

the Mercian

Vol. 45 No.11 mercyhigh.org Spring 2017



Mercy Gras, FIESTA 2017 Sparkles

A carnival of color complete with masks, beads and festive sparkle met more than 500 alumnae, faculty, staff and friends of Mercy High School who attended *Mercy Gras*, FIESTA 2017 on Saturday, February 25. The auction and dinner raised more than \$275,000 for Mercy's Negotiated Tuition Program. Last year Mercy provided \$1.6 million in tuition assistance to 82% of its families.

The evening included a Mass, dinner, presentation of *The Cor Misericordiae Award*, \$10,000 raffle, and auction items including baskets, art, collectibles, trips, concert tickets, sporting events and more that attendees could bid on via personal devices.

Joe and Fay Fisher served as this year's chairs and were supported by hundreds of parent volunteers and students.

Julia Pechar '17, Student Council President, spoke at the event and reflected on her experience at Mercy.

"At Mercy, we are taught the importance and power of education, and we are a school that practices what we preach. Now that I am a senior, I am looking forward to starting a new chapter in my life. I can honestly say that I feel completely prepared for college. Although I am not ready to leave Mercy, I am confident, that with the tools it has given me, I will be successful in my future. Mercy is a bond, a community that stays with you for your entire life. I am excited to embark on a new adventure and show the world what a Mercy Girl is capable of accomplishing."

Ingrid Kalinowski Borghoff '65 received Mercy High School's highest honor, *The Cor Misericordiae* (Heart of Mercy) Award. See her story on the next page.



Photos from top to bottom: Volunteers help to register attendees at this year's FIESTA. Mercy seniors volunteering at this year's FIESTA help Sr. Laura Reicks, RSM, make her bid on an auction item. From left to right are Madison Richeter-Egger, Reicks, Isabelle Brown and Lyndee Hoge. Ingrid Kalinowski Borghoff '65 on the left receives *The Cor Misericordiae* (Heart of Mercy) Award from Sr. Delores Hannon, RSM, Mercy High School President.

Cover photos: Top left: Current parent Tony Petersen receives help with his bid from seniors left to right Ava Blessie and Samantha Harvat. Top right: Mercy classmates Kathy Daley Jones '88 and Kim Lang Bunnell '88 enjoy FIESTA 2017. Middle: Guests get into the Mardi Gras spirit by donning masks at this year's event. Left bottom: Pictured left to right FIESTA Chairs Fay and Joe Fisher enjoy a conversation with Dan Vankat and Mercy teacher Julie Vankat. Bottom right: Mercy students provided volunteer support at this year's FIESTA by greeting attendees, helping people make bids on their personal devices, selling gift boxes, retrieving and distributing items bought and much more. From left to right are seniors Katie Moragues, Natalia Kruszczyk, Alexis Hansman, Samantha Harvat and Claire Johnson.

Borghoff Receives Cor Misericordiae Award

Ingrid Kalinowski Borghoff '65 received Mercy High School's highest honor at this year's FIESTA. *The Cor Misericordiae* (Heart of Mercy) Award was established to recognize and bless the school's partners in ministry who espouse Mercy's mission of the careful instruction of young women.

For more than a quarter of a century, 1986-2012, Ingrid led Alumnae and Advancement activities at Mercy High School before retiring in 2012. During that time she raised more than \$25 million. Her achievements are numerous and include these highlights:

- Establishing the Annual Fund program to attract unrestricted and recurring gifts to Mercy High School.
- Developing, along with Ron Wilwerding, the annual Golf Fest, which will be in its 26th year in 2017.
- Helping coordinate and implement five major capital campaigns ranging from converting the convent wing into school space, creating an entrance plaza, developing the school's first dedicated gym, and supporting the technological needs of the school.
- Enhancing the membership and activities of the Alumnae Council.
- Engaging people in the mission of Mercy High School.

"Ingrid kept herself abreast of the best practices in development and she constantly challenged me and the board to reach further and to try new things," said Sr. Johanna Burnell, RSM, former president of Mercy High School for 21 years.

Born in Hannover, Germany, Ingrid and her sister Ursula both attended Mercy High School. She graduated from Creighton University with a Bachelor's Degree in German and worked in management positions at Northwestern Bell Telephone Company. She served as a Development Officer at the Archdiocese of Omaha before joining Mercy in 1986.

Ingrid is active in the Ignatian Volunteer Corps and serves on the Advisory Council. She was a Sisters of Mercy Associate, a Board member of Knowles Mercy Spirituality Center, and has served on Creighton University's Committee on the Status of Women. She is also an active Mercy alumna, attending and supporting alumnae activities such as the Golden Guild Tea, the Memorial Mass, All-School Reunion, and FIESTA.

Franco Named First Recipient of Alumna Award



Theresa Franco '74 is the first-ever recipient of the Distinguished Woman of Mercy Alumna Award given by the Mercy High School Alumnae Association. Franco, a 1974 graduate, is the Vice President of Cancer Services and Radiology at Nebraska Medicine. The announcement was made at the school's annual FIESTA on February 25 and she will receive the award at the 2017 All-School Reunion on Sunday, June 4.

The new award recognizes an alumna for her outstanding achievements, service, and contributions, which promote the growth of faith, knowledge, and service in her career, community and/or society. As the recipient of this award, the honoree is someone who is respected by peers, outstanding in her field, and promotes society in a way that benefits many people.

Franco is responsible for comprehensive cancer care program development. With over 30 years of experience in cancer care, Franco is the Clinical Leader overseeing the development of the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center on the Nebraska Medicine campus. She has published and presented nationally and internationally on a variety of cancer program topics, and has served on several advisory boards to improve cancer care delivery. A member of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Best Practices Committee since its inception, Franco also serves on the NCCN Board. Her resume also boasts other board memberships including Creighton University College of Nursing Alumni Board, the American Cancer Society, and the Josie Harper Hospice House.

She is known as someone whose commitment to the care and treatment of cancer patients and families is grounded in her faith and was reinforced during her days at Mercy. For instance, she starts each day reading a reflection from the book, "Jesus Calling."

In nominating Franco for the award, the nominator said, “Theresa’s works of mercy include counseling the doubtful and comforting the sorrowful. A person’s faith can be shaken when given the diagnosis of cancer and with Theresa, the person comes first. Be it a colleague, friend, family or complete stranger, she has spent countless hours patiently answering questions, giving comfort and even helping set up medical consultations. Her compassionate, loving spirit responds instantaneously to the needs of others.”

The active alumna regularly attends Mercy events and supports the school. She previously served on the Alumnae Council and her Mercy connections are very deep. Her mother Louise Battaglia Franco, SM ’50 as well as four sisters and five nieces are Mercy graduates.

She has received numerous other awards including the Creighton University School of Nursing Alumni Merit Award, Leadership Development Award at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, Carol M. Wilson Award for Quality in Nursing, and “Caring Kind Employee of the Year,” Nebraska Hospital Association.

“Theresa is a compassionate leader who exemplifies all that is good about Mercy High School. She is a worthy first recipient of the Distinguished Woman of Mercy Alumna Award and an excellent role model to all alumnae,” said Sr. Delores Hannon, RSM, President of Mercy.

Monthly Giving Made Easy

Donors have asked for an easy way to plan their donations to Mercy High School. Instead of waiting for annual Phonathon appeal letters, they would prefer to add a line in their monthly budget for a gift to Mercy.

In response to this request, we created a new monthly giving club: Mercyx12, or Mx12 for short. And it’s a simple two-step process—

- Simply decide how much you want to give each month;
- Let the automated system do the work for you.

Just think what the following amounts fund:
\$10 per month = 2 days of tuition for a student
\$25 per month = one full week of tuition.

The benefits of Mx12 are that donors have full control of their giving to Mercy, Mercy receives a steady, predictable stream of donations in support of the Negotiated Tuition Program, and our Mercy Girls get the opportunity of a Mercy Education. Sign up on Mercy’s website under Support Mercy, Ways to Give page.

Alumna Filmmaker Brings Production to Mercy



Mercy students join the cast and crew during production of a recent movie entitled “Eskimo Kisses,” at the school’s chapel.

Kathy Mulcahy Mittan ’83 and her husband are award-winning, short film movie producers who used Mercy High School’s chapel recently for a new movie project. Students were invited to attend, watch the action, and work behind the scenes in the making of the film. Performance, especially on the stage, has always been Kathy’s passion and was nurtured during her years at Mercy.

Living down the street from Mercy allowed Kathy to attend all the Mercy plays during her childhood. She recalls helping to find props for many of the productions. Initially she thought she wanted to go to a coed high school but after a long talk with a Mercy graduate, she realized Mercy was the right fit for her.

“Our class was loaded with spirit and theatrical talent. We pulled out all the stops for our class plays, productions and Masses. When Field Day was rained out, we sang all our songs and formed our shapes in the choir room,” she said.

Drama had always been her strongest interest and one of her earliest recollections was being part of the stage crew under the leadership of a senior student director. She recalls before each performance gathering for a student-led prayer and the senior sending her a thank-you note for being on the stage crew.

“To this day I pray the Memorare before every performance and after every run I send out thank yous,” she added.

Read more of her story on Mercy’s website under Alumane Features.



Mercy Receives Honor

Mercy High School was chosen as a Catholic Superstar High School as part of Spirit Catholic Radio’s contest during Catholic Schools Week, January 30-February 4. Many alumnae, family and friends voted for Mercy.

The school will receive:

- A LIVE interview on Spirit Catholic Radio's Spirit Morning show.
- FREE prayer cards for every student.
- A trophy to be displayed at the school.
- A gift card to supply the teachers' lounge with Mystic Monk Coffee.
- \$1,000 worth of on-air spots that promote the school and what makes it unique.
- Promotion on spiritcatholicradio.com.



Students left to right Kim Calderon ’18, Lianne Hensley ’18 and Skyler Oksman ’18 post notes on why they love Mercy on a giant Mercy Cross during Catholic Schools Week.

Hoge Is National Merit Finalist



Senior Lynden Hoge, has been named a Finalist by the National Merit Scholarship Cooperation and now joins an elite group competing for one of the 7,500 scholarships available valued at \$35 million. Her advancement in the competition began with a pool of 1.5 million entrants. She continues the academic excellence of the school

which has had three Finalists in the last four years.

Hoge is Student Council Secretary and served as Stage Manager for last fall’s musical, The Wizard of Oz. She has also played soccer, been involved in show choir and theatre, enjoys Math, Spanish and English, especially Language and Composition. Her GPA is 3.98 and she plans to go to college and is in the midst of figuring out her choices leaning toward language development or linguistics.

She has six siblings and two of her older sisters went to Mercy.



Sr. Rita Connell, RSM, shares a ‘comfortable cup of tea’ with left to right Tiffany Toth ’18 and Hope Fett ’18 during Sisters of Mercy Mentoring.



Mercy students enjoy a day out with their dads at the Father/Daughter Bowling event. Pictured left to right are Bella ’20 and John Larsen, Mayela ’19 and Sergio Hernandez, and Charles and Julia Cooper ’20.

Alumnae News (Available pictures follow the items)

1950s

The **Class of 1959** held their annual Christmas dinner on December 1. The group has been meeting for over 30 years! If interested in attending contact Connie Orsi Crouch at conniec59@cox.net.



Back row left to right are Mary Ann Hostettler Strider, Rosemary Schmitz Weiche, Pat Wimmer Blasing, Deanna Callahan Hobza, Sr. Jeanne Ward, RSM, Colleen Fahey Anson, Viola Hennes Ramaekers, Monica Heck Barry, Colleen Heenan Eickelman, Lucille Palermo Mickells, Sara Cottone Dietrich and Mary Ann Mayhan Kathol. Front row left to right are Connie Orsi Crouch, Kathy Rehmeier Wilczewski, Marilynn Fryzek Blankman, Betty Grabowski Gotch, Mary Alice Buscher McKernan, Mary Kearney Jackson and Ann Gallagher Dunn.

1960s

Members of the **Class of 1961** held their 55th reunion on October 19 at the Skyline Room at the River Front Plaza.



Pictured left to right front row are: Peg Gassman O'Malley, Carol Kontor Bertoni and Patti Humlicek Gehringer. Second row are Virginia Houston Feeney, Mary Gleason Likes and Carolyn Janowiak Schiltz. Third row are Yvonne Buresh Kros, Kathy McGafferty Griffith, Maureen Stevens Folda, Jeannie Pape Pluhacek and Janet Marsicek Gural. Back row are Jean Gallagher Decker, Mary Jo Danahy Ellis, Nancy Macdonald Dolezal, Shirley Pollreis Lee, Judy McKenna, Joyce Rosenberg Stranglen and Kitty Kelly Grace.

Linda Walsh Fell '65 has received the 2016 Member Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Society for Clinical Pathology.

Martha Grant Bruckner '67 Superintendent of Council Bluffs Community School plans to step down in June. Read her announcement at <http://bit.ly/2lCvLhf>.

Shirley Olsen Combs '68 wants to thank the Mercy community for their thoughts and prayers on the passing of her son Nicholas Cody Combs.

1970s

The **Class of 1976** held their reunion last fall.



Back row left to right are Jann Fangman Haller, Cyndi Russell, Kelly Rapp Cano, Sue Mitzlaff Glatz, Kathy Fitzmaurice and Denise Vermillion Bast. Front row left to right are Laurie Dodendorf Simon, Mary Ann Vipond Armstrong, Susan Lorkovic Collins, Mary Pat Ruma Hodgens, Lori Gunia Kelly and Cathy Murphy Segrell.

1990s

Jennifer Smisek '99 was featured in an *Omaha World-Herald* article about overcoming health challenges at <http://bit.ly/2m3dA6h>.

2000s

Nickie Lee '02 was named director of finance and administrative services for the city of Topeka. <http://bit.ly/2lmiNcz>

Jillian Edmonds '06 was featured in a news article on her baking shop. See the article at <http://bit.ly/2ePlXLH>.

2010s

Madison Hoge '11 was a cast member of the Rose Theatre of Omaha's recent production of *Jungle Book*.

Three Mercy graduates are part of the Blue Crew at Creighton University.



Pictured left to right are Jennifer Novotny '13, Paige Peitzmeier '15 and Elizabeth Maynard '15.

Jill Sobczyk '13 is graduating from Creighton University with a Bachelor's in Chemistry this May and plans to attend Creighton Medical School.

Calla Kessler '14 was featured on UNLStudentSpotlight! for her work as a photojournalist.

Reyvin Hernandez '15 was named NSAA Offensive Soccer Player of the Week on November 1. Her Bellevue University team also won their conference regular season and tournament on November 6. Read at <http://bit.ly/2mO3Gp3>.

Shannon Jerram '15 earned All-Conference Honors for soccer at Nebraska Wesleyan. See the story at <http://bit.ly/2mTTJFZ>

In Celebration

Weddings/Anniversaries

Amy Slater Friesner '10 married Matt Friesner on October 1, 2016 at St. John's Church on the Creighton University campus.



Pictured left to right are Natalie Slater, Libby Slater Perez '06, Jessica Slater '20, Amy Slater Friesner '10, Katy Butts '03, and Becky Slater '08.

Births

Jackie Lee '02 and Chin-Hwa Chong welcomed Vincent Thomas Chong to the family on December 28, 2016.



In Memoriam

We extend sympathy to the families and friends of those alumnae whose deaths were communicated to the Advancement Office from October 1, 2016-February 28, 2017. We try to make this list as accurate as possible. Please inform Naomi Chambers at chambersn@mercyhigh.org if we missed anyone.

Margaret Lorkovic Coniglio, SJ '41
Sr. Mary Virginia Daly, RSM, SJ '41
Joan Mokry Herman, SJ '42
Kathleen Calvert Bohacek, SJ '43
Lois Hardy Lynch, SJ '44
Mary Manhart Gurnon, SJ '45
Betty Cronin, SM '46
Constance L. Szucs, SM '46
Mary Ann Koraleski Wessling, SJ '48
Barbara L. Horacek, SM '48
Patricia Marron Tuttle, SJ '50
Sr. Ruth Anne Rezek, OP, SM '50
Claire Sobczyk Sova, SM '50
Helen McGargill Svoboda, SJ '52
Margaret Malloy McLain, SM '52
Marilyn Rotella Weak, SJ '53
Rose Marie Madej Foster, SJ '55
Patricia Searl Early, SM '55
Mary Anderson Bratty '57
Patricia Brandt Podjenski '57
Carol Longmore Wessling '58
Patricia Tarascio Vocelka '60
Mary Constance "Connie" Maryanski Redmond '65
Patricia Grieser Bantner '67
Jacqueline Tylski Rohrke '67
Mary Tracy McKernan '82

Alumnae News is the most read section of *The Mercian*. We want to hear from you. Please share your story with other alumnae.

Contact Deborah Daley at daleyd@mercyhigh.org or call her at 402.553.9424

This is only a small sampling of the stories about Mercy High School. To read more look at the school's website at mercyhigh.org or follow us on social media on





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All-School Reunion Saturday, June 4, 2017

9:00 a.m.

Sunday Eucharist ~ Our Lady of
Mercy Chapel

Honoring

the Class of 1967

who will be inducted into the
Golden Guild

10:00 a.m.

Complimentary Brunch & Program
(reservations required)

11:30 a.m.

Self-guided tour of the school

Theresa Franco '74, Distinguished Woman of Mercy
Alumna Award Recipient

RSVP by Friday, May 26, 2017
to Katy Butts '03 at buttsk@mercyhigh.org or
402.553.9424

