

ACADEMY OF OUR LADY OF MERCY

Lauralton Hall



Saturday, September 24 marked 195 years since Sisters of Mercy Foundress Catherine McAuley opened the House of Mercy in Dublin, Ireland. Its doors have remained open since 1827 to serve the poor, sick, and uneducated. Following Mass in the historic Chapel, Lauralton students were excited to see that the sun was shining for their annual Mercy Day picnic lunch, a special tradition at Lauralton Hall.

SEEKING A NEW LEADER

A LETTER FROM THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

With the [October announcement](#) that Lauralton will be seeking a new Head of School, effective after the 2023 Commencement, the Board of Trustees has assembled a search committee to find a worthy successor to Elizabeth Miller. The group includes six current board members, a former board chair, two faculty members, and a representative of Mercy Education.

The search process will play out over the next several months with input from the greater Lauralton community, and the search committee will deliver a hiring recommendation for approval by the full Board of Trustees and Mercy Education.

We are seeking candidates who have demonstrated leadership abilities; who are committed to academic excellence, and who have a clear understanding of — and commitment to — the values of Lauralton’s Mercy Tradition.


In Mercy,

Charlotte Evans ’64
Vice Chair, Board of Trustees
Chair, Head of School Search Committee



Photo Credit: Shades Shutter Photography

Seated from L-R: Mary Alice Synkewecz, RSM, MaryJo Dunne P’02, P’05, P’07, Patrick Lagrange P’19, Chair, Elizabeth Miller, Head of School, Charlotte Evans ’64, Vice Chair, Johana Rendon-Ledesma ’12, Stephen Ball P’16, ’18
Standing from L-R: Lisa Shea P’14, P’21, Dr. Peter Jokl GP’21, Brian Elliott P’20, P’21, Raymond Peloso P’14, P’16, P’21, Sheila Scullion Sullivan ’84, P’16, Rev. Guy Dormevil P’12
Not Pictured: Rachel Bode-Mundackal ’02, Marylee Jenkins ’83, A. John Mancini P’17

INSPIRE HER TO EXCELLENCE



The Annual Fund is our primary fundraising campaign to which alumnae, parents, faculty, businesses, and friends make unrestricted gifts that flow directly into Lauralton’s operating budget each year. This support allows Lauralton Hall to offer an extraordinary educational experience to our students, taught by exceptional faculty and staff.

Our ability to fulfill our Mission to empower young women to pursue their highest potential happens through the generosity of our community. When you make a gift to Lauralton Hall, you become a part of a long tradition of helping to ensure the School remains in the top tier of independent schools. Your charitable donation provides immediate support for academics, financial aid, faculty enrichment, athletics, performing and visual arts, and more.

Together, we ensure that today’s students achieve their dreams, and that Lauralton continues to thrive for generations of women to come. Our towers represent the heights and lofty goals set in place by Catherine McAuley over 150 years ago—goals that will bring women and women’s issues to the forefront of our changing society. You help to make those goals a reality. Your generosity fuels excellence at Lauralton.

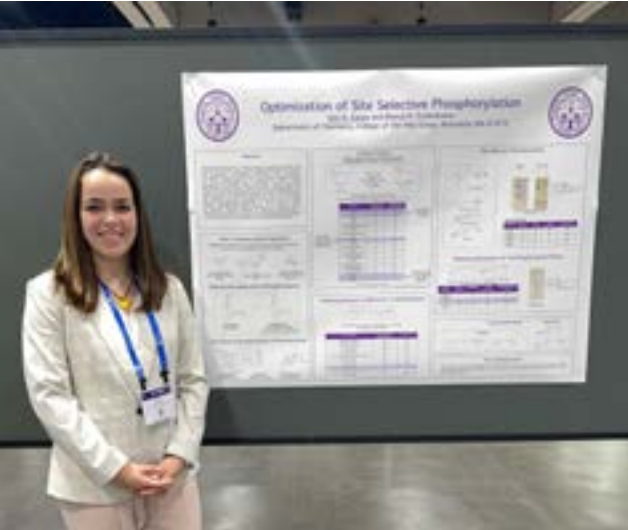
[Visit our website to make a gift](#), use Venmo (@LauraltonHall), or call the Advancement Office 203-877-2876, ext. 129.

Alumnae, We Want to Hear from You!

We are #LHProud of Erin Eason ’19, a senior at College of the Holy Cross, who has been working since her freshmen year in the Sculimbrene organic synthesis and methodology chemistry lab discovering methods for building molecules. Her project entitled “The development of conditions for the site-selective phosphorylation of diols” is about developing chemical conditions which are cost-efficient and environmentally friendly in building pharmaceutically relevant substrates. One substrate she works with specifically is Levodopa – a drug used in the treatment of Parkinson’s.

This past Spring, she presented with her faculty advisor to the Fairfield University Chemistry Department, at the American Chemical Society Spring 2022 Conference in San Diego, and at the Holy Cross yearly academic conference.

Lauralton is excited to announce a new landing page on their website, dedicated to Alumnae Class News! Please visit www.lauraltonhall.org/classnotes to read more.



She Keeps Luralton Ticking

Perhaps you have marveled at the intricate workings of a fine timepiece, admired its efficient but inconspicuous operations; if so, you can appreciate the 30-year – and continuing – career of Pat Krissik, Luralton’s Registrar. Pat first came to Luralton in 1989 as a part-time employee in the cafeteria; in 1992, she joined the school staff, assisting then-principal Ann Pratson and counselors in the Guidance Department. Following the retirement of Sr. Mary O’Neill ’55 in 1997, she became Registrar.

Pat has always worked closely with students, although they might not always be aware of it. Her duties include scheduling, managing attendance, maintaining all academic records and databases, completing numerous compliance reports, and dozens of other tasks related to the smooth operation of Luralton Hall. Ann Pratson says, “I couldn’t have done the job without her. She was amazing at keeping everything organized and functioning – including me!”

Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, Pat attended an all-girls Catholic high school. Catholic education was an integral part of her family, so when it came time for their daughters to start thinking about high school, Pat and her husband learned more about Luralton and soon became Luralton parents; Tara graduated in 1995, and Keri in 1998. In recent years, her grandchildren have come to Luralton too – as campers in the Summer@ Luralton Sports and Enrichment program.

Pat has of course witnessed many changes on campus. She says, “The first biggest addition for me was the Athletic Center. It was quite amazing to watch it being built from the ground up. It was even more amazing to be present for the first sports competitions in the new facility.” Naturally, technology over the last 30 years has changed the way many administrative duties are handled. Pat recalls transcribing handwritten college letters from the counselors, compiling and collating stacks of paper rosters every morning to confirm attendance, and scheduling parent-teacher conferences for the entire faculty by hand. “Now we have software programs and operating systems for that,” she says with a smile.

Some things never change. “The one constant in all my years at Luralton is the sense of community. It is truly a home away from home for me. I especially enjoy student contact. What I notice most is the students’ transformation in maturity from their first day freshman year to the day they graduate.” For those students who do see and chat with Pat on a regular basis – that book in her office for late sign-ins has a great many pages – the fond feelings are mutual. “Although she may not be one of my teachers, she



Photo Credit: Shades Shutters Photography

is a constant in my school day; her wishing me a good day makes me smile,” says Cat Rogers ’23. “Even if I’m late for class or in a bad morning mood, I am always happy to see her. She is such a kind, warm-hearted person,” adds Jeanette Ahuatl ’23.

Pat is also treasured for her ready laugh. She is one half of the mighty office duo (Dean of Academics Jan Powers ’75 is the other) who makes the most reliably funny videos for retirement parties. “An absolute favorite aspect of my time at Luralton is working with Jan. We have been working side-by-side for many years. Her work ethic is an inspiration, and she has a keen sense of humor. Laughter is a part of every day.” Even when things are stressful, Pat stays cool. “She is the most patient person I know,” says Jan. “I’ve never seen her lose her temper. She doesn’t even get mad at me when I ask her the same thing ten times.” We are blessed to have the steady, reliable presence of Registrar Pat Krissik; she keeps Luralton ticking.

Bishop Caggiano Visits Luralton Hall

On Wednesday, September 7, Academy of Our Lady of Mercy, Luralton Hall celebrated our Opening Mass. Faculty, staff, and students gathered in our historic chapel with the Most Reverend Frank Caggiano, Bishop of the Diocese of Bridgeport, presiding.

In his homily, the Bishop reminded the Luralton community that being a disciple of Christ is a lifelong journey that we make one day at a time. He spoke of his own personal journey and challenges in living as a Christian in action. Mrs. Catherine Grace Gallagher ’85, P’15, P’16, P’18 shared: “I think the Bishop’s homily was memorable because it was so candid, and he was himself so personable. He came down from the altar and shared with us his experiences and his reflections.” His message resonated with students, faculty, and honored guest Board Chair Patrick Lagrange P’19.

We were also privileged to have the Bishop bless our newly refurbished science labs during his visit. We are grateful for The Most Reverend Caggiano’s time, spiritual leadership, and presence. We look forward to celebrating with him again in the future!



Photo Credit: Shades Shutters Photography

The Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano pictured with Head of School Elizabeth Miller and Board Chair Patrick Lagrange P’19



Photo Credit: Emmy Casini ’24

Reunited at Last

It was a beautiful fall weekend on the Luralton Hall campus when alumnae from the Classes of 1950 through 2017 returned to their *alma mater* to celebrate Homecoming-Reunion Weekend 2022!

Alumnae from across the country – including Nevada, North Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Florida, Massachusetts, and New York – traveled to

Connecticut to honor their milestone anniversary celebrations. On Saturday, September 10 students eagerly awaited guests, excited to provide tours of our newest signature programs such as the Publications Suite, refurbished science labs, and Math Center.

During the Reunion Mass, Rev. Gerald Blaszcak, S.J. of Fairfield University welcomed back our alumnae sharing in his homily the importance of “coming home” as told by Jesus’ parable of the Prodigal Son. After Mass, alumnae made their way to seating on the Mansion porch, the front lawn, and by the Carousel to enjoy the spectacular weather and share stories, laughter, and smiles.

On Sunday, September 11, Luralton welcomed our Golden Girls for their annual luncheon. Those women who have celebrated 50 or more years since their graduation were led to the Chapel for the Class of 1970, 1971, and 1972 pinning ceremony. More than 40 women received their Golden Girl Society pin and with a gleeful round of applause, were inducted into the Luralton Hall Golden Girl Society.

We are so grateful to the many student, faculty, and alumnae volunteers who helped to plan this successful event! Special thanks to Nicole Benson-Ayisi ’04 for leading the efforts.

Save the Date: The next [Homecoming-Reunion Weekend](#) will be held on September 9-10, 2023, and will include our [Athletic Hall of Fame Ceremony](#). For more information, or to join the 2023 Reunion Planning Committee, please email alumnaerelations@luraltonhall.org.

Photo Credit: Shades Shutters Photography



Fun & Nunsense

On the evening of Saturday, October 29 eager anticipation filled Parsons Auditorium as a crowd gathered to see Luralton Hall’s production of *Nunsense: The Mega Musical*.

Led by Fine Arts Department Chair Margy Sargent P’16, P’18, the cast of this show had the audience cackling in their seats as they watched the trials and tribulations of the little Sisters of Hoboken and their attempt to put on a fundraising show. This was a musical to remember at LH!

Congratulations to the following seniors on their final Luralton Hall musical performance: Catherine Bosse ’23, Colette Burke ’23, Bella Morris ’23, Sophie Salazar ’23, and Holly Thorndike ’23.



Honoring Those Who Serve

We are so proud of our students and their accomplishments here at Luralton, and even more impressed by their achievements beyond campus guided by Mercy traditions and Core Values.

On Friday, November 11, the Luralton student body was privileged to hear from three Luralton alumnae who have breathed life into the Mission Statement and built a successful career and life within the military:

- Captain Elizabeth Young McNally ’96 (U.S. Army - retired)
- Captain Megan Dobbins Ishum ’04 (U.S. Army - retired)
- Rear Admiral Joanna Collins Nunan ’83 (U.S. Coast Guard - retired)

After a brief introduction from our Student Ambassadors, each panelist answered a series of questions about her experience in the military, as well as her time as a Luralton student. Each panelist brought a unique perspective to the discussion; many students stated afterward how the presentation has now influenced the trajectory of their education and future career path. We honor these three servicewomen and all those in the greater Luralton community for their selfless service to our country and community.

If you are a Luralton Hall alumna who has served or is serving in the military, please let us know by visiting www.luraltonhall.org/classnotes.



Photo Credit: Shades Shutters Photography

A Growing Science Program

The first week of school is marked by beginnings and renewals. This year, with the blessings of the Most Reverend Frank Caggiano, Bishop of the Diocese of Bridgeport, excited students and faculty celebrated Luralton’s strong foundations in science and our commitment to STEM education with our newly refurbished science labs.

[As she cut the ceremonial ribbon](#), President & Head of School Elizabeth Miller welcomed students and dedicated the labs “to all the alumnae who studied in these very rooms from 1930 to today. Those women are now engineers, architects, archaeologists, medical doctors, researchers, and so much more.” The new facilities optimize work and traffic flow so that multiple student groups may inquire, experiment, and collaborate on distinct projects and models; the labs also promote interaction between our Science and Math Departments, a partnership that is so integral to the success of our STEM program. Luralton offers seven AP courses in math and science - AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, AP Computer Science Principles, AP Statistics, AP Environmental Science, AP Chemistry, AP Physics 1 - and two [Early College Experience \(ECE\) opportunities](#); those classes, Advanced Biology and Environmental Science, give students the chance to earn college credit and are taught by Luralton faculty members who are certified through the University of Connecticut as adjunct faculty.

Students are also enthusiastic about the look and feel of the new labs. Junior Shyanne Roman said, “I just like the vibe down there. The turquoise and navy go so well together.” Luralton art students – in particular, Brianna Horowitz ’24, Quinn Colabella ’24, Leni Wisniewski ’24, Michaela Day ’24, Amanda Umbricht ’24, and Morgan Moore ’22 – made their contribution as well; the lab safety posters are the work of Fine Arts teacher Matthew Rossetti’s Graphic Design class. Chemistry teacher Jen Shea is “thrilled to share this improved space with students,” as it will provide the next generation of Luralton women the environment in which to learn and achieve.

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Luralton Hall

ATHLETIC Hall of Fame

Save the Date

SATURDAY | SEPT. 9 | 2023

WWW.LAURALTONHALL.ORG/ATHLETICHALLOFFAME

We are delighted to announce that the Luralton Hall Athletic Hall of Fame will take place on Saturday, September 9, 2023. Inaugurated in 2012, the Luralton Hall Athletic Hall of Fame recognizes outstanding individuals who are nominated for performing with athletic distinction or having been instrumental in the overall development and success of athletics at Luralton.

To view past awardees, or to nominate an athlete, coach, team, or friend of LH Athletics, please visit: www.luraltonhall.org/athletichalloffame

SAVE THE DATES

Winter Play:
Little Women
February 10-11, 2023

Irish Night
March 4, 2023

Athletic Hall of Fame
September 9, 2023

Homecoming-Reunion
Weekend 2023
September 9-10, 2023



Lauralton Hall

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LauraltonHall.org

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We are #LHProud of our Lauralton cheerleaders who participated in the Walk to Defeat ALS in Westport on Saturday, October 15. The ladies brought exuberance which motivated their fellow walkers.

Please keep us up-to-date on your latest moves at:

[LAURALTONHALL.ORG/MYINFO](https://lauraltonhall.org/myinfo)

For a list of Lauralton loved ones who have passed away in the last year, please visit:

[LAURALTONHALL.ORG/INMEMORIAM](https://lauraltonhall.org/inmemoriam)



Mercy
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Courageous Action. Selfless Spirit.™

Lauralton Hall is a sponsored ministry of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas and is a member of Mercy Education.