

the Mercian

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All-School Reunion



All-School Reunion Boasts Large Crowd

Nearly 300 alumnae attended this year's All-School Reunion coming from as far as Australia to participate in this annual event. The day began with Mass celebrated by Fr. Kevin Schneider, S. J. who spoke to the group about the gifts of the Holy Spirit and how those were developed at Mercy High School.

"This is a special place where joy was well-developed and the spirit of Mercy began filling your lives," he said.

The Class of 1967 was inducted in the Golden Guild and received their 50-year pins. Attendees gathered for brunch where they received a welcome by Sr. Delores Hannon, RSM, President. Roz Parr '09, President-Elect of the Alumnae Council, introduced Theresa Franco '74, as the inaugural recipient of The Distinguished Woman of Mercy Alumna Award. The Alumnae Council created this award to honor alumnae who exemplify the spirit of Mercy.

Theresa acknowledged that the Sisters of Mercy and her Mercy friendships, helped her navigate the tracks of her life. She shared her own "Top Ten List" of Life Lessons she learned at Mercy with the crowd.

The list included:

10. Gracefulness. She joked she learned the skill while cutting in line for lunch
9. Taking risks in life even before analyzing all sides of a situation
8. Being a team player
7. Being a fashionista. She laughed recalling different ways she 'enhanced' the school uniform
6. Appreciating the diversity of others
5. How to type which helps in her daily career
4. How to be confident in her own skin
3. How to have crazy fun with women
2. Redefining sisterhood and knowing that it consists of a million different things
1. Being a woman of faith

Additional pictures are available on Facebook.



Mary Parise Nowaczyk '67 receives her Golden Guild pin from Sr. Delores Hannon, RSM.



Lucille Kupfer Windels '62 and Mary Gordon Haman '62 listen to the speakers and enjoy brunch at the All-School Reunion.

Alumnae Induction

The Senior Baccalaureate Mass and Dinner is a long-standing tradition at Mercy High School. This year a new element was added. During the Mass, 82 Seniors were inducted into the Alumnae Association. This included signing their name in a new Alumnae Association book, receiving their membership card and pin from members of the Class of 1967, Mary Tuttle Marasco '67 and Jean Stackhouse Wang '67, and a yellow rose from Sister Delores Hannon, RSM, President and Sarah Regan, Principal.

Cover photos: Top middle: Front row left to right are: Jo Ellen Meier, Cindy Nykiel Stenger, Sheila Greene Bryant, Juli Krzemien Ferguson, Terrie Houston Ringwalt, Sue Hensley, Sarita Troia Penka, Mary Tuttle Marasco, Mickie Baratta Olsen, Francene Buda Dardon, and Kathy Troia Radosevich. Middle row left to right are: Sue Tessin Bruning, Lynn Saucier Pesek, Marilyn Wichert Selk, Marilyn Merrill Olivier, Kathie Murphy Shepoka, Jean Stackhouse Wang, Monica Kirk, Maryann Neneman Boelter, Joanne Zegar Tusa, Mary Parise Nowaczyk, Kathy Militti Coniglio, and Barb Slama Ramsey. Standing left to right: Kathy Linstrom Wright, Margie Luce Gubbels, Jo Ann Newell Raymer, Regina Hanson Ulfers, Claudia Grisnik, Mary Lou Nemecek Gunia, Betty Breeding Hurt, Nancy Harris Thomas, and Carol Koziol Rozmiarek.

Left bottom: Juli Krzemien Ferguson '67 came from Australia and read the petitions during the All-School Reunion Mass.

Middle bottom: Sharing a hug and fond memories are left to right Connie Emery Wolf '62 and Mary Cvetas Munshaw '62.

Right bottom: Theresa Franco '74, the first recipient of The Distinguished Woman of Mercy Alumna Award, shares a graduation picture when she was a student at Mercy.

May Crowning: A Blessed Tradition

One of the most beautiful and moving traditions at Mercy High School is the Catholic ritual of honoring Mary in May by crowning her statue with a circlet of flowers. As part of the symbolic ceremony, the May Queen, a senior chosen by the students as the girl who exemplifies the qualities of Mary, places the crown and is attended by a May Court, which includes representatives from each class.

Mercy High School's 2017 May Queen was senior Isabelle "Izzy" Brown. Brown has been involved in music and theatre during all four years at Mercy. She is a member of the award-winning Mercy High Singers, and was Dorothy in the school's fall production of "The Wizard of Oz." Brown is an outstanding scholar with a 3.8 GPA who served as president of the National Honor Society. As a sophomore she was a princess in both the Nocturne and May Crowning courts. Her community involvement includes being a member of the St. Patrick's of Elkhorn's Youth Ministry Team Core Team and Venture, a scouting leadership program where she was past president. She plans to attend the University of Nebraska at Omaha and major in civil engineering. She received a Regents Scholarship and has been accepted in the Entrepreneurial Living Learning Community.

Other members of the May Court include:

Seniors: Shea Childs and Erin Jones

Juniors: Annabella Glatte and Lillian Kraft

Sophomores: Juena Laa and Audra Pflug

Freshman: Madeline Riesberg and Abbey Wilson



First row left to right are : Abbey Wilson, Juena Laa, Lillian Kraft, Annabella Glatte, Audra Pflug, and Madeline Riesberg. Back row left to right are: Shea Childs, Isabelle Brown, and Erin Jones.

The ceremony included class processions and a blessing by Father Michael Eckley, pastor of St. Pius X Parish. Each class recited a decade of the rosary with the final decade led by faculty, staff and the May Court. It is also the first time seniors wore their caps and gowns.

"Not only is this ceremony a beautiful tradition, it is a reminder to our students that it is important to recognize and share their gifts of faith, knowledge and service with those around them, as Mary did," said Sarah Regan, Principal, Mercy High School.

Efforts Raise Funds for Tuition Assistance

From purchasing plants and flowers, to answering the call for donations during the school's annual phonathon, to participating in Omaha's charity challenge, Omaha Gives!—the Mercy community used these activities to raise funds for tuition assistance.

Plant Sale: Students sold flowers and plants to raise money for the Negotiated Tuition Program. More than \$47,100 was raised with thousands of flowers adorning hallways and Franey Hall for pickup the first weekend in May.

Phonathon: This year's phonathon theme was "Traditions." It challenged current donors to join the monthly giving club or Mx12 and non-donors to start a tradition of donating to Mercy. In addition, students, parents and alumnae called Mercy supporters to encourage giving to the school. Almost \$70,000 was raised by June 5 with the number of signups for Mx12 tripling.

Omaha Gives!: Preliminary results are in, and 194 supporters pledged \$32,735 to Mercy. This surpassed last year's tally by \$5,885, and the average gift was \$169.



Mercy students left to right, Andrea Vargas '18 and Adriana Silva '18, help with the plant sale.

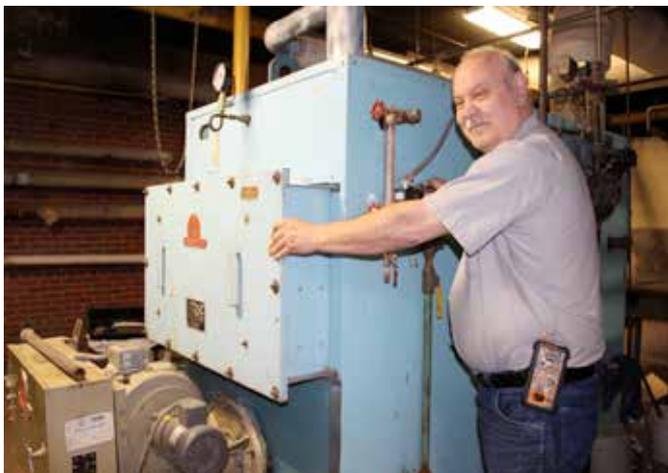
HVAC Renovation

This summer you will see the building abuzz with the sights and sounds of construction. The work will take place in three phases: heating systems renovation, air conditioning upgrades and installation of centralized control systems. Mercy is converting the steam heat system to a more efficient hot water heating system.

Workers began the Thursday before Memorial Day and started on the third and second floors, as well as in the boiler room. The rooms with old radiators will have them replaced with new units and those with window air conditioners will have a unit placed in the ceiling tile.

The school building is a bit messy, so we apologize for any inconvenience or disruptions this may cause. Project timelines call for the majority of work to be completed by the new school year this fall.

These efforts are the culmination of an 18-month campaign to renovate our HVAC systems and to raise funds to support this \$2 million effort. Our tenacity paid off thanks to a generous \$1 million matching grant and inspired support from donors, alumnae, family and friends of over \$760,000. Mercy is confident that additional monies will be given by the matching grant deadline to complete this campaign. If you are interested in donating to this effort, please contact Jim Pogge, Vice President for Advancement at poggej@mercyhigh.org.



Milton "Pete" Peterson, maintenance worker, says goodbye to the old boiler during HVAC renovations.

In Memoriam

We extend sympathy to the families and friends of those alumnae whose deaths were communicated to the Advancement Office from March 1, 2017-May 31, 2017. We try to make this list as accurate as possible. Please inform Naomi Chambers at chambersn@mercyhigh.org if we missed anyone.

Nancy A. Giordano, SJ '39
Henrietta Cich Kolbinger, SJ '41
Mary Oberdin Lampe, SJ '43
Helen Caniglia Minarik, SJ '43
Mary Anne Courtney Wurtz, SJ '43
Virginia Anania Lefler, SM '45
Mary Ann Herek Wortman, SJ '46
Jean Moylan Lacy, SM '46
Mary Watsabaugh Bishop, SJ '47
Madeleine Duffy McGillan, SM '47
Margaret McWilliams Welsh, SM '51
Donna Prenosil Dillon, SJ '52
Madelyn "Peg" Connelly Hanson, SM '52
Mary Ann Barfell White, SJ '53
Rose Marie Ryba Svendsen, SJ '54
Marjorie Ostransky Fibich, SM '54
Catherine O'Brien Casey '57
Beverly Sorys Hicks '58
Mary Prerost Incontro '64
Judith "Judy" Watson Schraml '64
Michaela M. Ormond '71

Alumnae Features

Mercy High School features stories about our alumnae on the school's website, under the Alumnae tab, Alumnae Features. We are also interested in knowing what is happening in our Women of Mercy's lives--careers, travels, class gatherings, births and weddings.

If interested in sharing your story, contact Deborah Daley, Communications Director at daleyd@mercyhigh.org.

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



School News

The end of the school year saw numerous activities celebrating the graduating Class of 2017. Here is a short recap of some of the student honors and accomplishments. Full stories appear on the News Section of Mercy's website.

Outstanding Seniors: Mercy students Lyndee Hoge and Julia Pechar were named outstanding seniors. The annual award winners are chosen by the senior class, faculty and administration and must "represent the class in an outstanding way." Honorees are considered by their peers and leaders to be loyal, trustworthy, spirited, compassionate, generous, dedicated while also being involved in school activities.

Athletic Honors: The Sister Edith Award, the top athletic award, was presented to Natalia Kruszcak. The recognition honors the athlete that best portrays qualities important in athletics like sportsmanship, spirit, enthusiasm and concern for teammates while using athletic skills to the best of her ability. The Scholar Athlete was Grace Novak.

Fine Arts: Music-- The Sister Catherine Franey Award for the Outstanding Senior in the Music Department went to Izzy Brown, Erin Jones and Faye Davis. *Theatre--* Mercy High School Theatre Spirit Award was Izzy Brown. Tony awards were given in acting, backstage support and more. *Art* students also received awards at numerous state and regional shows.

Service Honors: Erin Jones received the Catherine McAuley Award for Extraordinary Service, completing the most service hours during the year. Rachel Dethlefs received the Sr. Jeanne O'Rourke Award for needed service hours and advocacy for justice. The Spirit of Mercy Award was given to Lyndee Hoge.

Graduation: 82 students graduated with Rachel Dethlefs chosen as valedictorian and Lyndee Hoge as salutatorian.

Did You Know?

- Since 1988, Mercy has had 33 National Merit Scholars. In the last four years the school has had three National Merit Scholarship winners.
- 100% of the class of 2017 is attending college; more than 50% received scholarship awards.
- Our graduating classes earned \$25 million in scholarships in the past six years.
- Athletes from Golf, Cross Country, Swimming, Tennis and Track went to State.



Outstanding seniors left to right are Lyndee Hoge and Julia Pechar.



Natalia Kruszcak received The Sister Edith Award .



Mrs. Patricia Yunker, Music Director presents the Sister Catherine Franey Award for the Outstanding Senior(s) in the Music Department to from left to right Izzy Brown, Erin Jones and Faye Davis.

Alumnae News (Available pictures follow the items)

1950s

Mary McCafferty Nastase '58 graduated from the College of Saint Mary at age 76 and was featured in several local news stories.



Mary Nastase '58 in her cap and gown.

Several Mercy alumnae were Omaha Urban Council of Catholic Women 2017 Woman of the Year Honorees. They include **Dr. Virginia A. Higgins, SM '53**, **Rita Humpal Dolan, SM '54** and **Mary McGinty Benda '60**.

1960s

Friends since high school, Mercy grads **Patricia Kennelly Mitiplier '60** of Phoenix, Arizona and **Donna Mathews '60** of Omaha, got together for a visit recently.



Pictured left to right Patricia Kennelly Mitiplier '60 and Donna Mathews '60.

Members of the **Class of 1963** gathered together in Arizona this winter for a mini-reunion.



Front row left to right are: Mary Murphy, Kate Danahy Powell and Mary Kay Connors. Back row left to right are: Doty Kowal, Therese Green Bigelow, Diane Crosby Cordova, and a friend from Maine. Not pictured but attending the event were Janice Rashid and Judy Jurek.

Jane Keller '66 had a passion for math and drama who never forgot Mercy. When she passed away, she put the school in her will as a beneficiary. Her brothers Paul and Richard decided to create an endowed fund in their sister's name for math and theatre students. Read this in Alumnae Features on the Mercy website.

1970s

Ellen Kitzdorf Lierk '70 was a teacher/counselor at St. Agnes in Alliance, Nebraska. She was recently featured in a media story on great women in Nebraska.

1980s

During her years at Mercy, performing arts and social justice took a strong hold and led to her current career. **Margie Walsh Haik '88** is the Director of Communications for the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. Read her story on the Alumnae Features.

1990s

Lisa Synowiecki Emsick '97 and her husband Dan are the new owner of Paddy McGown's Pub & Grill open for business at 4503 Center St. later this summer.

2000s

An environmental engineer, a basketball coach and a Mercy graduate—are all elements of the interesting and unique resume of **Nicole Lencowski '06**. Read the article on Alumnae Features.

Briana Jordan-Brabbin '08 got a new job working for the Hilton Brand at the Homewood Suites in downtown Omaha. She is also a Beachbody coach.

The Papillion Nebraska Police Department recently welcomed **Emily Thomsen '09** as a new officer.

2010s

Danielle Dyer '10 received a Master of Arts degree in library science from the University of Missouri in May. **Emily Dyer '13**, graduated from Benedictine College with a degree in biology and French, and will be attending Creighton University Medical School this fall.



Left to right Danielle Dyer '10 and Emily Dyer '13 received degrees this year.

Nicholle Ramsey '13 has been appointed the Associate Poet Laureate of Winona, Minnesota and was the first woman and African American to receive this prestigious appointment. Read this story on Alumnae Features.

Abby Culp '13, graduated from the US Coast Guard Academy in New London, CT. She is now officially a Coast Guard ensign.



Abby Culp '13 graduates as a Coast Guard ensign.

Bridget Blessie '13 was awarded the Student-Athlete Volunteer of the Year at Missouri Western State University. She has devoted her time with Habitat for Humanity, YMCA, Make-A-Wish, Meals on Wheels and The Noyes Home in St. Joseph, Missouri.

Calla Kessler '14 is part of the UNL journalism team that won the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights journalism award--an honor never before bestowed on a group of college students. She also was named the 2017 Hearst National Photojournalism Champion.



Amber Johnson '14 has gone to 12 countries since she has graduated from Mercy in 2014, and now has her eyes set on Taiwan with the Ambassador Scholarship. Read more on Alumnae Features.

Alexandra Lorenson '15 earned first place in the Opinion Page Personal Column Writing category for the Daily Nebraskan at the annual Spring Awards Ceremony. Alli also earned third place in Headline Writing.

This year's graduation featured a student who was fourth generation **Alyssa Turnquist '17**. Read about her family story on the News Section on Mercy's website.



Pictured from left to right are: Lynda Caniglia Turnquist '83, Alyssa Turnquist '17, Loretta Smejkal Caniglia SJ '50 and not pictured (deceased) Mary Haller Caniglia SJ '30.

In Celebration

Weddings/Anniversaries

Melissa Hilpipre '98 married Logan Roth on March 10, 2017 at the Santa Lucia Festival Hall in Omaha, Nebraska.



Molly Elston '07 married Bill Ayaday on September 4th, 2016. Her wedding party included two of her Mercy classmates Ali Opitz '07 and Anne Lavelle '07, and her two sisters who are also Mercy grads, Olivia '10 and Annie '14. Molly and Bill are currently living in Abu Dhabi.



Molly Elston '07 and her bridesmaids which were Mercy grads.

Births

Lindsay Rosonke Sullivan '04 and her husband, Tim, welcomed their second daughter, Norah Rose, to their family on January 11, 2017.





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Mercy's website at
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