

SPRING 2025

MAVERICK



CONNECTIONS & COMMUNITY

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Connections and community

Our Mercy University community demonstrates the extraordinary power of human connection. Every time I'm on campus, I see meaningful interactions between students and professors, study groups deeply engaged in learning, and faculty and staff who are committed to upholding our values and mission. These daily moments remind me that our strength lies in our commitment to supporting one another and lifting each other up.

Our students, faculty, staff, and alumni create an extraordinary network of support, learning, and achievement, strengthening the bonds between our campus community and beyond.

Our new Mercy Link platform exemplifies this spirit. Students now connect directly with alumni who offer career guidance, internship opportunities, and real-world insights. These relationships strengthen our entire Mercy family and open doors for the next generation of professionals.

And we were deeply honored to welcome Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson to our Westchester Campus. Some of our students had the privilege to meet her. Her presence and message reinforced the power of breaking barriers and lifting others up – values that define the Mercy experience.

Mercy Mavericks consistently answer the call to serve. This sense of dedication led our School of Nursing to launch an asthma awareness initiative, providing vital health education in local schools, while our students gained hands-on experience.

Our student-athletes showed similar dedication when they showed up big for the Dobbs Ferry Holiday Hustle to support the local Youth Services Council.

These connections – between students and mentors, theory and practice, campus and community – form the foundation of our university's strength. Every day, I see how these relationships transform lives and create opportunities. I'm grateful to be part of this remarkable community where support, service, and success intertwine.

It's exciting to witness how these connections between students, faculty, alumni, and community members create opportunities and transform lives. Together, we make Mercy University extraordinary.

Susan L. Parish, Ph.D., M.S.W.
PRESIDENT OF MERCY UNIVERSITY



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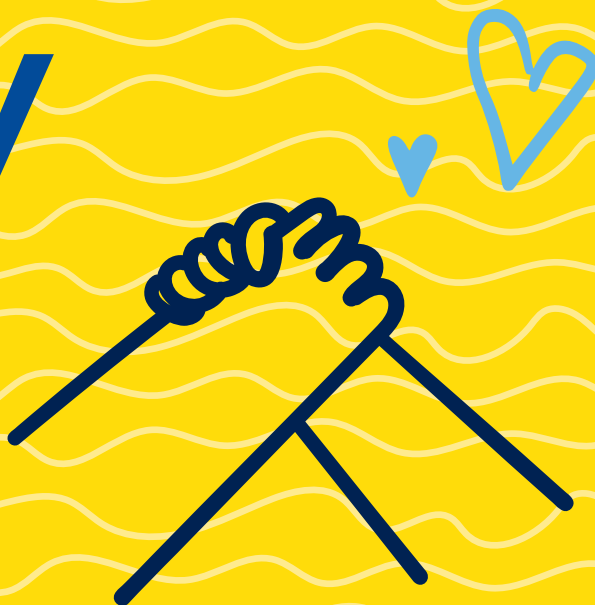
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Alumni & Community News



Forging Connections at Mercy

WE ASKED OUR STUDENTS ABOUT CONNECTIONS THEY'VE MADE DURING THEIR TIME AT MERCY UNIVERSITY. HERE ARE A FEW OF THEIR RESPONSES, TELLING US ABOUT FACULTY, STAFF AND OTHER STUDENTS WHO HAVE MADE AN IMPACT ON THEIR LIVES.



Jordyn Ringel

Physician Assistant, M.S.

"There are about 55 people in my program, and I would say that every single one of them has impacted me, motivated me, pushed me. I'm very grateful that, during this time being in PA school, I have them by my side."



Ruth Costume

Major: Nursing

"There were times in the Nursing program where I felt like maybe this wasn't for me. Sandra [Farrior] gave me reassurance and told me to remember how far I'd come. She provided the clarity and encouragement to keep going."



Joey Dos Santos

Major: Business Administration: Finance

"Juan Alvarez is a great friend, and he's family to me now. In my time here, we've become really close. He even took me to his motherland, Colombia. I'm really grateful that I made such a strong friendship at Mercy."





Adriana Flores
Major: History

"I met [my friend Marcela] my sophomore year while she was a freshman, and since then we've been completely inseparable.

She is always making me laugh and motivating me to do my best in my classes."



Alyssa Politi
Major: Journalism | Minor: Business

"Professor Michael Perrota – from the second we met, we connected and he became a mentor for me ... he's been guiding my writing journey throughout my whole time at Mercy."



Anthony Slater
Major: Social Work

"Raynell Webb helped me to map out my academic course here ... to make sure that I'm graduating on time and helped me be a part of the community. Raynell reached out to just connect with me as a person and not just as a student."



Daniel Coste
Major: Social Work

"Dr. Carol Bennett-Speight is the one who got me into the social work major. It was very hard for me to choose a major, but once I had a conversation with her, everything fell into place. She's a person I'm really thankful for."



Marcela Guerrero
Major: Biology: Biomedical Studies

"I will never stop shouting out Rob Cornetta, my PACT Mentor. I've created such a strong bond with him, and that's helped me get my stuff in order. I feel confident that I'll leave Mercy with all the accomplishments that I've wished and wanted."



Blake Young
Major: Business
Administration: Finance

"[Because of Professor Mark Chmiel's class], my approach to everyday life is ... purposeful and meaningful. Because at the end of the day, it's all about who you are and the impact you leave behind on other people."



MUTUAL
SHOUT-
OUTS!



Cassie Knight
Major: Business Administration

"One of my fondest memories with [Duaa] was when I was stressing about exams. The next day, she put a little note under my door saying, 'Have a great day. Good luck on midterms!'"

Duaa Imran
Major: Health Science: Pre-Physician
Assistant Studies

"I would definitely say friends from my RA team and the orientation team. Shout out to Luis, Maheen, Cassie, Favour, Alfred and Khadijah."



Do you have a
story to tell?

We'd love to hear from you!
Share your Mercy story with
PR@mercy.edu.

Sculpting the Unseen

Rubio's sculpture, titled "G3," is on display at Mercy's Manhattan Campus.



Photos by John Raiola

Famed Puerto Rican artist installs sculptures at Mercy's Bronx and Manhattan Campuses.

When Puerto Rican sculptor Martín Rubio first heard about Mercy University from College of New Rochelle (CNR) alumna Laudelina Martinez CNR SAS '63, something about its history and mission struck a chord. A school committed to opening doors for students deeply resonated with him. Inspired by this, he decided to donate one of his sculptures to the Westchester Campus. That initial gift, facilitated by Martinez, turned out to be just the start of a larger relationship with Mercy.

"We talked about Mercy, she told me the history, and it resonated with me," Rubio recalled. He wanted to honor Mercy's commitment to Hispanic and first-generation student success and to recognize the legacy of CNR, whose alumnae became part of the Mercy community when it closed in 2019.

"That was the beginning, with that first gift." But as he learned about Mercy's other two campuses, he knew he wanted to extend his generosity even further.

Rubio, an internationally recognized artist, has had his works exhibited in museums, galleries and private collections across Japan, France, Colombia and the United States. As one of the founders of El Taller Boricua in Spanish Harlem – a movement that helped spur the creation of El Museo del Barrio in New York City – his artistic contributions have long celebrated cultural heritage. Martinez, founder and owner of the Martinez Gallery in Troy, N.Y., has also been a champion of his work, featuring his pieces in her gallery.

Rubio's sculptures are distinctive, not only for their craftsmanship but for their sensory engagement. Legally blind due to glaucoma, he has adapted his creative process over the years, relying on touch and symbolic representation to bring his ideas to life. "I like to use a lot of symbolism in my pieces," he explained.

For Mercy's Westchester and Manhattan Campuses, Rubio selected two different-sized models of his sculpture entitled "G3," part of a series he created as he adjusted to his vision loss. Sculpted from laminated plywood furniture-grade wood, "G3" features rich variations in wood tones and is mounted on a rotating wooden pin – an invitation for viewers to interact with it physically.

"All of us are affected by what we see every day. Everything is a reaction. I want people to react to the art."

—
Martín Rubio



Rubio's sculpture, titled "Rice the Seed," is on display at Mercy's Bronx Campus.

"This particular piece ["G3"] deals with enlightenment," Rubio said. "The theme is the past, the present and the future. There is more detail on the back of the piece, which represents the past, the middle is the head, the present, and the front, which is like a question mark, is the future," he explained.

For Rubio, placing "G3" in an academic setting made perfect sense. "When students are in college, they have an idea of what they would like to be in the future when they complete their studies, but at present, they are studying and preparing for that future."

To further complement the sculpture, he also donated a commissioned poster created by New York City-based graphic designer Thompson. The artwork features "G3" on a chessboard with a king positioned in front of it. "Both of them are on a chessboard because this sculpture represents so much knowledge and information, and the sculpture has the king in checkmate," Rubio explained.

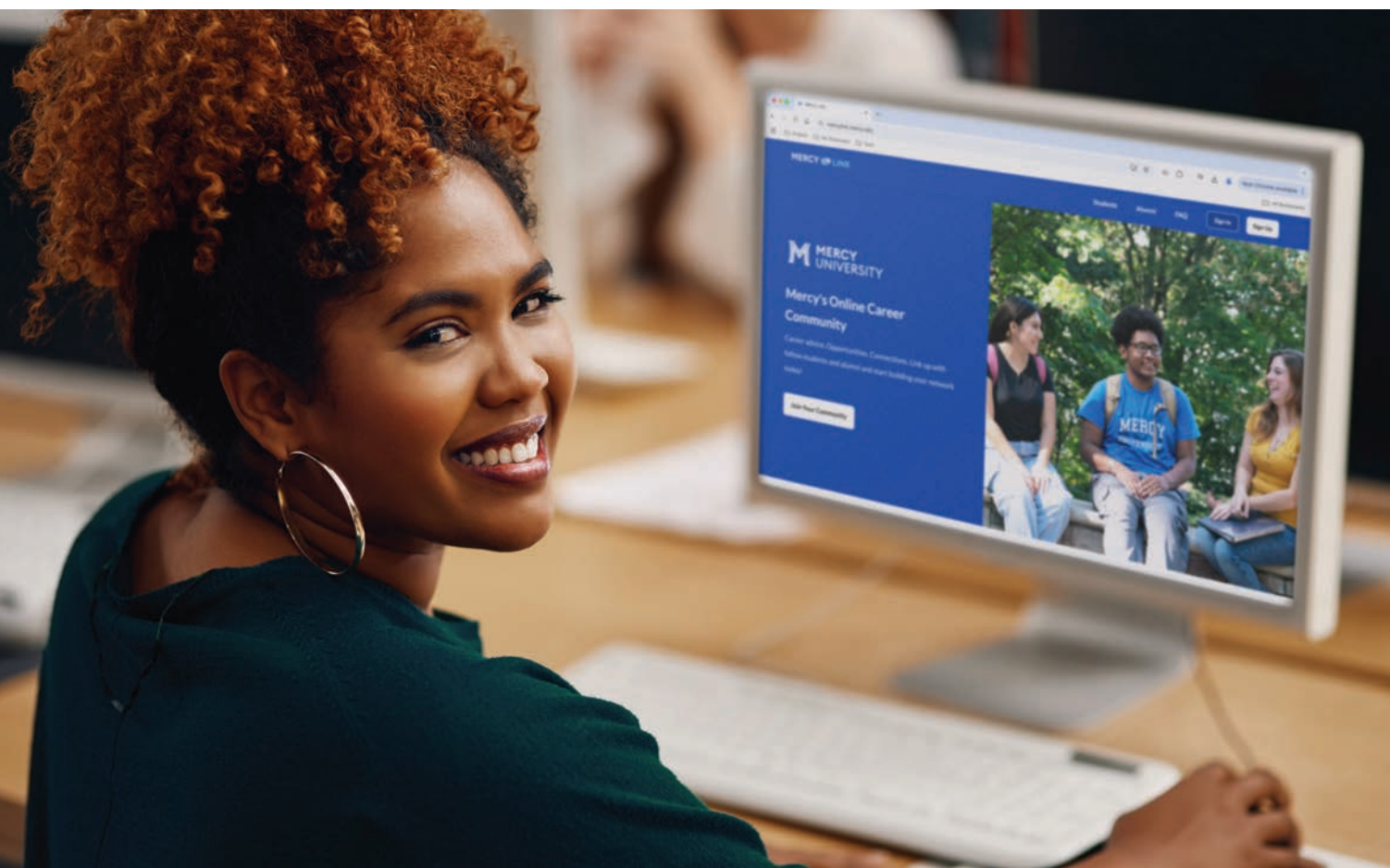
For the Bronx Campus, Rubio chose a different piece – "Rice the Seed." Made of laminated plywood furniture-grade wood, it's another sculpture designed to be touched and explored. Given that the Bronx was the first place he lived when he arrived in New York from Puerto Rico, it felt like the perfect location for a piece representing his roots.

"I grew up on rice and beans," he said, noting that rice is a staple in many cultures. His travels, including an exhibition of this particular piece in Japan, reinforced its universal significance. "When I thought about Mercy's Bronx Campus, I thought about this piece."

More than anything, Rubio hopes his sculptures spark curiosity in the students, faculty, staff and visitors who encounter them.

"All of us are affected by what we see every day. Everything is a reaction. I want people to react to the art," he said. "That is the main focus of all the pieces I design."

Mercy Link Opens New Paths to Career Success



Last fall, Mercy launched Mercy Link, a platform designed to connect Mercy students and alumni and help them navigate to their next (or first) career goal. It provides a powerful network of up to 100,000 alumni from both Mercy University and the College of New Rochelle, giving the Mercy community another way to stay connected. Mercy Link was made possible by funding from Gioietta and Alberto Vitale HD '09, longtime supporters of Mercy.

"Your people are your power," said Lyn Leis, director of Career Education at Mercy. "Unlocking opportunities is so important for first-generation students who don't come in with these inherited networks." She added, "That's daunting if you don't know how to do it. We do that with Mercy Link."

"A recent survey of Mercy alumni indicated a willingness to give back to students. Mercy's Career & Professional Development team partnered with Advancement to make this experience relevant and impactful for students and alumni," said Bernadette Wade CNR SAS '80, vice president of Institutional Advancement. "This platform makes it easy and convenient to connect and have meaningful interactions with students."

Mercy Link is similar to job networking platforms like LinkedIn, but it's tailored specifically to the Mercy community to connect students with alumni. "The idea is that all the alumni who are opting in and creating an account on the platform are the ones who say, 'I very much want to help students,'" explained Leis. "It's not formal mentorship, it's not a long-term or high-time commitment. Students can reach out through the platform and just ask questions."

According to Forbes, 70-80% more jobs get filled than posted each year, which means there's a hidden job market of people who are getting access to these positions through referrals and word-of-mouth. And with Glassdoor reporting that the average online job posting attracts an average of 250 applications, it's easy to see that personal connections are crucial – they give jobseekers the ability to break through the noise.

The platform makes it easier for users to search for jobs with Mercy connections. It scrapes major job boards and displays only positions where Mercy alumni can offer insider knowledge. Before applying, students can connect with graduates who have knowledge or connections with target companies, industries or roles.

"Instead of millions of postings, students see 200 where alumni connections give them an edge," Leis said. "A student can message an alumnus [connection] saying, 'I found this job matching your background. Could you suggest cover letter points to help me stand out?'"

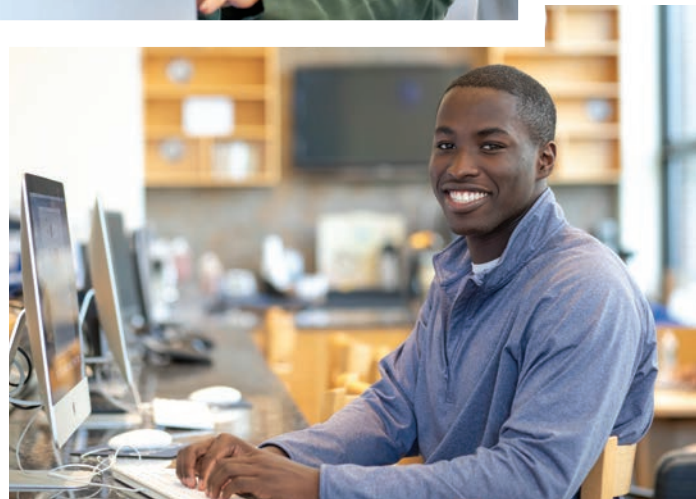
Internship connections take center stage with Mercy Link. "Alumni refer students to openings they know about or post opportunities directly from their own organizations," Leis emphasized. These internships build confidence, expand networks and create competitive advantages after graduation.

Mercy Link also helps naturally develop strategic networking skills. The platform's artificial intelligence (AI) feature guides message drafting, flagging casual language and suggesting more professional alternatives. If someone uses slang or other informal language, Mercy Link will suggest it's not the right tone for that particular message.

"One of my favorite feedback notes pops up if a student writes 'job' or 'internship' in their first message. It will remind the student that they need to make a connection with someone before they ask for referrals, and then it makes connections easy," Leis shared. "The platform reminds them: build relationships first, discuss opportunities later. Share your interests but focus on learning from alumni experiences."

**"Mercy's community is so special,
and one of the things I've noticed
is that there's such a unique
desire to help each other out."**

—
Lyn Leis, director of Career Education



Beyond jobs and internships, Mercy Link aims to provide lifelong career support for students and alumni. "Alumni give back by helping students while growing professionally themselves," Leis said.

Those seeking career changes post-graduation can tap into peer networks based on industry experience, identity or shared interests. "They find fellow veterans, athletes, Spanish speakers – whatever connects them," Leis explains. "So, there's a way for them to connect around shared experiences, which is so impactful."

Mercy Link also allows for the creation of groups where students and alumni can engage in more public conversations with each other, making more informal connections, which has been a recent business trend. "Traditional mentorship programs struggle because monthly commitments overwhelm people," Leis notes. "We ask alumni to share guidance when they can. This approach naturally builds student confidence and understanding of the field they're interested in."

"Mercy's community is so special, and one of the things I've noticed is that there's such a unique desire to help each other out," Leis said. "Current students are helping each other along their job search from day one, and so we're hoping to leverage that and either engage alumni in new ways or engage new alumni."

Mercy Link strengthens bonds between current students and alumni. "We build student career confidence through alumni connections," Leis shared. "They learn industry specifics, secure valuable internships and launch careers in chosen fields. The power of this network will transform how our community supports each other's success."

Alumni and students can join the community at mercylink.mercy.edu or through the PeopleGrove mobile app.

GO



THE 2024 FALL SEMESTER WAS ONE FOR THE RECORD BOOKS AT MERCY UNIVERSITY, AS THE MAVERICKS EXCELLED BOTH IN THE CLASSROOM AND IN COMPETITION.

Photos provided by Mercy Athletics.

MAVS

ATHLETES SHINE ON AND OFF THE FIELD

The Athletic Department set a **new school record with a 3.58 GPA**, showcasing the dedication of its student-athletes. An impressive **40 student-athletes achieved a perfect 4.0 GPA**, while **193 out of 238 recorded a GPA of 3.25 or higher**. For the third consecutive year, the Mavericks earned the **NCAA Division II Presidents' Award for Academic Excellence**. Mercy also recorded a remarkable **92 percent Academic Success Rate (ASR)**, ranking 12th among 312 Division II institutions. Additionally, men's soccer set a new standard with four players named **College Sports Communicators (CSC) Academic All-Americans** – the most from any Division II school and the highest number of Academic All-Americans in one sport in school history. Across all sports, Mercy totaled **16 CSC Academic All-District selections**.



MERCY TEAMS CONTINUE TO IMPRESS

The volleyball team qualified for the **NCAA Tournament** for the second consecutive year, reaching the **ECC Championship Final** for the first time since 2005 and finishing with their **best record in nearly two decades** (16 wins). Both men's and women's soccer teams advanced to the **ECC Championship Semifinals**, with men's soccer posting a 9-3-5 record and achieving a national ranking as high as No. 10 on October 8. Women's soccer finished with a strong 10-8-2 record, making their 11th straight appearance in the ECC Championship Semifinals. Meanwhile, field hockey narrowly missed out on the NE10 Championship, closing their season with six wins.

PLAYERS MAKING HISTORY

Women's basketball was ranked **first in the ECC Preseason Poll** for the first time in program history, while senior **Jaclyn Stanavich** was named **Preseason Player of the Year**. After a **breakthrough NCAA Tournament appearance in 2024** – their first since 1985 – the team started the new campaign strong, sitting at 9-6 overall and 3-2 in ECC play as of January 14, aiming for their fifth straight ECC Championship berth. **Men's basketball has its best ECC start since the 2002-03 season**, posting a 3-2 record in conference play and doubling their win total from the previous year. The team is seeking its first ECC Championship qualification under the current format since 2016.



SHINING ACHIEVEMENTS

Across all sports, Mercy athletes collected **20 ECC All-Conference honors, nine All-Region selections, and multiple Player of the Year awards**. Junior **Johannes Hanken Tjostheim** of men's soccer was named a **United Soccer Coaches Third Team All-American** after tying the school's single-season goal record with 22 and leading the team with 50 points. Graduate student **Julia Pomerleau** of volleyball earned AVCA **All-American Honorable Mention** with 247 kills, a team-high 87 blocks and a .402 hitting percentage. Other standout award winners included **ECC Offensive Player of the Year Johannes Hanken Tjostheim**, **ECC Defensive Player of the Year Julian Holland** (men's soccer), **ECC Setter of the Year Adriana Rivera Rodriguez** (volleyball) and **ECC Rookie of the Year Grace Dilen** (volleyball).

Holding COURT

Through powerful partnership, Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson inspires at Mercy University.

Photos by Kenneth Gabrielsen



Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson shared her journey and vision for education at Mercy University, speaking to an audience who saw their own dreams reflected in her historic achievements. The event, held on December 15, 2024, was possible thanks to a collaboration between Mercy University, The Westchester Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta and the YWCA White Plains & Central Westchester. The power of women's leadership marked this historic gathering, where Justice Brown Jackson spoke about the process of writing her book, "Lovely One," which chronicles her inspiring journey.

"Our ability to host Justice Brown Jackson really is about inspiring all of us," said Tiffany S.W. Hamilton, CEO of YWCA White Plains & Central Westchester and president of The Westchester Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta. "The intersection of these three organizations coming together is not by accident, it was specifically designed," she explained. "Because all three of those organizations are led by women who boldly champion spaces of equity, access, empowerment and education."

Susan L. Parish, president of Mercy University, highlighted the significance of the partnership. "Tiffany's visionary leadership and her partnership with Mercy is what brought Justice Brown Jackson here today. Justice Brown Jackson's presence celebrates not only her achievements but also serves as an invitation for every one of us to reflect on how we each can contribute to a more equitable and more inclusive society."

Justice Brown Jackson, herself a proud alumna of Delta Sigma Theta, shared personal reflections on education and self-belief. "My parents were so interested in making sure that I had all the opportunities that had been denied to them, and they would say to me, 'You can do anything you want to do,' and that really seeped into my consciousness. I remember from being this big just thinking this is what I want to do, this is what I want to be."

She emphasized education's role in democracy: "I've spoken about how much education has shaped and changed the trajectory of my family, my life, and I think it is a crucial tool for achieving not only personally, but also as a society," she said. "Being educated in a democracy is crucial – understanding the issues, being able to speak your voice, being able to participate in your community, knowing truth from fiction – all these things are a function of getting a very good education."

"Education has shaped and changed the trajectory of my family, my life, and I think it is a crucial tool for achieving not only personally, but also as a society."

Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson



Tiffany S.W. Hamilton (left) with Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson (right).



“Justice Brown Jackson being here is inspiring to me as a woman, because I really just want to listen to such a powerful role model.”

—
Mercy University student, Alyssa Politi '24

Hamilton reinforced the event's focus on education and youth empowerment: “When we envisioned this event, we knew that we wanted to center the focus on our young people. It was important for us to create a space where young people from the community could be in the room to see what's possible and to know that they belong here.”

Students responded with enthusiasm to Justice Brown Jackson's presence. Her story resonated with first-generation Mercy students like Alyssa Politi '24. “Justice Brown Jackson being here is inspiring to me as a woman, because I really just want to listen to such a powerful role model. As a first-generation student, getting the first bachelor's degree in my family, and being a woman with three older brothers, sometimes I need that person to inspire me in the professional sense.”

For Mercy student Hannoy Cedeno '24, learning about her impact was incredible. “I've read so many articles about how passionate she is ... and with where we are now as a collective, it's important that she speaks to us about what she's going to do while she's on the Supreme Court. I would love to learn more about what Justice Brown Jackson can do for our community, not just for the nation.”

After the fireside chat, Justice Brown Jackson answered several questions from the audience, including Mercy students. When asked about the role of empathy in judicial decision making, Justice Brown Jackson said, “Justices and judges who have a variety of experiences are able to do the work of evaluating the evidence and the arguments in a way that maybe someone who has not had that experience can.”



Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson (left) poses for a photo with Tiffany S.W. Hamilton (right).



From left to right, Mercy University students Alyssa Politi, Raylene Walters, Michaela Milano and Gretchen Hoffman, President Susan L. Parish, Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, students Hanny Cedeno, Adriana Flores and A'Janae Curtis, staff Orla Fitzsimons and Lisa Mills-Campbell and faculty member Joanne Payne-Preyor.

She was asked about the rules of order for the Supreme Court of the United States, which require her, as the junior member of the court, to comment last during a seriatim round – the legal term for a series of opinions written individually by each judge on the bench. “I like it,” she said, “because I am listening to what other people are saying and in many ways I get the last word.” Justice Brown Jackson continued, “It really gives me some flexibility around participating in the argument and leaving it on a note that I hoped to leave for the public or for the lawyers or whatnot.”

When asked for advice on how to persist through challenges, Justice Brown Jackson shared, “Don’t expect that everything is going to be rosy all the time ... but realize that you’re strong enough to survive this particular set of circumstances.”

The event proved to be informative and uplifting, and everyone left feeling energized and connected.

Empowerment was an overarching theme for the day, and Mercy’s President Parish summed it up with a quote from “Lovely One,” which had been inspiring her since she read it: “Ordinary humans can do extraordinary things, so go ahead and dream as enormously and courageously as you can. If you are diligent and well-prepared and relentlessly optimistic and resolute in purpose, you will be capable of creating a brilliant future for yourself.”



Ida Vallo Morris of Mercy University asks Justice Brown Jackson a question for Maverick Magazine during the Q&A session.



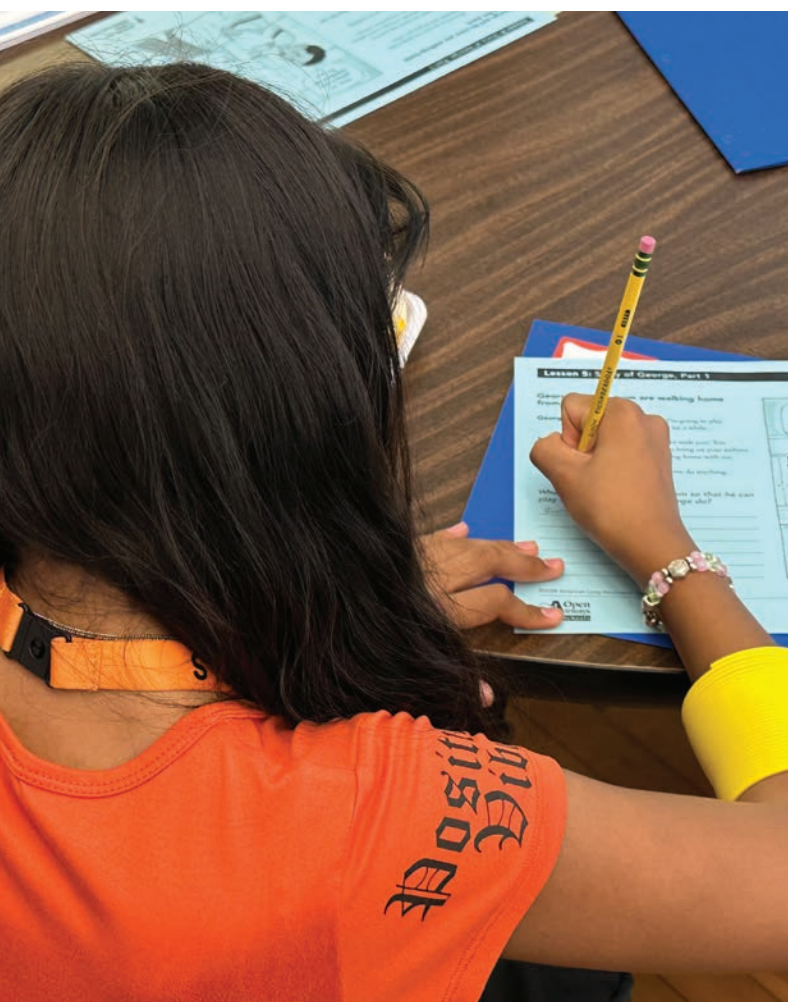


BRIDGING HEALTH GAPS

The School of Nursing
brings asthma awareness
to vulnerable communities.

In a bustling elementary school classroom, a group of third graders sits rapt as they learn how to use a device many have never seen before: a metered-dose asthma inhaler with spacers. Patiently explaining the proper use of the medical device are a group of nursing students from Mercy University, participants in The Asthma Initiative, an innovative program that increases access to health education for communities with high rates of asthma.

The program, inspired by Kenya Beard, Ed.D., AGACNP-BC, ANEF, FAAN, dean of the School of Nursing, and led by Sindy Louisma, associate director of clinical operations, kicked off in September 2024 with a series of community health events aimed at increasing asthma awareness among children and other vulnerable members of the community. In partnership with the American Lung Association, the White Plains School District and the YWCA in White Plains, the program sends nursing students to visit schools and community organizations in Westchester to learn about the experiences of those who have asthma and may have been marginalized or overlooked by public health efforts.



The program is accomplishing key goals for community health and nursing education. “The Asthma Initiative benefits the community by providing strategies that affect health outcomes. And it benefits our students when we expose them to the rewards of community health,” said Beard. “We are building strong nurse leaders who will advocate for better policies for the health of the whole community. We are making a life-changing impact.”

Before fanning out into the community, the future nurses were briefed on how to demonstrate the correct use of asthma inhalers to children and adults effectively. They also prepared answers to common questions about asthma triggers, environmental factors and other health behaviors that can worsen symptoms.

“Asthma is a chronic disease, yet in recent years it has taken a back seat,” said Louisma. “Our goal is to raise the community’s awareness of asthma prevalence in their community, and to give them strategies for staying healthy. There are steps people can take to manage their asthma, such as knowing their triggers, having an action plan, staying in touch with their providers and following their treatment protocols. This reduces emergency room visits and improves the overall community health.”

“We believe we’re building strong nurse leaders who will advocate for better policies for the health of the community.”

—
Kenya Beard, Ed.D., AGACNP-BC, ANEF, FAAN,
dean of the School of Nursing



Photo by John Raiola



“Having an asthma action plan can really help. It’s important for kids to feel they have some control.”

—
Victoria Torres ’25

Louisma added that Mercy students have also participated in the American Lung Association’s award-winning Open Airways for Schools® program, which provides action plans for children with asthma to share with their parents and pediatricians. “By providing a key source of support to vulnerable populations, we’re helping them improve asthma outcomes in their communities,” said Louisma.

The Mercy students who attended the outreach programs said the Asthma Initiative opened their eyes to the variety of options for nursing professionals, including roles in promoting public health.

Victoria Torres ’25, who was diagnosed with asthma as an adult, said she relates to the worry parents and children feel when facing the enormity of the disease. “I can only imagine how scary that can be for a child,” she said. “Having an asthma action plan can really help. It’s important for kids to feel they have some control.”

Minnu Benny ’25, whose mother was a nurse, was inspired to pursue the same career. “My mom genuinely enjoyed her work and had a passion for helping others,” Benny said. The Asthma Initiative offered a new perspective on nursing. “When we educate people to manage their condition, we are helping them to prevent future issues.”

“I’ve always had a strong desire to help people and to make a positive impact in their lives,” said Jennifer Lopez ’25. “[Learning how to] encourage communication between families and healthcare practitioners really sticks in my mind,” she said.

Grace Kim ’25 questioned a common misperception that health means stepping in after a disease or condition has set in. “But we learned that prevention is possible, and providing knowledge can help even little third-graders to control triggers before the condition worsens,” she said. “There truly is no limit to when health education can begin.”



The Asthma Initiative is part of the School of Nursing’s Health Equity Influencers Program. It exemplifies Mercy University’s commitment to addressing healthcare disparities and preparing nursing students to be effective leaders in public health.

Mavs Giving Back

During the 2024 holiday season, Mercy Mavs embodied our commitment to service, bringing support and smiles to our communities through several meaningful events.

Photos by Kenneth Gabrielsen





Thanksgiving Food Drive

Mercy students collected items to fill the shelves at the Dobbs Ferry food pantry at South Presbyterian Church. Their efforts brought essential holiday staples to local families during a season centered around gathering and gratitude, ensuring they could celebrate around full tables.



Dobbs Ferry Holiday Hustle 5K

Mercy students helped to make a difference at the Dobbs Ferry Holiday Hustle 5K and Reindeer Fun Run as enthusiastic volunteers. Mercy's student-athletes were positioned along the race route to hand out water and provide spirited encouragement. The event raised funds for the Dobbs Ferry Youth Services council, supporting the overall well-being of Dobbs Ferry's youth.



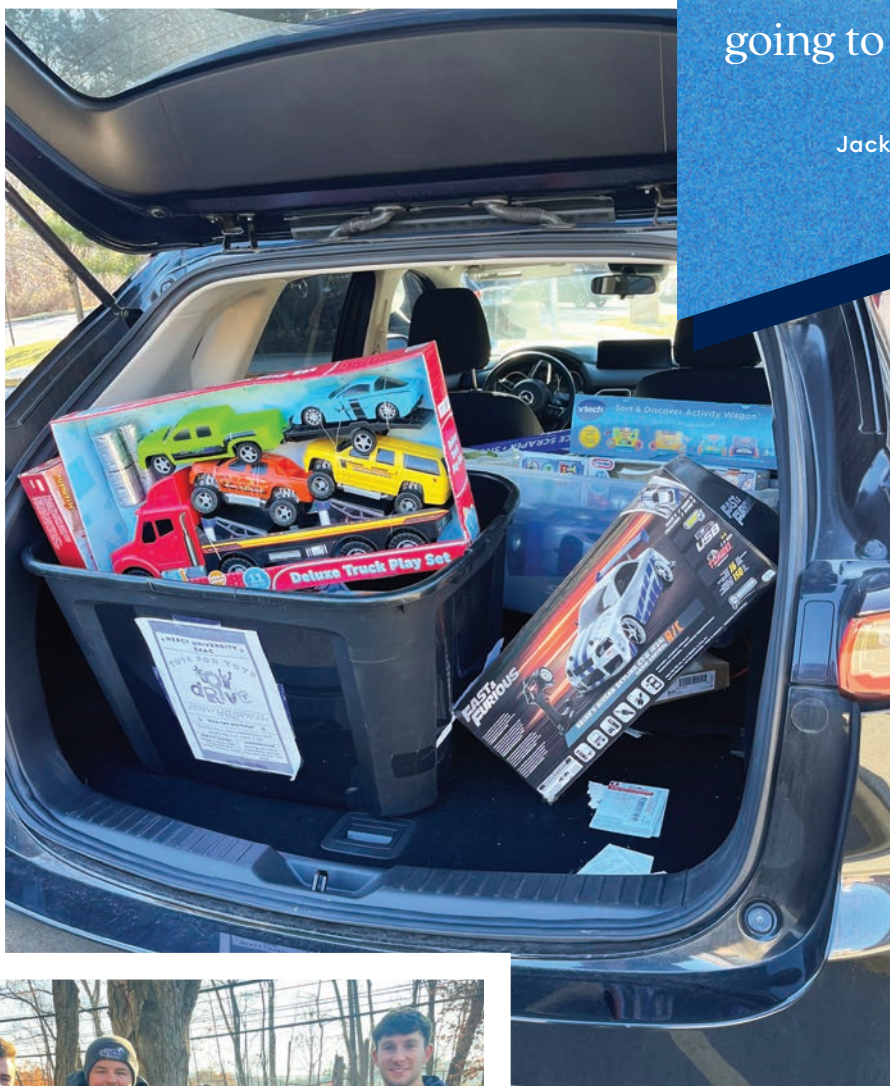
SEE OUR STUDENTS
IN ACTION AT THE
DOBBS FERRY HOLIDAY
HUSTLE 5K ON MERCY'S
YOUTUBE PAGE

“It’s just great to see
smiling faces on
everyone ... what we’re
doing is making
other people happy.”

—
Juliana Talenti '26







“I think it’s a big thing
as student-athletes
that we give back.
And anything we can
do like this is always
going to be great for us.”

—
Jackson Redmond '29

Holiday Toy Drive

Students delivered hope and holiday cheer when they collected unwrapped toys from generous spectators at home basketball games throughout December. The impressive collection – from developmental toys for toddlers to trendy items for teens – was presented to the Dobbs Ferry Police Department for distribution through their holiday outreach program.

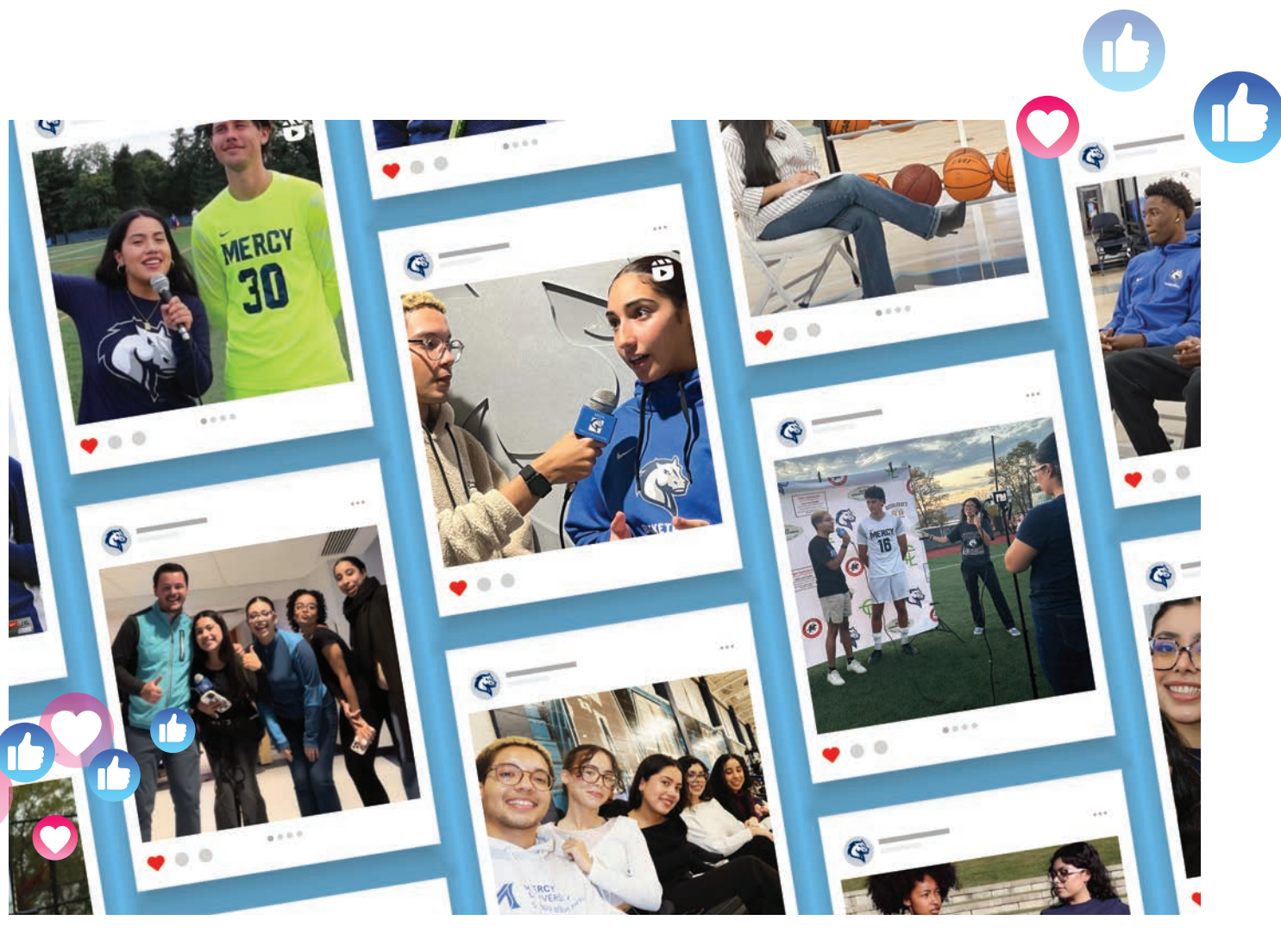
TALKING A GOOD GAME

Student-run sports media network promotes Mercy Athletics.

On a sunny day in September, Jackeline Gregorio '25 watched the women's soccer team win 3-1 in a game against Georgian Court University. After it ended, she conducted a short video interview with player Isabella Messina '25 about defensive tactics and what the team learned from the game.

That interview became the first Mercy Sports Network (MSN) post on Instagram under the handle @mercysportsnetwork. Since then, the student-run MSN team has created dozens of posts that highlight Mercy's student-athletes, coaches and athletic successes. Posts are routinely getting thousands of views.





“These videos help Mercy by promoting the athletics department and student-athletes,” said Gregorio, who is in the Mercy Business Honors program. “They help Mercy coaches show prospective students that the opportunities at Mercy are endless. And they help MSN team members see if sports marketing is something they want to pursue. It’s a win-win on all sides.”

Gregorio was inspired to start MSN after attending the Conmebol Copa América semifinal over the summer. “Watching the game reignited my passion for sports,” she explained. “And it drove me to find a way to combine that passion with my love of storytelling and my business education.”

Upon returning to Mercy for the fall semester, she mentioned launching a student-run Mercy sports media group to Mark Chmiel, instructor in business. “She came to me with this great idea, and then she ran with it,” he said. “I gave her some guidance and connected her to leaders within Mercy, including Vice President of Athletics Matt Kilcullen Jr., who fully supports this effort. One thing Jackeline and I have worked on is how to manage a team and get younger students involved, so MSN can live on after she graduates.”

JG

Jackeline Gregorio '25

**“I want to make a global impact.
And I think I can make that
impact in storytelling for sports.
MSN was the spark.”**



Mark Chmiel, instructor,
School of Business

“One thing Jackeline and I have worked on is how to manage a team and get younger students involved, so MSN can live on after she graduates.”



Other Mercy leaders and staff rallied behind MSN as well. Mercy’s Assistant Athletic Director of Communications, Kyle Goodhart ’12, worked with the students to make MSN interviews look more professional, and he and Gregorio are currently talking about the possibility of producing a podcast on Mercy athletics. Mercy President Susan Parish connected Gregorio with an executive at ESPN, which has turned into a series of networking opportunities. “That one connection led to several career chats for me to explore sports media and marketing,” Gregorio said. “I end each conversation by asking who I should speak with next, so each conversation leads to another one.”

Gregorio praises the Business Honors program for playing a significant role in her success. “The Business Honors program molded me to become ambitious and determined,” she said. “I’ve had amazing professors, including Mark Chmiel, who saw my potential and mentored me. His lessons and insights on the technical side of business helped me set and meet goals for our views and engagement on Instagram. Having a support system like that really pushed me to where I am today.”

MSN makes sure that at least a couple of team members attend every Mercy home game. They watch the game, write up interview questions and conduct one or more video interviews, aiming to share behind-the-scenes perspectives. Later, the MSN team edits each video and writes the caption before posting on Instagram.

The work is data-driven, and the team constantly experiments with new ideas. Gregorio watches professional sports networks to get new ideas for interviewing and video editing techniques. The MSN team examines Instagram’s performance data to determine which posts perform the best. One video got almost 5,000 views, and the team thinks it is because of the variety of hashtags Luis Mejia ’25 included in the caption. That result has made them more focused on editing and perfecting the captions.

Being involved with MSN has helped team members grow their skills in many areas. “Interviewing is so out of character for me because I’m not much of a talker,” said MSN team member Nikky Ramirez ’24. “But it’s my last semester here at Mercy, so I wanted to try something out of my comfort zone. I’ve learned public speaking skills and gained confidence.” Francelis Ovalles ’25, another MSN team member, says that she has learned the value of teamwork and how to manage her time.

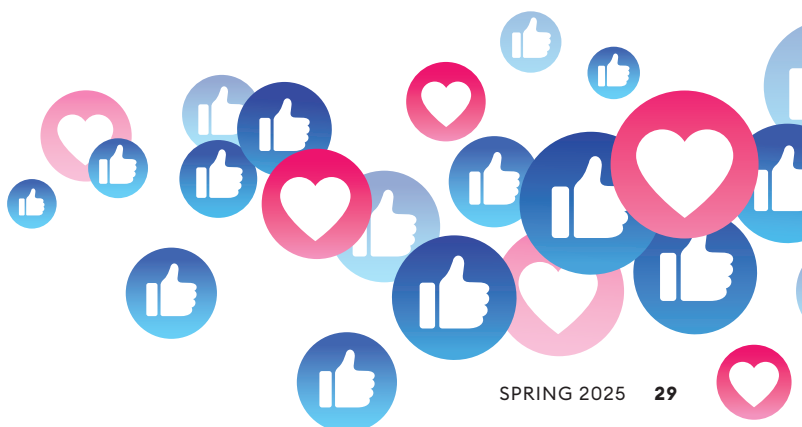
MSN is shaping students’ career plans. Both Nikky Ramirez ’24 and Esmeralda Perez ’25 report that their work with MSN has solidified their plans to pursue careers in marketing. “I found my niche throughout this experience with MSN,” said Perez.

Gregorio has also discovered her new career path. “I want to make a global impact,” she said. “And I think I can make that impact in storytelling for sports. MSN was the spark.”

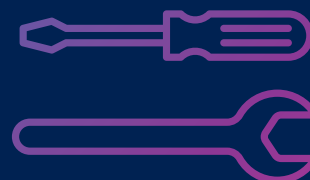
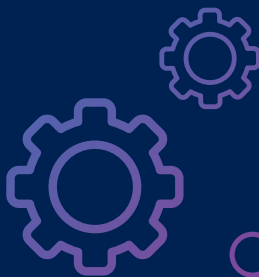
EP

Esmeralda Perez ’25

“I found my niche throughout this experience with MSN.”



Creating Community, Empowering Teachers



MCSE co-directors Dr. Amanda Gunning (top) and Dr. Meghan Marrero (bottom).

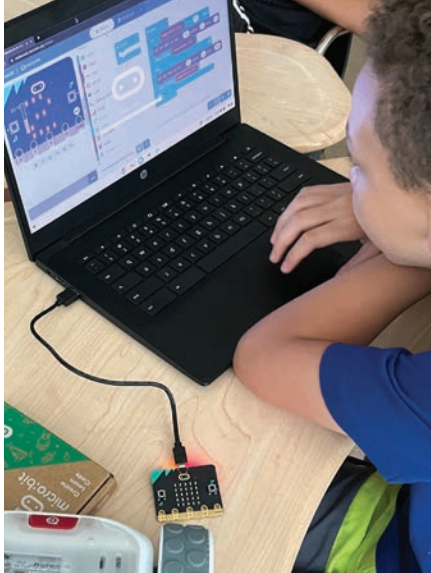
Mercy leads the way in spreading early STEM education.

On a cool evening last fall, fifth graders at Columbus Elementary School in New Rochelle, N.Y., made their first foray into architectural home design. As part of a STEM engineering challenge, the team of 10-year-olds applied creative problem-solving, budgeting and other skills toward the design and construction of tiny house models using household materials.

The activity was developed and facilitated by a cadre of K-8 teachers, with support from the Mercy University Center for STEM Education (MCSE). At Columbus Elementary and other schools in the region, educators of children in grades K-8 are leading the way to ensure all students have access to rigorous STEM education.

MCSE co-directors Dr. Amanda Gunning and Dr. Meghan Marrero are a driving force behind the proliferation of the center's flagship programs, which include the STEM Schools Network, the Wipro Science Education Fellowship (SEF), and the family-centered FLORES (Family Learning and Outreach for Research and Education in STEM). Thanks to their steady efforts over the past decade, Mercy has emerged as a leader in shaping early STEM education in the region.

In its 10 years as a member of Wipro SEF, MCSE has supported more than 90 science teacher fellows from five local school districts as they completed a science education fellowship. Many of these Fellows have recruited additional



educators from their schools and other networks, alerting them to Mercy programs, building community and advocating for early STEM education.

“We’re focused on building community and connecting teachers to emerging educational resources,” said Gunning. “And we’re constantly growing. Our goal is to ensure all students, regardless of background, have access to integrated STEM learning.”

At their conference on STEM teacher leadership held last fall on Mercy’s Westchester Campus, the MCSE invited area K–12 STEM educators to come together and learn from schools that are succeeding in early STEM education. Seven of these schools, including Columbus Elementary, were recognized as the first cohort of the Mercy University STEM Schools Network, a consortium of distinguished schools that have demonstrated a commitment to STEM

education and have leveraged MCSE’s wealth of programs and opportunities. Network schools have access to funds for teachers’ STEM initiatives and enjoy discounts on STEM conferences and other professional development programs.

“Through our many outreach programs, we are seeing real growth in our ability to build a knowledge-sharing community of STEM educators that not only empowers teachers but also helps communities,” said Marrero. “We commend our Network schools for their dedication to learning new practices, sharing technologies and spreading the word about Mercy’s programs to other schools and districts.”

To date, Columbus Elementary has sent four teachers through the Westchester STEM Ambassadors program, another professional development project led by the MCSE. Many have reached out to other schools in the area, connecting with other K–8 teachers and sharing resources and support as more schools work to develop their own STEM activities for students.

Anny Vanegas, a National Science Foundation STEM Master Teacher Fellow, Wipro Reimagined Fellow, Westchester STEM Ambassador and a teacher at Columbus Elementary, acknowledged the support and enthusiasm STEM has received from her administrators

and the district. “It’s gratifying to know our district leaders share our belief in the transformative power of science education, particularly for students with learning differences,” she said. “We’re seeing them – all students, in fact – starting to thrive in STEM subjects.”

Columbus regularly hosts evening workshops for families to help support their children’s science learning and bring science into their daily lives. The FLORES family-oriented, bilingual workshops are led by Columbus faculty who have completed a professional learning program at the MCSE.

“Columbus has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to STEM education by wholeheartedly tapping into the resources and opportunities we offer,” said Gunning. “We’re proud to be partners, along with the other members of the Mercy University STEM Schools Network.”



STEM SCHOOLS NETWORK

Out of 11 K–12 schools that applied, only seven were selected to join the first cohort. In September, these seven schools were recognized for their dedication to sharing new and emerging technologies and practices that result in the propagation of STEM education.

- **Brookside Elementary School,**
Ossining Union Free School District
- **Columbus Elementary School,**
City School District of New Rochelle
- **Charter School for Educational Excellence High School,**
Yonkers
- **John F. Kennedy Elementary School,**
Port Chester-Rye Union Free School District
- **Thomas Edison Elementary School,**
Port Chester-Rye Union Free School District
- **Trinity Elementary School,**
City School District of New Rochelle
- **Washington Irving Elementary School,**
Public Schools of the Tarrytowns

From Page To Practice

Mercy University faculty help
shape the future of veterinary
technology education.

Photos by Kenneth Gabrielsen



For students pursuing a career in veterinary technology at Mercy University, mastering hands-on skills isn't just a component of the program – it's the foundation. A new edition of the coursebook "Assessing Essential Skills of Veterinary Technology Students" ensures students are fully prepared to meet industry standards and excel in the field.

Faculty from Mercy's Veterinary Technology Program played a pivotal role in shaping the fourth edition. Professors Lisa E. Schenkel, Amanda Colón, Sandra Lynn Bertholf '97, M.S. '18, Sabrina Timperman and retired faculty member Laurie J. Buell '95 contributed their expertise to this comprehensive resource, which reviews the skills required by the American Veterinary Medical Association's Committee on Veterinary Technician Education and Activities (AVMA CVTEA).

"What I really value about this book is it's not just a checklist of skills," said Dr. Colón. "It gives you a thought process and knowledge behind each skill, in addition to the hands-on techniques. It really puts a big focus on applying these skills in the clinical environment."

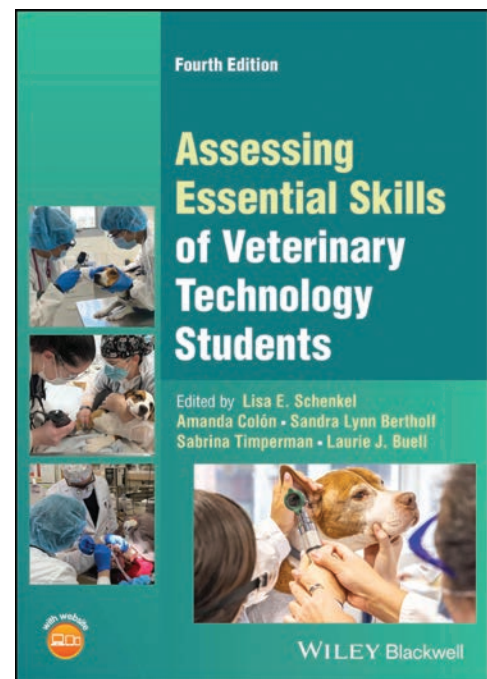
Mercy University's Veterinary Technology Program is a standout choice for students passionate about animal healthcare. As one of the few programs nationwide offering a Bachelor of Science degree in veterinary technology, it combines rigorous academics with extensive clinical training. Students complete two full-semester externships and have opportunities to specialize in areas such as surgical nursing, exotic animal medicine and zoo animal care – preparing them for advanced roles in veterinary medicine. With a 98% Veterinary Technician National Exam pass rate for more than 20 years, the program consistently delivers exceptional results.

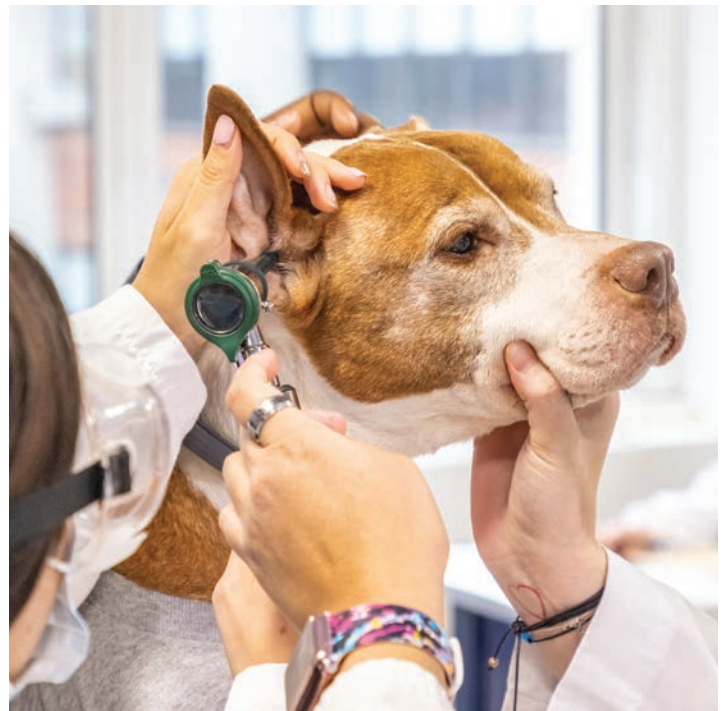
What sets Mercy's program apart are its unique opportunities, including externships at top practices, multi-specialty centers and zoos, as well as an articulation agreement with Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine. This agreement reserves two seats per enrollment period for qualified Mercy students, ensuring them a direct path to further their education in veterinary medicine at Ross University. Named one of the Top Ten Best Value Schools, Mercy's program ensures students are not only well-trained but also positioned for rewarding careers in this growing field.

Bertholf, a licensed veterinary technologist and associate program director, plays a unique role in the curriculum by teaching both the introductory course and the final capstone course. She describes her position as the "bookends" of the program, allowing her to guide students from their first steps to their final milestones. "It's really amazing to see how far they've come and how much they've learned," she said.

"The goal of this book is for students to apply knowledge to the patient in front of them. We want the students to have a very detailed resource."

—
Sandra Lynn Bertholf '97, M.S. '18,
assistant professor and associate
program director Veterinary Technology,
the School of Health and Natural Sciences





“What sets us apart is the clinical experiences we provide to students. They encounter real-life patient situations. When our students graduate, they are ready to enter the field.”

—
Amanda Colón D.V.M.,
associate professor Veterinary Technology,
the School of Health and Natural Sciences





A graduate of the program herself, Bertholf said, “It’s exciting to come full circle and teach for the program. I like that I can relate to the students and share my own experiences to help them be successful.”

Colón echoed this sentiment, highlighting the program’s emphasis on real-world experiences. “What sets us apart is the clinical experiences we provide to students,” she said. “They encounter real-life patient situations. When our students graduate, they are ready to enter the field.”

These real-life patient scenarios, encountered during externships, are supported by the coursebook, which emphasizes the reasoning behind each procedure. “It really focuses on applying skills in the clinical environment,” said Colón. “It’s not just about how to do something – it’s about understanding the why. When you grasp the reasoning behind procedures, you’re better equipped to pivot and make adjustments if things don’t go as planned, ensuring patient safety. Our goal is to develop thoughtful, knowledgeable and professional veterinary technicians.”

Colón also emphasized the challenge of bridging classroom knowledge to real-world application. “Students can do quite well on a written exam, but making that bridge from didactic knowledge to a real-life patient in front of them? That’s the challenge,” she said. “Applying that knowledge in the clinical environment is one of the biggest challenges for students today.”

Bertholf agreed, highlighting the coursebook’s purpose. “The goal of this book is for students to apply knowledge to the patient in front of them,” she said. “We want the students to have a very detailed resource.”

This essential study guide is ideal for undergraduate students in AVMA CVTEA-accredited veterinary technology programs and serves as a valuable teaching tool for instructors. It is also a required textbook in Mercy University’s Veterinary Technology Program.

A photograph of a red theater curtain. A spotlight illuminates the stage floor in the lower right corner, while the rest of the scene is in shadow.

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

Mercy students gain hands-on experience working and performing at a local theater.

Thanks to a partnership between Mercy University's School of Liberal Arts and the Irvington Theater, Mercy students can take advantage of internships, part-time jobs and performance opportunities at the local theater – contributing to the community in the process.

"This job gives me an 'in' in the arts," said alumnus Eduardo Balbuena '23 who works part-time at the theater. "It complements what I want to do career-wise, and I hope it'll help me get there one day." He plans to pursue a career in acting. He fell in love with the craft at Mercy while majoring in radio and television production.

Marc Palmieri, assistant professor in communications arts, spearheaded the partnership with Irvington Theater manager Greg Allen. The 432-seat Irvington Theater, which is located within Irvington's Town Hall, opened in 1902 and now hosts local arts organizations and touring groups. "It's the ideal community organization collaboration in every way," Palmieri said. "The theater is up the street from Mercy, and it's such a beautiful place. The people there are so encouraging for the students. And it couldn't be a better extension of my classes because students see all the elements of a theatrical production come together on a professional level, and they get to be a part of it."

In 2017, Palmieri and Allen met and started exploring how the School of Liberal Arts and the Irvington Theater could work together. After Palmieri helped resurrect the Mercy University Theatre Club, Allen invited the group to perform at the theater in exchange for students volunteering as ushers at other performances. From there, the partnership yielded some internships and part-time paid positions at the theater for students and alumni. Currently, one student and two recent alumni work there.

Balbuena works in the box office and in the front of the house, which involves greeting patrons and keeping the stage managers updated about whether the audience is seated. "I was so nervous my first day," he said. "I get nervous talking to people sometimes, so being face to face with strangers was nerve-racking. But the theater staff helped me through the process and see that it wasn't something to be afraid of."



Joel Rivera '26 – who is majoring in film and media – has worked as an usher since November. He greets patrons as they enter the theater, scans tickets, shows people to their seats and hands out programs. "I've had a great time working at the theater," he said. "I like that I get to see people feeling happy as they go to live performances." He hopes to pursue a career in acting or writing screenplays.

Allen believes it is important for art organizations to work with university students. "The arts are for everyone," he said. "We want patrons to feel that when they walk through the door, and students need to feel that too. These jobs provide access. If students want to work in the arts one day, working in the box office or as an usher gets you in the door. They can learn so much in these roles."

The partnership continues to evolve. While the theater was closed for extensive renovations from 2020 to 2024, Mercy hosted two years of the theater's Arts Incubator Short Play Fest, in which playwrights submit unpublished, unproduced scripts for public reading. Students from the Theatre Club read a play along with the professionals. After the festival, a couple of local directors contacted Palmieri to ask for specific students' contact information to offer them other performing opportunities. "It's nice to see the community recognize how good our students are," Palmieri said.

Peter West, Ph.D., dean of Mercy's School of Liberal Arts, sees how beneficial this partnership is for all parties. "The collaboration between Mercy and the Irvington Theater has resulted in such meaningful experiences for our students," he said. "We hope the collaboration continues to grow in ways that enrich both institutions and the local community."

The partnership also yields less tangible – but no less important – outcomes, such as exposing students to more of the arts. For example, working in the theater this year has inspired Balbuena to read more plays to refine his understanding of drama. Rivera is enjoying the shows he sees while ushering. "My favorite one so far was 'Les Misérables,'" he said. "It was the first musical I've seen. I wasn't sure how I'd feel about all the singing, but it turns out that it was really, really good."

"The collaboration between Mercy and the Irvington Theater has resulted in such meaningful experiences for our students."

—

Peter West, Ph.D., dean of the School of Liberal Arts

Leading in Justice

Mercy's new master's program in criminal justice is not just an academic milestone — it's a step toward a safer, more equitable society.



“Corporate security managers, justice policy advocates, individuals supporting victims of crime or formerly incarcerated persons – these are just a few of the many professionals who benefit from the critical thinking, ethical decision-making, research and strategic problem-solving skills that our program develops.”

—
Stuart Sidle, Ph.D., dean of the School
of Social and Behavioral Sciences

Mercy University has launched its first master’s degree program in criminal justice. Under the auspices of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SSBS), the new graduate program builds on the success of Mercy’s criminal justice bachelor’s degree by offering advanced training and critical thinking skills essential for careers in the broad field of criminal justice.

Dr. Charles Lieberman, the program’s director, joined Mercy in 2021 to develop this interdisciplinary graduate program. Launched in fall 2024, the curriculum was designed to address increasing student demand and the growing need for diverse, well-trained professionals in criminal justice.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that employment for police officers and detectives will grow 7% by 2030. Mercy’s master’s degree can prepare graduates for a variety of careers, both in law enforcement and in a number of related fields.

“Although our program is ideal for police officers seeking career advancement, it’s important to note that the master’s degree provides a robust foundation for a variety of career paths,” said Stuart Sidle, Ph.D., SSBS dean. “Corporate security managers, justice policy advocates, individuals supporting victims of crime or formerly incarcerated persons – these are just a few of the many professionals who benefit from the critical thinking, ethical decision-making, research and strategic problem-solving skills that our program develops.”

The criminal justice faculty consists of current or former practitioners with decades of experience across adjacent areas of policing, corrections, federal agencies and the legal system. “We have veterans from the NYPD, the FBI, and even the Korean National Police Force,” said Lieberman. The faculty’s collective expertise provides students with an insider’s comprehensive understanding of the field.

While the benefits of a master’s degree include job security and higher earning potential as well as preparation for a wide variety of careers and doctoral studies, the realized value goes much deeper.

“Effective solutions to crime and criminal behavior require more than quick fixes based on emotional or political appeals. They demand approaches grounded in solid research and a refined understanding of underlying causes,” said Dean Sidle. “Society doesn’t lack solutions; it often lacks the ability

to implement evidence-based strategies that address root causes effectively. Our program equips students with the skills to analyze data, apply research findings and make informed, empathetic decisions that lead to meaningful and lasting improvements to our justice systems and public safety.”

The timing felt right. “Mercy’s curriculum stands out for its small class sizes, and that enables students to build close mentoring relationships with faculty,” Lieberman said.

Some students come to the program having held jobs in corrections, the courts, the military or law enforcement, Lieberman observed. Students who had majored in the social sciences also began inquiring about the program, hoping to apply their earlier studies to adjacent areas of focus such as victims’ assistance, the families of incarcerated individuals or criminal justice reform.

The students now enrolled in the master’s program reflect Mercy’s commitment to diversity, with the majority being from minority backgrounds and over half identifying as women. “Diversity improves organizations by reducing bias and broadening perspectives,” Lieberman said. This representation is especially critical in criminal justice professions, where varied viewpoints can improve decision-making and foster stronger community connections.

Sidle noted that “By preparing a diverse generation of leaders, our aim is to create more equitable representation in the communities where our graduates hope to serve.”

By combining academic rigor, practical experience and a commitment to equity, Mercy’s criminal justice program may be paving the way to a safer, more equitable future. Looking ahead, Lieberman said he hopes to expand Mercy’s criminal justice offerings, further enhancing the University’s mission to promote social mobility and community impact. Sidle added, “It’s never been more vital to begin shaping the next generation of leaders who can meet the complex challenges our society faces.”



FINANCIAL FREEDOM FOR ALL

Inside Mercy's
groundbreaking
new partnership.

To help local residents achieve financial stability and well-being, Mercy University has partnered with the City of Mount Vernon, Westchester County and the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund (CFE Fund) to launch the Mount Vernon Financial Empowerment Center (FEC). Officially inaugurated on December 3, 2024, the FEC offers free financial counseling and coaching to the Westchester community.



“This collaboration underscores our mission to not only empower our students but also advance the broader communities we serve,” said Susan L. Parish, Ph.D., M.S.W., president of Mercy University. “Combining Mercy’s expertise with the center’s specialized services will equip families with the tools they need to confidently navigate their finances.”

disparities and creating a pathway to financial independence for the people of Mount Vernon.”

The FEC is located at 130 Mount Vernon Avenue, within the Westchester-Putnam One Stop Career Center, a key supporter of the initiative. This strategic location ensures that residents of Mount Vernon and the greater Westchester community have easy access to these invaluable services.

“This center ensures that every county resident has access to free, life-changing financial resources, empowering brighter futures for all – and is another example of the type of collaboration and opportunity that we must continue to pursue,” said former Westchester County Executive George Latimer.

The Financial Empowerment Center model was first piloted in New York City under Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg in 2008 and has since expanded across the country. The City of Mount Vernon is one of several dozen local governments working to launch or having already launched a local FEC initiative. To date, FECs have assisted over 180,000 clients, reducing individual debt by over \$293 million, and increasing their families’ savings by close to \$57 million. A key component of the FEC model is the integration of counseling into other social services, such as housing and foreclosure prevention, workforce development, prisoner reentry, benefits access and domestic violence services,



Mercy University serves as the nonprofit provider managing the day-to-day operations of the FEC, where professionally trained counselors assist low- and moderate-income individuals and families in managing their finances. Services include helping clients pay down debt, increase savings, establish and build credit and access safe and affordable mainstream banking products. The FEC’s mission is to ensure financial security is within reach for all residents, regardless of income level.

Mount Vernon Mayor Shawyn Patterson-Howard emphasized the significance of this initiative in tackling economic inequalities and creating opportunities for the community. “By integrating financial counseling into our broader social services, we’re not just helping families get by – we’re helping them thrive,” she said. “This partnership with the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund, Westchester County and Mercy University represents a major step forward in addressing economic



among others. Research from the CFE Fund shows that this program works even for residents with very low incomes and other complex financial challenges.

“Mayor Shawyn Patterson-Howard and the City of Mount Vernon are part of a growing national movement to bring free, high-quality financial counseling as a public service to their residents,” said Jonathan Mintz, president and CEO of the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund. “We are proud to partner with Mayor Patterson-Howard to help residents work towards a stronger financial future.”

By providing essential financial guidance, the FEC aims to break cycles of economic hardship and pave the way for a more financially secure community.

An illustration of three children playing in a park. A girl is swinging on a swing set, a boy is running with a ball, and another boy is throwing a paper airplane. The scene is set against a blue background with white leaves and grass.

LEADING *the* WAY

**DaMia Harris-Madden,
M.S. '07, M.B.A. '22,
works to improve life for
New York communities.**

"I wake up every day feeling privileged and honored to work in state government," said Dr. DaMia Harris-Madden, M.S. '07, M.B.A. '22, commissioner of the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) since May 2024. "I also feel massive responsibility." Named a Mercy University Alumni of Distinction honoree in 2024, she has spent more than 20 years working for community and government organizations serving youth and families.

As commissioner, Harris-Madden plays a pivotal role in shaping OCFS policy to achieve its mission of promoting the safety, permanency and well-being of New York children, families and communities. OCFS provides oversight and support to all local DSS and child welfare agencies, 18,000 childcare providers, domestic violence shelters and just about all programs relative to childcare and child welfare services, foster care, juvenile justice, youth development and the Commission for the Blind. "It's a vast agency that touches the lives of residents at all ages – 'from twinkle to wrinkle,'" she explained.



In her first nine months in the role, Harris-Madden has driven forward many OCFS priorities, which include after-school programming, funding resources and opportunities for young people in the juvenile justice system, paving the way toward universal childcare and supporting the most vulnerable populations, including runaway, homeless and trafficked youth.

A lucky conversation brought Harris-Madden to study at Mercy University and put her on a path to a career in government. She was working at Gap, Inc. in human resources at the time and planned to apply to law school. For some reason, she ended up at a Mercy open house and heard about the master's degree in human resource management. "The next thing I know, I applied and got accepted!" she said. "That totally changed the trajectory for me."

Her experience as a young mother completing her degree gives her a unique perspective on the necessity of Governor Kathy Hochul's childcare initiatives. "I wrote my thesis on youth employment with my baby daughter on my lap, typing with one hand," she laughed. "I know that lots of parents attend Mercy, and I appreciate the governor's initiatives promoting access to childcare so parents can further their education and realize their dreams."

With a passion for helping people prepare for the workforce, Harris-Madden soon moved into the nonprofit world and then into government. After working as an assistant program director at the Urban League of Westchester County, she took a job with the City of Mount Vernon. She worked for the city for 14 years, serving in four mayoral cabinets, including executive director of the Mount Vernon Youth Bureau.

Next, Harris-Madden moved to the county level. She was one of the first leaders recruited to serve in then County Executive and now Congressman George Latimer's Cabinet and served for six years as the executive director of the Westchester County Youth Bureau. In this role, she managed the financial and technical resources deployed to hundreds of programs supporting children, youth and families across Westchester County and established for the first time in 30

"I know that lots of parents attend Mercy, and I appreciate the governor's initiatives promoting access to childcare so parents can attend school"

—
DaMia Harris-Madden, M.S. '07, M.B.A. '22

years, three new municipal Youth Bureaus, mental health in afterschool programs, and a number of violence prevention, STEAM initiatives, amongst other things.

When Harris-Madden returned to Mercy to pursue her M.B.A., she appreciated how applicable her courses – especially accounting and quantitative analysis – were to her day-to-day work. "It's not easy to manage an organization that has vast fiscal responsibility and oversight," she explained. "Even though I lead a large team, I still need to deeply understand budgets and financial documents. The M.B.A. program formalized that learning for me."

Harris-Madden finds ways to stay connected to Mercy today. In October 2023, for example, the Westchester County Youth Bureau hosted its inaugural Youth MedTech Conference on Mercy's Westchester Campus. At the event, 250 middle and high school students explored high-growth industries that combine medicine and technology. This event continues today.

With a new federal administration, the political landscape is changing, but Harris-Madden is keeping her eye on doing good work for state residents. "We want New Yorkers to feel like they've received high-quality educations and can land good jobs here," she said. She encourages Mercy students and alumni to consider careers in state and local government: "We need good people to join our team and help us do this important work for all New York residents."



DaMia Harris-Madden with New York Governor Kathy Hochul (left) and State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins (below.)



Nursing is a *Family Affair*



One family boasts
four nurses who all
trained at Mercy.



In the Pervaiz family, nursing is a bit of a family business. This matriarch and faculty member along with her three children have earned an impressive 11 Mercy degrees so far. Thanks to Mercy's variety of exceptional nursing programs, they are living their dreams of helping others.

"I'm so grateful for how Mercy has helped my family," said Sonia Pervaiz '03, M.S.N. '08, P.M.C. '11, M.B.A. '16, D.N.P., adjunct assistant professor in nursing. "My kids are all nurses, and they're all working. Mercy made that happen."

Sonia was always drawn toward nursing, especially caring for the elderly. After earning her associate degree from the Cochran School of Nursing in Yonkers, she was accepted into Mercy's R.N.-B.S. completion program to pursue her bachelor's degree.

She felt very supported throughout her time at Mercy. "Professors would always take extra time to make sure I understood the content, and the staff helped me navigate financial aid," Sonia explained. "I felt like they truly cared about my academic growth and my success."

After graduation, she worked as a nurse in a community hospital in the Bronx. As her career progressed, she returned to Mercy to earn a master's degree in nursing education, a post-master's certificate in nursing administration and a master's degree in business administration.

Along the way, she began teaching nursing at local colleges. Eventually, she took a full-time teaching position at the College of New Rochelle (CNR) and then joined Mercy as an assistant professor in 2019 when CNR closed its doors. This year, she moved into an adjunct assistant professor role. "I feel such passion for educating new nurses and growing this beautiful profession," she said. "I love helping my students move to the next level."

When her oldest children were planning their college educations, Mercy was the obvious choice. Twins Ashbal Pervaiz, B.S. '19, M.B.A. '21, B.S.N. '22, and Shubael Pervaiz, B.S.

'19, M.B.A. '21, B.S.N. '22, both earned their Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in 2019, followed by a Master of Business Administration in 2021, and a second bachelor's degree in Nursing in 2022. However, with the COVID-19 pandemic in full swing upon graduating from the M.B.A. program, they found it challenging to start their careers in business.

The pandemic gave Shubael a new perspective on his career path, and he convinced Ashbal that they should apply to Mercy's accelerated second degree in nursing program. "During the pandemic, my mom worked very hard as a nurse," Shubael explained. "She would suit up in all the protective gear, work long days and nights, do everything to keep herself and her patients safe and then come home to care for our family. Nurses were celebrated as superheroes, and they truly were. My brother and I saw how important and rewarding the career could be."

Of course, they wanted to return to Mercy. "We never thought about going anywhere else," Ashbal said.

The accelerated nursing program was everything they imagined and more. "The professors were always looking out for us," said Shubael. Both he and Ashbal noted how hands-on and practical the program was. "I learned how to talk to patients and families," said Ashbal. "Those are skills that I use in my work every day now."

By the time the twins' younger sister, Bethsheeba Pervaiz '24, was applying to college, going to Mercy was a foregone conclusion. "My mom went there, and my brothers went there, so I didn't even apply anywhere else," she said. As a child, she had felt inspired by her mother's stories about being a nurse, so she decided to major in nursing, too.

Bethsheeba particularly enjoyed

the clinical lab simulations in which students work through different patient scenarios using mannequins. And she often finds herself thinking back on specific knowledge and skills she gained at Mercy, such as the different ways that abnormal heart rhythms present in patients.

Now, all three siblings are working as nurses. Ashbal is a registered nurse case manager in hospice and palliative care. Shubael is a nurse working with an ear, nose and throat doctor. And Bethsheeba is a nurse in the emergency room at St John's Riverside Hospital in Yonkers.

**"I felt like they truly
cared about my
academic growth
and my success."**

Sonia Pervaiz '03, M.S.N. '08, P.M.C. '11,
M.B.A. '16, D.N.P., adjunct assistant
professor in nursing

Importantly, they are all happy with their decisions to go into nursing. "Being a nurse has exceeded my expectations," said Ashbal. "You're really, really helping people. And that feels really good."

Sonia could not be more pleased. "I have great trust in Mercy," she said. "I knew that my professors would help me thrive. And then they did the same for my children. I can't thank Mercy enough."



The Family Builder

Marybeth Gerrity

CNR SAS '74 Reflects

on Her Accomplished

Career in Reproductive

Biology



Back (left to right):
Mary Beth Gentleman,
Marybeth Gerrity,
Karen McManus;
Seated: Beverly Clendening

"I was there when the first ultrasound showed three beating hearts," said Marybeth Gerrity CNR SAS '74, Ph.D., M.B.A., H.C.L.D. "We were dumbfounded because it was a time when we were lucky to get pregnancies at all."

Gerrity is a reproductive biologist who produced the first successful triplet test-tube babies in the United States in 1983. During her career, she has established, built out and led several successful assisted reproductive technology programs across the country and helped shape the regulatory framework that governs the field.

"Today, there are no IVF [in vitro fertilization] triplets, and we're even working to lower the incidence of twins due to the poorer obstetric outcomes for multiples," she explained. "But in 1983, we couldn't bank on implanting just one embryo because we didn't know which embryo would continue its development to result in a baby. Thankfully, the parents were thrilled with their triplets."

Gerrity credits a course at the College of New Rochelle (CNR) for introducing her to the field. All biology majors were required to take a course in embryology, which was taught by biology chair Dr. Robert Reggio. "Bob Reggio will always have a special place in my heart," Gerrity said. "He was a very inspiring teacher, and he sparked my interest in embryology. He taught me how to think."

CNR provided an unparalleled education for women studying science. "We enjoyed a superb science education at the College because we were in such small classes," Gerrity said. "We were able to do hands-on research and work under incredible mentors. In that all-women environment, we felt that there was nothing we couldn't do."

From left to right:
Mary Lu Amberg,
Joan Quilty,
Mary Beth Martin,
and Marybeth Gerrity



Second from left: Marybeth Gerrity | Photo: CNR 1974 Yearbook

“We were able to do hands-on research and work under incredible mentors. In that all-women environment, we felt that there was nothing we couldn’t do.”

Marybeth Gerrity CNR SAS '74, Ph.D., M.B.A., H.C.L.D.

Fifty years after her graduation, Gerrity is still very connected to the alumni community. “STEM education wasn’t common for women back then, so my fellow biology majors at the College of Rochelle were already doing something quite different,” she explained. “When we got out into the world, we were used to being on the front lines, making change and pulling other women along with us. That mindset is what has served me best in my career. And that’s why I stay connected and returned for my 50th reunion at Mercy this year.”

After graduating from CNR, Gerrity earned a master’s degree and Ph.D. in pharmacology from New York Medical College and later a master’s in business administration from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

Initially, she worked in contraceptive research, which is where most funding was focused in the 1970s. However, that began to shift once the world’s first test-tube baby was born in the United Kingdom in 1978. Gerrity pivoted into reproductive technology and accepted a position at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where she and her team experienced early success. Her career took off from there. “It was very much the serendipity of having a certain skill set and being alert to how you can use that skill set even when the landscape is shifting,” she explained.

Gerrity loved that her work produced meaningful, tangible results. “I realized early in my training that I didn’t want to do science for science’s sake only,” she said. “I wanted to do something that made a difference. I still get this unbelievable feeling when a patient sends me a Christmas card with a picture of their child or brings that baby into the office. I

realize that I watched that egg get fertilized and monitored that embryo’s development. Now look at this unbelievable outcome! I made a real difference in these people’s lives.”

Over the past 40 years, reproductive technology has changed remarkably. New drugs and procedures make egg retrieval more productive and less invasive. Embryologists can support embryos longer in the lab, maximizing the chance that they will implant and continue to develop. And IVF success rates are much higher. Gerrity has seen changes in the types of patients who seek treatment, which now include cancer patients and same-sex couples. She also says that societal stigma about IVF has diminished. The latest changes in the field involve the implications of restrictive abortion laws in some states.

As she looks back on her long career in this fascinating field, Gerrity is open about her accomplishments but very humble – a quality she also credits to her time at CNR: “One thing we learned at the College is that it’s not about being a big shot. You put your head down, and you do your work the best that you can. If you’re lucky, you get to look up and say, ‘How can I be of service?’”

Mercy University Faculty Publications

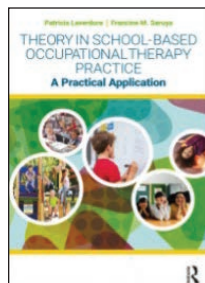
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School of Business



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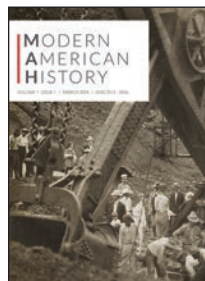
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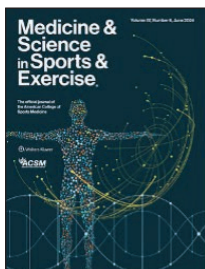
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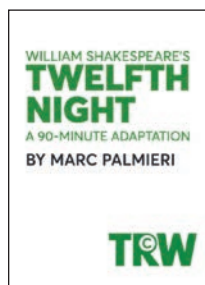
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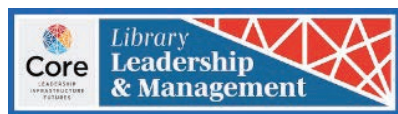


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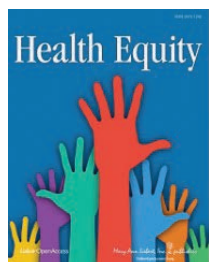
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School of Nursing

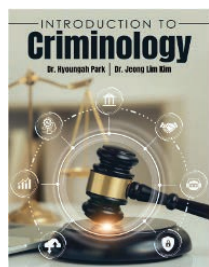


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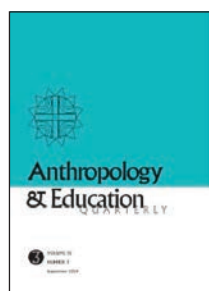


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Mercy Class Notes

Our Mavericks marking milestones.

MAY 2024–DECEMBER 2024



1960s

Linda Bianchini Uzelac '69 has released her second album, titled “Piano Classics,” now available on all streaming platforms. The album features 39 classical piano pieces, including her signature concert piece, Claude Debussy’s “Clair de Lune.” She is currently arranging and scoring four-part vocal harmonies with piano accompaniments for choral Christmas performances. These will complement her popular and widely performed arrangement of “Silent Night.” [1]

Anne Marie Leone '69 debuted her photo exhibit “Along the Hudson Line” at the Ossining Public Library in Ossining, N.Y., on September 5, 2024. [2]

2000s

Constance Barnes, M.S. '01, Ed.D. PMP, successfully defended her dissertation at the University of Pittsburgh’s School of Education in April 2024. Barnes earned her Doctor of Education in Administration & Policy with a major in Urban Education. She also graduated from the CORO Leadership NY Fellowship this past spring and continues to serve as director for the CUNY ASAPIACE National Replication Collaborative. [3]

Angelo Hunt, II '05, has successfully managed two homeless shelters and permanent supportive housing programs since graduating from Mercy. He is currently the director of Social Services for The Fortune Society, overseeing multiple congregate housing units funded by the Department of Homeless Services, Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice, HUD Supportive Housing Program and New York Supportive Housing Program. [4]

Camele Barrett '06, M.B.A. '09, a prominent consultant and founder of Edge Consultant, has been recognized for inclusion in “Marquis Who’s Who,” a prestigious directory profiling individuals of prominence in their respective fields. Beyond her transformative career, Clarke-Barrett is also pursuing a doctoral degree. [5]

2010s

Chris Sapienza, M.S. '10, received a Certificate in Public Leadership from the Harvard Kennedy School on June 27, 2024. The certificate was presented by Professor Jen Lerner and Vice Admiral Herman Shelanski. [6]

2020s

Sofia Huyhua '20 works as a patient care technician in the ICU Burn Care Unit at Westchester Medical Center Health Network. She is currently pursuing her master's degree in occupational therapy at Mercy University. [7]

Mohamed Gueye '22 recently completed his master's degree in software engineering from Grand Canyon University. He works at Fidelity Investments, where he was promoted to mid-level software engineer. [8]

Dennis Dias '23, a New York City special education teacher, was named the 2024 Peace Teacher for New York State by the United States Institute of Peace. [9]



Mercy Class Notes is a way to stay connected. We would love to share your recent news, life events and accomplishments. Tell us about them, and we will include them in the next issue. Email: alumni@mercy.edu with your class note.



CNR Class Notes

Our alumni achievements.

JULY 2024–DECEMBER 2024



1960s

“Bamboo Whispers: poetry of the Mangyan (Philippine Indigenous People)” by **Maria Dolores Lolita Delgado-Fansler SAS '67** won the 2018 National Book Award as Best Translated Book, and the Golden Book Award for Art and Humanities. Additionally, Delgado-Fansler founded The Association of Foundations in the Philippines, which is now 52 years old. She hopes to introduce West Virginia’s History Alive! program in the Philippines in 2025. **[1]**

1970s

On October 28, 2024, the Legacy Theatre in Branford, Conn., announced that **Mary Pepe CNR SAS '71** joined its Board of Trustees. With many years of experience in business and a strong background in community service, Pepe brings valuable expertise to this role. She currently serves as the director of Human Resources for the Town of Greenwich. **[2]**

1980s

On October 24, 2025, LaTanya Richardson Jackson introduced **Barbara Chirinos CNR SAS '83** as Spelman College’s Inaugural Artistic Director of the LaTanya Richardson Jackson and Samuel L. Jackson Performing Arts Center and the Mary Schmidt Campbell Center for Innovation and the Arts, in Atlanta, Ga. (Photo by Tim Richardson). **[3]**

1990s

Dr. Darcel Reyes SN '96 has been named an American Academy of Nursing (AAN) 2024 Fellow for her contributions to nursing education, research and practice. Reyes is a nurse practitioner and is also an associate professor at Lehman College. **[4]**

Registered and board certified, as well as licensed as a creative arts therapist, **Meredith Snow, M.S., ATR-BC, LCAT, SAS '97**, obtained a position at Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital Stanford this spring as a pediatric art therapist. She works with cardiac transplant patients, pre- and post-treatment on the Creative Arts and Child Life team at Stanford Health in Palo Alto, Calif. Snow also provides eco-art therapy through her private practice, Island Art Therapy, where she integrates ecological approaches to art therapy after having received a California naturalist certificate last autumn through UC Naturalist program at Point Reyes National Seashore. **[5]**

2000s

In August 2024, **Tracey Weeden, B.S.W., M.S.W., LCSW, LICSW, QS, CNR SAS '02** was appointed as vice president and chief behavioral officer for NeighborHealth. In this role, Weeden will leverage her experience and leadership to support the overall mission of addressing behavioral health needs of patients and improving health outcomes within the communities served by NeighborHealth. Weeden is dually licensed in Massachusetts and Florida. [6]



2010s

With over 20 years of leadership experience, **Liliana Santizo CNR SNR '12**, launched Florece.Life in September 2024 to empower individuals and organizations to thrive. Her company specializes in leadership development and People Operations, using psychology-based strategies to help organizations build resilience, tackle complex challenges and drive lasting, meaningful impact. [7]

Francesca Sterling CNR SAS '13 successfully achieved a milestone by completing an intensive program in international politics at the esteemed Bucerius Summer School in Global Governance in Hamburg, Germany on August 26, 2024. Sterling was one of 55 young professionals selected from a pool of approximately 300 applicants representing 32 countries to explore international relations with some of the world's top global thinkers. She completed her M.B.A. at American University's Kogod Business School in 2020 in Washington, DC. Presently, Sterling serves as an advisor to Secretary General Luis Almagro of the Organization of American States and previously worked at Whiteford, Taylor and Preston, LLP in Washington, D.C. [8]



Christine Biskup Columna CNR SAS '13 GS '14 has taught for 10 years as a general and special education teacher in the South Bronx and White Plains school districts, where she has obtained tenure at both locations. Columna also received her Doctor of Education from St. John's University, focusing on literacy and administration and published her dissertation on Social Emotional Learning: Narrative Growth. In her spare time, she is an 8th grade confirmation teacher and active volunteer with HOPE Community Soup Kitchen in New Rochelle, N.Y. [9]

CNR Class Notes is a way to stay connected.

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In Memoriam

Tribute



Sister Theresa Kane (1936–2024)

Sr. Theresa Kane, of the Sisters of Mercy, passed away on August 22, 2024. Sr. Kane served in a variety of regional and national leadership positions with the Sisters of Mercy – including oversight of Mercy College (now Mercy University) as a Board of Trustees member (1966–70) – before becoming president of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR). Later, she served as campus minister for Our Lady of Victory Academy – in what is today Victory Hall at Mercy – and, from 1992 until 1995, as administrator of the Sisters of Mercy Dobbs Ferry motherhouse – in what is today, Mercy Hall.

In her role as LCWR president, Sr. Kane greeted Pope John Paul II during his 1979 visit to Washington, D.C. In her historically groundbreaking message to the pope, Sr. Kane urged him to consider opening to women all ministries of the church – which meant allowing women to serve as priests. As Mercy Professor Emerita Ann Grow (Philosophy), a longtime friend and colleague said many years later of Sr. Kane, “You don’t see her as a warrior type but she’s a warrior for her beliefs. She wanted women to be able to step forward and to be received in the church on an equal basis.”

Starting in 1995, Sr. Kane taught courses at Mercy as an adjunct faculty member. In 1999, she joined the full-time faculty of the then-Social and Behavioral Sciences Division as well as the then-Civic and Cultural Studies Division. She served in that capacity until 2017, after which – though officially retired – she continued to teach internship and capstone courses through 2019.

Throughout her long and varied career, Sr. Kane sought to promote women’s rights and the betterment of humanity around the world and in the New York area. She served as founding member of the Intercommunity Center for Justice and Peace, US representative to the Union of International Superiors General, board member and president of the Washington Office on Latin America, founding member and first vice president of the board of the Association for the Rights of Catholics in the Church, and board member of the National Catholic Reporter. Locally, she served on the Board of Directors of two social service centers in the Bronx, the Mercy Center of Mott Haven and the Thorpe Residence in the South Bronx. For her efforts, she was recognized as winner of the 1999 National Catholic Leadership Award from Call to Action.

“You don’t see her as a warrior type but she’s a warrior for her beliefs.”

Mercy Professor Emerita Ann Grow

Sr. Kane epitomized the spirit of transformational education at Mercy University through her commitment to empowering students and to the value of mutuality in teaching and learning. Colleagues in the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences remember her as supportive to all and quick to check in with junior faculty in particular. In 1999, she was honored as recipient of the Outstanding Teacher Award at the Bronx Campus as judged by students; in 2005, she received the Outstanding Teaching Award as judged by her faculty colleagues; and in 2015 she received a Lifetime Achievement award from Mercy. A scholarship in her name – the “Sr. Theresa Kane, RSM, Agent of Change Scholarship” – has been established for a student who has completed any undergraduate degree in the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences and has shown outstanding work.



Hon. Dominic R. Massaro, H.D. '75, '95 (1939–2024)

Honorable Dominic R. Massaro, H.D. '75, '95, a prominent judge and former member of Mercy's Board of Trustees, passed away on December 18, 2024. Justice Massaro served on the Board of Trustees from 1977–1980, 1983–1992 and 1993–1995. He also received two honorary degrees from Mercy; a Doctor of Laws in 1975 and a Doctor of Letters in 1995.

Born and raised in the Bronx, he dedicated his career to public service. He was appointed as Justice of the New York State Supreme Court in 1987 and prior to that, Massaro served seven years as a New York City, then New York State Human Rights Commissioner. On the Federal level, he also served as a member of the New York Appeals Board of the Selective Service System from 1969 to 1976.

A trustee and member of many Bronx institutions, Justice Massaro was a recipient of Bronx County's "Distinguished Community Service Award." He served as president of the Bronx Chamber of Commerce and of the Gramercy Boys' Club of New York, was board chairman of the Bronx County Civic Association and served on local boards of the Police Athletic League, Boy Scouts of America, Red Cross, Cancer Care, Council on the Arts, Council for Environmental Quality and the YMCA, among others.

Justice Massaro was also a well-regarded member of the Italian American community. He served as chair of the Board of Governors of the Verrazzano Institute, dedicated to the discovery, preservation and dissemination of knowledge about Italian and other Mediterranean cultural traditions.

It was established at Mercy University's Westchester Campus. He worked closely with former Mercy President Donald Grunewald to acquire and name the estate now known as Verrazzano Hall. He also served as chair of the Board of Overseers of the Garibaldi-Meucci Museum and was past president of the Italian-American ESCA (Educational, Social, Civil, American-Italian) Club of New York Youth Auxiliary and of both the Italian-American Center for Urban Affairs and the Italian-American Coalition of the City of New York. His professional and civic accomplishments won him numerous awards and citations. He was knighted five times, including the highest decoration, the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic by the President of the Republic of Italy in 1969 and by Pope Paul VI in the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem in 1973.





Alumni & Friends

COLLEGE OF NEW ROCHELLE

Ethel Madden Bonneville SAS '41
The Honorable Clara Louise Malone Gould SAS '48
Rosamond Mole Malgieri SAS '49
M. Joan Fraser Gately SAS '50
Nancy Collins McKenna SAS '51
Margaret Reynolds Charles SAS '51
Maureen Costello Durkin SAS '52
Caroline Pagnucco Meskers SAS '52
Patricia Walsh Berntson SAS '52
Anne Marie Weiler SAS '52
Harriette Gillem Robinet SAS '53
Ethelmarie Walsh Hunter SAS '53
Claire Waterbury Philips SAS '54
Mary Doyle Eglin SAS '56
Margaret McCreery Kane SAS '56
Donna Walsh Milne SAS '56
Margaret Houlihan Lynch SAS '57
Rev. Mary Ann DeMetsenaere Taylor SAS '58
Carol Hopkins DeRuggiero SAS '58
Barbara Mackinnon Kuttner SAS '58
Gloria Canal Doino SAS '60
Sr. Patricia Couture, OSU SAS '60
Claire Monaghan SAS '60
Eleanor Shea Buckley SAS '60
Janet Maroney Connolly '61
Helen Dunn Cunney SAS '62
Carol Gill Clifford SAS '62
Linda Gorman Lapointe SAS '62
Susan Herald Clarke SAS '62
Elizabeth Riggio Whelan SAS '62
Teresita Dwyer O'Leary SAS '63
Anita Gay Winkler SAS '63
Elaine Donovan Blair SAS '64, GS '92
Sr. Bridget Haase, OSU SAS '65
Patricia Rice Devereaux SAS '65
Kathleen Sloggatt SAS '65
Sr. Sheila Campbell, OSU SAS '68
Eileen Clavin O'Connor SAS '69

Barbara Farrell Dingee SAS '69
Patricia Phelan SAS '69
Cathleen Donovan Myatt SAS '70
Nancy Sarrantonio Alfonso SAS '70, GS '75
Donna Demarest SAS '71
Mary Ann Zeender Donovan SAS '71
Mary O'Mara SAS '73
Ann Marie O'Neill Geraghty SAS '73
Annette Wiley Robidoux SAS '74
Gina Tapogna Broadbent SAS '75
Audrey Chatzky GS '77
Beverly Voltz Mittelstadt GS '82
Alice Stephens SNR '85
Marilyn Maynard GS '86
Julia Landau GS '88
Michelle Malcolm SN '92
Dorothy Wade SNR '94
Jeanne Fritz SNR '96
Robert Saul SNR '99
Thomas Donohue, *CNR Friend*
Elizabeth LeVaca, *CNR Friend*

MERCY UNIVERSITY

Catherine Graf Celtruda '67
Maryann DeCesare Gangi '68
Angela Vitale Houlihan '69
Verne Urbano '75
Charlene Healey Klapwald '81
Paul Schirizzo '83
Paul Gebhardt '86
Daniel Raftery '87
Frances Twiss '89
Laura Barnwell '90
Richard Cunningham '93
Ana Bonilla '97
Melba John Riley '97
John Turowski '07
Gabriel Harvey '17

Photo by Kenneth Gabrielsen



Making a Planned Gift to Support Mercy University

There are multiple ways to secure the future of the university and keep higher education accessible to all those who seek it.

Planned gifts or estate gifts will have a profound impact on students and their futures.

Ready to make a lasting impact? We're here to help.

For more information about including Mercy University in your estate plans, contact the Office of Institutional Advancement for a confidential discussion at **914.674.3073** or via email at **jmiller59@mercy.edu**.

Answers to questions about Planned or Legacy Gifts to Mercy University:

WHY ARE LEGACY GIFTS IMPORTANT TO MERCY UNIVERSITY?

A legacy gift is a lasting investment in Mercy University. It is a way to secure the future of the university and keep higher education accessible to all those who seek it.

WHAT TYPES OF LEGACY GIFTS ARE AVAILABLE?

A bequest or gift in your will or living trust is one of the most meaningful ways to provide for our students' future. You gift a percentage of your estate or a stated dollar amount to Mercy University.

WHAT IS THE RONNENBERG LEGACY SOCIETY?

The Ronnenberg Legacy Society, named after the founders Mary Ellen and Francis Ronnenberg, recognizes and honors an extraordinary group of alumni and friends who have made a future legacy gift to Mercy University. Members receive a special legacy pin and are honored at select University events.

WHAT'S THE FINANCIAL BENEFIT OF MAKING A LEGACY GIFT?

A gift to Mercy University in your will or trust allows you to retain your assets during your lifetime. In addition, your family may benefit from estate tax savings.

ARE THERE OTHER WAYS I CAN INCLUDE MERCY UNIVERSITY IN MY ESTATE PLANS?

Yes. You can name Mercy University as a beneficiary of your retirement plan, individual retirement account (IRA), bank or brokerage account, donor-advised fund (DAF) or life insurance policy. This is an easy way to support our educational mission without changing your will or living trust.

WHAT INFORMATION WILL I NEED TO SHARE WITH MY ADVISORS TO MAKE A LEGACY GIFT?

You will need to share our legal name, address and tax ID# as follows:

- **LEGAL NAME:** Mercy University
- **ADDRESS:** 555 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
- **TAX ID#:** 13-1967321

HOW CAN I CREATE A WILL ONLINE?

Mercy University has partnered with FreeWill, a free online estate planning tool that makes it easy to create your will. **Scan the QR code to get started.**



CAN I MAKE A GIFT DIRECTLY FROM MY IRA?

Yes. If you're 70 ½ or older, you can donate funds directly from your IRA. These IRA gifts, also known as Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCCDs), may be excluded from your taxable income, and beginning at age 73, they can qualify towards your required minimum distribution (RMD).

*This is not professional tax or legal advice;
consult a qualified tax advisor or attorney about your specific needs.



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A three-panel poster for the Annual Founders' Festival. The left panel has a purple top half and a light blue bottom half, both featuring white starburst patterns. The middle panel is solid dark blue with white text and a single white starburst. The right panel has a yellow top half and a dark blue bottom half, with a large white '75 YEARS' logo in the dark blue section. The text in the middle panel reads: 'ANNUAL Founders' Festival', 'A CELEBRATION OF 75 YEARS OF MERCY', 'September 20 • 12-4 p.m.', 'The Westchester Campus', and 'ALL ARE WELCOME • FREE ADMISSION'. The bottom right corner features the Mercy University logo and name.

ANNUAL
Founders' Festival

A CELEBRATION OF 75 YEARS OF MERCY

September 20 • 12-4 p.m.
The Westchester Campus

ALL ARE WELCOME • FREE ADMISSION

75 YEARS

M MERCY UNIVERSITY