

THE 2023 WANSBORO AWARD RECIPIENT



When asked to share her Sacred Heart story, the 2023 Wansboro Award recipient Barbara Cliff Silverman '77 replied, "To tell my Sacred Heart story is to tell the story of my life." Having spent so many years learning and giving back to the school, Barb is forever intertwined with and inseparable from all that Academy of the Sacred Heart has meant to her.

Barb's "first day on the job," as she jokingly calls it, was as a kindergartener in 1964. After graduating in 1977, she soon returned to Sacred Heart in 1987, serving as the Alumni Director for eight years. Barb expertly connected with alums from across the decades, secured donations for the school, and ran special alum events. But Barb found her true calling when she began working with the maintenance department, where she treasured every opportunity to care for "the House," the name she calls our Bloomfield campus.

Barb's work in maintenance for those many years centered on ensuring our mission-serving spaces were cared for, including classrooms, entrances, the beautiful outdoor spaces, and more. Barb's devotion to "the House" was inspired by the RSCJ sisters' care for small tasks with great love. St. Madeleine Sophie's words, "Be humble, be simple, bring joy to others," guided her every move as she ensured the building was in the best possible shape for our students, from setting up events to checking that the lightbulbs worked. She has always followed Philippine's maxim "simple duty, daily done." Barb's consistency and kindness in meeting faculty and staff needs were extraordinary.

For Barb, Sacred Heart has always been about connections. First and foremost, connection with God, and the connections that span all Sacred Heart students. Wherever in the world, Barb still visits any local Sacred Heart school and is sure to create relationships, whether with a fellow alum, a familiar RSCJ, or just saying hello to fellow children of the Sacred Heart.

Barb's history with Sacred Heart began before and has continued since her time as a student and staff member. Barb is a third-generation alumna, her two sisters attended Sacred Heart, and she is mother to a fourth-generation alumna, Sallyann. Since retiring in 2020, Barb is often seen at Sacred Heart collaborating on the Archives project. This initiative organizes and shares documents, photos, and other records chronicling Sacred Heart's history. Her efforts to record these treasures of our past will be remembered for years to come.

The Alumnae and Alumni Association proudly recognizes Barbara Cliff Silverman '77 with the 2023 Wansboro Award.