

## SAINT MARY'S SCHOOL

# MAZIE STRICKLAND FROELICH '51C SOCIETY OUTSTANDING ALUMNA 2024

BY LAUREN E. GERBER



*Melrose  
Whitfield  
Fisher  
'72HS '74C*

Many years ago, the Saint Mary's Alumnae Leadership Council created the Mazie Strickland Froelich '51C Alumnae Award to honor Mrs. Froelich's leadership and service to Saint Mary's. The ultimate example of a distinguished alumna during her lifetime, the late Mrs. Froelich was the first female chair of our school's board of trustees – which was no small accomplishment back then! Wouldn't she be delighted today to know that on our current Board of Trustees, we have 15 alumnae out of 24 serving and two current Saint Mary's moms?

The 2024 Outstanding Alumna Award, which recognizes an alumna's outstanding achievements in volunteer service to Saint Mary's, was presented to Melrose Whitfield Fisher '72HS '74C during Reunion Weekend on April 27, 2024.

Melrose's fondest memories are of Saint Mary's, she will always tell you it is the friendships and camaraderie she shares with her Saint Mary's classmates from her high school and junior college classes, and she owes thanks to her

mother who was responsible for her enrolling at 900 Hillsborough Street all those years ago.

Melrose blossomed as a member of Beacon and the Legislative Body, as well as serving as chair of the Social Board, head of the Hall Counselors, and on the basketball team as a student. Of her time at Saint Mary's, she has said, "I just loved it. You will never have friends like the ones you have at Saint Mary's."

After graduating from Saint Mary's junior college program, Melrose attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. There, she earned her first bachelor's degree in 1976. A few years later, she returned to the university to study nursing and earn a nursing degree.

For 25 years, she worked in the Cardiology Department at UNC as both a nurse and a research coordinator. Over the years since leaving her full-time position, she has continued to work as an independent research consultant, in addition to running her own

business, Lots of Luxe, and volunteering her valuable time for Saint Mary's.

Over the years, Melrose has been involved at her alma mater as much as an alumna as she was when she was a student, and she has been one of Saint Mary's most generous and dedicated volunteers serving in multiple roles.

She has served as a dedicated alumnae leader as a current member of Saint Mary's Forever Campaign's Public Campaign Sub-Committee and as a previous member of the school's Board of Visitors from 2016-2018, and was also active on the 175th Gala Committee during that time.

It has been said of Melrose that "she can man a name tag table like no one else!" and often serves as a co-host for events, makes outreach phone calls to prospective families for admissions, and Annual Fund calls to her classmates and others to encourage their giving and participation.

But, that's not all. Melrose is also a current leader serving on the Alumnae Leadership Council. However, one of the longest roles of service she has held is that of Class Secretary for both her high school and junior college classes. As Secretary, she created a class prayer list to share the triumphs, tragedies, and life updates of her classmates over the years ensuring the classmates stay abreast of a lifetime of milestones.

Not only does Melrose give back through her gifts of time and talent, she also gives back through her personal treasure, making annual leadership gifts to the Annual Fund. She also supports several endowments and campaigns and she helped create the Class of 1972 Scholarship Fund during her 50th high school reunion, she also helped initiate and fundraise for this year's Class of 1974 Endowed Scholarship Fund in celebration of their 50th Reunion this year

Melrose has been dedicated to our school, attending regional events and reunions, and always encourages others to uplift Saint Mary's so that our alma mater is here forever. She lives the creed of leadership and stewardship for her alma mater and is always an amazing role model for our girls and a wonderful spokeswoman for our alumnae.

This year she celebrates her 50th reunion having served with distinction at all levels of service. Several classmates through their nomination letters have shared that this recipient "has worked tirelessly for Saint Mary's and is the perfect Saint to receive this award. She encourages her classmates to share their time, talents, and treasures with the school, and she models the numerous ways to do so."

Another nomination letter stated, "We are so proud to know Melrose and so grateful for the tireless work she contributes to ensure all Saints, regardless of when they graduated, stay connected to our beloved alma mater."

Melrose often says she owes so much of her life and career success to her time at Saint Mary's. Providing her with her friends for life, the confidence and ability to be agile and change, and ultimately to lead.

Originally from Kinston, NC, Melrose is married to her best friend, Rob, who himself is an honorary member of the high school class of 1972 and college class of 1974. Together, they share two adult sons, a daughter-in-law, two grandchildren -- and one on the way soon!

Saint Mary's is thrilled to bestow upon Melrose Whitfield Fisher, on behalf of Saint Mary's alumnae, the 2024 Outstanding Alumnae Award, for her service to others and her school.

Saint Mary's School is grateful for this faithful servant and leader of our alumnae association!

To learn more about The Mazie Strickland Froelich '51C Society Outstanding Alumnae Award, contact Emily R. Smith '01, Director of Alumnae Engagement, at [ersmith@sms.edu](mailto:ersmith@sms.edu) or by phone at 919.424.4171, or visit us online at [www.sms.edu/alumnae](http://www.sms.edu/alumnae).