*Arts*

**Carolyn Fontaine Davis '97**

*Business/Entrepreneur/Engineer*

**Joely Esposito, Psy.D. '88**

*Healthcare/Science/Technology*

**Andi Land Healy '80**

*Religion/Vocation/Volunteer-Layperson*

### 2014

**Diane Dewhirst '75**

*Government/Legal*

**Kristin M. Risi, Ph.D. '87**

*Education*

**Teresa Araco Rodgers '91**

*Philanthropy/Nonprofit*

**Sr. Cathe Shoulberg, R.S.M. '65**

*Religion/Vocation/Volunteer-Religious*

### 2013

**Margaret Walsh Huddy '57**

*Arts*

**Joan Murray Reynolds '48**

*Business/Entrepreneur/Engineer*

**Mary Ellen Miller, Ph.D., R.N., Past Parent**

*Healthcare/Science/Technology*

**Ann Diehl Casey '50**

*Religion/Vocation/Volunteer-Layperson*

### 2012

**Mary Higgins Fletcher '77**

*Government/Legal*

**Sr. Mary Klock, R.S.M. '48**

*Religion/Vocation/Volunteer-Religious*

**Kathy Myers, Ph.D.**

*Education*

**Corinne O'Connell '93**

*Philanthropy/Nonprofit*



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Trocaire Leadership Award Recipients,  
continued...

**2010-11**

**Maureen Grogan Colburn '93**

*Education*

**Peggy Dolan, Past Parent**

*Philanthropy/Nonprofit*

**Rosemary McCarron Flannery, Esq. '39**

*Government/Legal*

**Frances Galante '75**

*Arts*

**Maureen O'Connell, Ph.D. '91**

*Religion/Vocation/Volunteer-Layperson*

**Kathleen Roeder, M.D. '60**

*Healthcare/Science/Technology*

**Barbara Boyle Sullivan '54**

*Business/Entrepreneur/Engineer*

**Sr. Antoinette Zimmerman, R.S.M. '57**

*Religion/Vocation/Volunteer-Religious*

## Margaret Beirn Barger '35 Distinguished Alumna Award



- 2019** Nancy Pannepacker McKeane '64
- 2018** Cory Clark Shay '95
- 2017** Melva Exner, Esq. '77
- 2016** Karen McKeane '88
- 2015** Cathy Cunneff Seese '46
- 2014** Eileen Cairnes Samtmann '60
- 2013** Carol Chiodo '75
- 2012** Cindy Antoni Conaway '71
- 2010** Linda Galante, Esq. '72
- 2009** Sr. Mary Trainer, R.S.M. '57
- 2008** Denise Corkery Marbach '72
- 2007** Mary Jane Leaming Wahl '56
- 2006** Sr. Peggy Mahoney, R.S.M. '64
- 2005** Alice Anne Goldkamp Bossow '60
- 2004** Jean Hepburn Lembach '50
- 2003** Kathleen (Toots) Cattie Fee '61
- 2002** Ann Diehl Casey '50
- 2001** Isabelle (June) McCullough  
Bottke '51

- 2000** Mary Elizabeth Cunningham '50
- 1999** Kathleen Roeder, M.D. '60
- 1998** Sr. Mary Klock, R.S.M. '48
- 1997** Joanne Becker Rovno '57
- 1996** Sr. Gail deMacedo, R.S.M. '55  
(posthumous)
- 1995** Judy McLaughlin Bucko '60  
Peg McKenna Luksik '73
- 1994** Sr. Elizabeth Marie McCormick,  
R.S.M. '32
- 1993** Nancy Faris Buckley '57
- 1992** Kate Harper Kelly, Esq. '74

## Athletic Hall of Fame Awards



- 2019** Clark Deardorff, Tennis Coach  
(posthumous)
- 2018** The 1995 Volleyball Team
- 2017** Lori Baiocchi King, Esq. '93
- 2016** Alex Malatesta McMahan, Esq. '05
- 2015** Moira Durkin Tozier '00  
Kate Hosterman Tobias
- 2014** The 1962-63 Field Hockey Team  
Maisha Palmer Kelly '95
- 2013** Colleen Gleeson Greshock '96  
Lauren Morton '04
- 2012** Regina Graham Maioriello '79  
The 2000 Swim Team

The Hall of Fame includes all those previously recognized on the 150th Anniversary Wall of Fame unveiled in September 2010.



## 2020-21 Alumnae Board

The Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School Alumnae Board, in conjunction with the Advancement Office, plans a variety of events throughout the year to help our Alumnae connect with each other and their Alma Mater. It is with greater support from our Alumnae that we build a sense of community and foster the legacy of Mercy and our lifelong sisterhood.

Anna Skoien Lall '02, *President*  
Melva Exner '77, *Vice President*  
Christina Ernst Ball '79  
Karen Price Benson '79  
Christine Burke '07  
Bethanne Mascio Connelly '03  
Jennifer Kin Cottrell '99  
Casey Mulhern Cumiskey '04  
Helena DeBald '10  
Emilee Desmond '16  
Mary Kate McNulty Gallo '02  
Andrea Geppert '05  
Jennifer Cervone Guarnaccia '93  
Caren Cline Johnston '85  
Alicia Jones, D.O. '87  
Katie Ailtmar Kirk '03  
Marita Sommar Osborne '66  
Kathleen Roeder, MD '60  
Jenny Prior Schlegel '90  
Caitlin Fitzgerald Straub '01

### Join the Board and Support Your Alma Mater

Please email  
[alumnae@gmahs.org](mailto:alumnae@gmahs.org)  
for more information.



## Advancement Office

**Colleen Belz Frascatore '89**  
*Director of Advancement*  
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**Colleen Corace Connor '86, P'25**  
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**Mimi Craig P'90, '93**  
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**Caitlin Fitzgerald Straub '01**  
*Engagement Coordinator*  
[cstraub@gmahs.org](mailto:cstraub@gmahs.org)





Save the Date!

Saturday,  
February 26, 2022

# McAuley's Pub Night

Let the  
**Shenanigans**  
Continue

*Join our  
Irish-themed pub  
night in support  
of our school and  
our girls. Wear  
your green and  
your jeans.*

.....  
All alumnae, parents, family, faculty, staff,  
and friends are invited.

**Show your support and be part of a fun night!**

[gmahs.org/shenanigans](https://gmahs.org/shenanigans)

Gwynedd+  
Mercy Academy  
High School

GWYNEDD MERCY ACADEMY  
HIGH SCHOOL

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## Alma Mater

*Hail to thee our Alma Mater!  
School of schools all hail to thee!  
We, thy children, here assembled  
dedicate our hearts to thee.  
Come, girls, your school now calls for you  
to honor the Red and the Gold.  
Give her your vow to go forth now,  
her standards to uphold.*

*Dear Alma Mater Mercy,  
we, your children stand  
to pledge our lasting loyalty  
in ever faithful band.*

*Let all in ardent chorus  
her merits to uphold.  
Strong and high her colors fly  
as Mercy's Red and Gold.  
So rise and cheer unto the sky  
to honor the school you hold so dear.  
Revere her name of widespread fame,  
and sing year after year.*

*Dear Alma Mater Mercy,  
we, your children stand  
to pledge our lasting loyalty  
in ever faithful band.*



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