CAMPUS EVENTS 2018

Spring Benefit Event
Mystery at the Mansion
Saturday, March 3, 2018

Tri-School Productions Spring Musical
Westside Story
at Junipero Serra High School
March 16, 17, 23 & 24 - 7:30 p.m.
March 18 - 2:00 p.m.

Making a Difference
Wednesday, April 25, 2018
6:30 pm

Spring Open House
Monday, April 30, 2018

Mercy Dance Concert
“Showstoppers”
Skyline College Theater
Wednesday, May 9, 2018

Spring Chorale Concert at Mercy
Thursday, May 10, 2018

ArtsFest at Mercy
Wednesday, May 16, 2018

Baccalaureate Mass
Our Lady of Angels
Saturday, June 2, 2018

Graduation
St. Ignatius Church (USF)
Sunday, June 3, 2018

ALUMNAE EVENTS 2018

SAVE THE DATE
Spring Alumnae Social
May 17, 2018 • 6:30 pm
Ladera Garden & Gifts
Hosted by
Adrianna Navarro ’03
More information to follow.

THE OAKS
SPRING 2018 - TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Cover Photo:
Mercy girls pictured on the green at the annual Think Pink Rally, October 27, 2017. Students cut and donated their hair to Locks of Love in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL KAREN HANRAHAN

Our Mercy Mission states that we educate young women to, among many things, lead with compassion and strive for excellence. As you read the articles in this issue of The Oaks, you will notice recurring actions of excellence, compassion, passion and collaboration. Whether we are embracing the Sisters of Mercy Critical Concerns on Mercy Day, in Ryan McGoron’s new class, or in Studio Art, celebrating Sister Marilyn Lacy’s amazing Opus Prize, spotlighting the new meaning of ‘library’, or honoring a beloved faculty member who left us far too soon, those action words surface again and again. Excellence, compassion, passion and collaboration. These values are what our alumnae live, our students learn, our teachers teach, and our administrators emphasize. As Catherine wrote, “We must strive to do ordinary things extraordinarily well.” Let us do things - both small and large - to make the world a better place. Let us all strive to make a difference in the world. Let us follow in Catherine’s footsteps and do it extraordinarily well.
Strategic Planning
Developing the Vision to Secure Our Future

In October 2017, Mercy High School embarked on a Strategic Planning process to help articulate a vision and action plan for our school for the next five years. With an overwhelmingly positive response, a 40-member volunteer committee was selected to represent our community. Students, alumnae, faculty, parents, administrators, and Board members have been examining, brainstorming, debating, and synthesizing the critical components of the Mercy program to develop a strategic plan for continued success.

The Center for Strategic Facilitation was engaged to guide the process and expedite development of a collaborative, action-oriented plan. We would like to thank the team members who have volunteered their time and energy to the process.

We are now at the point of opening the discussion of the strategic vision to the larger community, and we look forward to more participation! As this issue of The Oaks goes to print, we are holding four Community Input Meetings for faculty and staff, students, alumnae, Mercy Sisters and community members, and the Board of Directors. It is a truly exciting opportunity to gather together so many people who care deeply about our school, and who want to work towards positive progress.

AIMS OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM:
Create a forward thinking, comprehensive 5-Year Strategic Plan that incorporates our values and mission with a strong academic platform. Engage the Mercy High School community in creating The Plan and committing to its implementation.

MERCY DAY

Every year in September, we gather for Mercy Day to honor the tremendous vision the Sisters of Mercy put forth and to celebrate the extraordinary reality our school has become. It was a year of passionate national debate and rekindled civic engagement. Amidst the heated political climate, we joined together to learn about and more deeply understand the issues dominating the news.

The Sisters of Mercy continually raise our nation’s consciousness on topics of social justice and humanity. They created and articulated their Critical Concerns - Earth, Immigration, Nonviolence, Anti-racism, and Women - after purposeful reflection on the issues that they think are most important to address. Catherine McCauley, Mary Baptist Russell, and the other intrepid Sisters of Mercy have fought for those who have not been heard, and have answered the call to give of themselves to others. Mercy Day activities are designed to prompt discussion and reflection about the small or significant actions we can take to support our neighbors, and how we can be part of the solution to these global issues.

An all-school liturgy set the expectation of openness for the workshops to come. The focus was ‘Remembering Our Roots - Leading with Mercy’ with readings meant to inform and inspire. Campus Ministry announced the McCauley Society, an opportunity to establish personal relationships with the Sisters of Mercy in order to continue their legacy and keep their mission alive for future generations.

All grades participated in a workshop on the Critical Concern of Racism. Led by Gary Ferguson (Dance) and Ryan McGoron (History), the girls explored the history of race relations in our country and then viewed current events in light of the hard truths of our past. They heard personal stories - experiences and emotions that, undeniably uncomfortable, were communicated with empathy and forgiveness.

The girls each chose one additional workshop to attend about the Critical Concerns. The day ended with students and faculty enjoying lunch on the green and a spirited all-school rally!

On this year’s Mercy Day we raised our collective awareness - to recognize different perspectives, to honor the changemakers that came before us, to appreciate the support of our community, and to lead the hope and passion within ourselves.
IN LOVING MEMORY
Carol Galletta

We celebrate the life and contributions of a very special member of the Mercy Community. The founder of the AMES program, Carol Galletta was a champion for students with learning differences and taught us that, with the right kind of instruction, care, and advocacy, students of all learning dispositions could thrive. In fact, we learned from Carol that finding the uniqueness in each student’s ability is just plain good teaching.

All of us at Mercy loved Carol’s passion for teaching, her sense of fun, and her devotion to her faith, family, friends, colleagues, and girls. For her memorial, members of the community submitted notes and remembrances. Her legacy lives on every day in the AMES program and in the success of her students as they take on college, careers, and life. While we will keep that legacy going at the school, it is Carol the person - her caring, her laughter, her fun personality - that we will miss each and every day.

—Karen Hanrahan, Head of School

“Your are braver than you believe, smarter than you seem, and stronger than you think.” — A.A. Milne

“YOUR FAMILY is deeply indebted to Carol for establishing the AMES program and for the many ways in which she encouraged her students. She was an amazing advocate, a wonderful listener, and an affirming presence in a world that sometimes does not appreciate learning differences. We will never forget her.”

—The Clausing Family

“THE GALLETTA is MORE THAN AN ORDINARY WOMAN - she is a fighter, she is brave, compassionate, wise, selfless, caring, empathetic, and bold. If it wasn’t for this powerful woman, many students wouldn’t be where they are today... including me. Those of us in the AMES program can all agree that she gave us a second chance. She took our ‘brokenness’ and made it beautiful, and treated us as if we were her children...Mrs. Galletta is a life changer and I want all of you to know that. She has not only changed individuals, she’s changed a community of young women. And for all of us in AMES who have walked through the doors of Mrs. Galletta’s program, we have been KNOWN, CHALLENGED, and TRANSFORMED.”

—Chili Phaler ’20

Mrs. Galletta - We couldn’t have gotten to where we are today without you pushing us past our limit, and reminding us that with hard work, we will achieve anything. Thank you for teaching us to advocate for ourselves, telling us that nothing is impossible, and for always being in our corner. We will miss you greatly and we will continue to make you proud!

—Allyson ’09 & Kristen ’13 DiGionia

In honor of Mrs. Galletta’s contributions to Mercy and her commitment to girls with learning differences, we have established a scholarship fund in her name. The Carol Galletta AMES Scholarship Fund will support students in the AMES program who might not otherwise be able to attend Mercy High School. If you would like to make a contribution to the Carol Galletta AMES Scholarship Fund, you may do so online at www.mercyhsb.com/giving.

THIS WOMAN’S LIFE has become a grace, a memory which lives on, a strength that motivates, a prayer of hope, a challenge to those who knew and loved her. She is a comfort to us in our grief - a vision set before us, on how the Christian life is to be lived.

—Sandy Huberty

“Dear Carol - WHAT A FORCE you were on this earth! Your friendship, your faith, your selflessness, your incredible legacy of education. Wow! You have burst into the universe like a thousand bright stars shining on inside so many students grown up to be teachers, nurses, scientists and every manner of confident and fearless adults.”

—Christine Folan

In Our Memory of Carol Galletta...
Critical Concerns Poster Art
AP STUDIO ART PROJECT WITH NAZIRA KURY-ARNOLD

In the fall, Ms. Kury-Arnold challenged her AP Studio Art class to explore meaningful social issues through the power of political posters. Students learned about the Critical Concerns identified by the Sisters of Mercy - Earth, Immigration, Nonviolence, Anti-racism, and Women - and chose an issue of particular significance to research. They learned about the purpose and use of political posters throughout history and then created their own posters. They each presented their artwork, sharing their own experiences and stories that connect them to the Critical Concern. The project allowed students to find their voices on these topics in a deeply personal, creative, and rewarding way.
Not Your Average Library

The Mercy Library is a new kind of library. No longer just a place for dusty books, homework and ‘shushing’, the library is a vibrant learning environment. Under Sarah Murphy’s guidance, it has become a place for creating, experimenting, exploring, and escaping. Of course there are still dusty books (though they are in the process of getting a ‘bookstore upgrade’ to be organized by genre), but Mrs. Murphy has stocked the shelves with the latest Young Adult favorites and pop culture staples. She also hosts a variety of drop-in activities to introduce girls to new skills and experiences.

TINKER SPACE
The Tinker Space is a special section of the library, home to activities where students practice and build skills in basic circuitry, computer programming (arduino), and 3D design. Girls come during lunch, collaboration, or after school to work on projects such as LED light-up greeting cards, needle felting, or motorized objects.

E-BOOKS
Books, the principal feature of any library, have also been modernized. Mrs. Murphy offers ‘anytime, anywhere borrowing’ through the e-book collection. Students can select from thousands of books and audiobooks, and access them from any of their devices.

3D PRINTER
The Parents Club recently purchased 3D printers for Mercy, and the library has certainly put theirs to use! To augment classroom activities, Mrs. Murphy has created body parts for a bio class and dancing function stick figures for algebra. Girls can use design programs like Tinkercad and 123Design to create anything themselves - backpack tags, name plates, and cookie cutters, to name a few.

GUEST AUTHORS
Popular Young Adult (YA) fiction writers present inspiring and informative sessions for the girls, exposing them not just to the real-world work of writing, but to the idea of tapping into their own creativity in whatever they do.

- E. Lockhart discussed how she uses active emotions to drive storytelling, and how she must be willing to dig deep and explore her own emotions - especially the uncomfortable ones - to be a compelling writer.
- As this issue of The Oaks goes to print, we are preparing for a visit from Dhonielle Clayton, who will be speaking about finding beauty’s role in society and her support of diverse authors in YA fiction.

INTRO TO ENGINEERING CLUB
Mrs. Murphy mentors the Intro to Engineering club, where students learn the basics of circuitry, soldering, and structural design. The club has made electronics, 3D-printed building components, LED-lit crafts, stylus pens, and objects mechanized by paper gears.
Mercy Dance

This year, Mercy Dance has made jumps, turns, and leaps towards their creative and competitive dreams!

With big wins in December Competitions, Mercy Spirit Squads - Cheer, Hip Hop, Lyrical and Song Pom - qualified for Jamz Nationals in Las Vegas!

In February, Mercy Lyrical and Pom were crowned State Champions!

Fall Sport Achievements

Volleyball: The Mercy Volleyball program stepped up this fall into the more challenging West Bay Athletic League’s (WBAL) upper division. The team finished in 4th place and went to the CCS playoffs, defeating Seaside High in the first round. The team displayed a tremendous amount of determination and tenacity, and were barely edged out by Sacred Heart Prep (the #1 seed). With strong numbers set to return in 2018, Volleyball looks forward to another great year!

Golf: The 2017 squad had one of its most successful seasons in Mercy golf history! The team finished with 7 match wins on the season and placed 4th in the league. They sent a record five golfers to compete in the league tournament. The program looks to improve on this year’s record-breaking season and to qualify for CCS next year!

Cross Country: The cross country team was a group of very dedicated, hard-working, and determined athletes. Three girls qualified for the league championships to go onto the CCS finals, representing Mercy CC admirably!

Don’t miss our Spring Dance Showcase! With bright lights and Broadway tunes, Show Stoppers is on May 9th at Skyline College Theater.

In February, Mercy Lyrical and Pom were crowned State Champions!

West Bay Athletic League Awards

Cross Country
Honorable Mention: Muriel Butler ‘18, Katy Clausing ‘18, Joanne Hui ‘21

Golf
Honorable Mention: Katie Carolan ‘18, Emma Curia ‘18, Maya Zeidan ‘20

Tennis
First Team: Angelina Zamattia ‘19, Sharlene Fang ‘19, Maria Mobraten ‘18
Honorable Mention: Karla Joachin-Alvarez ‘20

Water Polo
First Team: Olivia Benedetti ‘18
Second Team: Daisy Paulsen ‘18
Honorable Mention: Salma El-Badry ‘19

Celebrating Soccer Star Sara Bermudez ‘18 and her decision to attend Brown University.

Volleyball
First Team: Alister Borabo ‘19
Honorable Mention: Ally Remulla ‘19, Becky Roos ‘20

Happy Holidays from the Athletics Department!
Codings for the Future

CodeHS visited Mercy to run an Hour of Code with Dr. Bradley and her AP Computer Science class. The students had a blast learning about app development, and at the end of the session, they each created a cell phone app! The organizers were impressed with the girls’ curiosity and perseverance.

CodeHS is a platform that helps high schools teach computer science and programming. They believe that coding is a foundation skill, and their mission is to empower all students to impact the future by learning to code.

Mercy Committed Scholars

Emma Miller ‘18 and Paulina Morearty ‘18 were named Committed Scholars in the 2018 National Merit Scholarship Program. They are recognized for their exceptional academic talent and promise, and placed among the top 3.5 percent of more than 1.5 million students that took the PSAT.

Academic Spotlight

The underlying causes of the Critical Concerns make the curriculum both accessible and difficult to explore. New topics of discussion come up every day with each natural disaster, piece of legislation, and news cycle. The project-based assessment format allows Mr. McGoron to tie lessons together, and students are able to display their learning and express their individuality in creative ways. The class is consistently reminded that there is always more work to do and more progress to be made.

A recent project for the Earth unit focused on sustainable farming and food production. Students learned about large-scale farming operations and food waste, and how meat and dairy production consumes vastly more resources than plants. They then chose vegetarian recipes to make, and visited their local farmer’s markets to buy the produce! By interviewing farmers at the local markets, they witnessed the passion and care that goes into growing our food and the processes. They also learned that plant-based meals can be delicious!

“My hope for the students in this class is that they realize they can make a difference in the world. Too often in history classes we talk about complex problems like climate change or mass incarceration, but with little guidance on solutions. This class has allowed students to be actors in their education by taking Mercy values and implementing them in their daily lives. Ultimately that is the heart of a Mercy education - to take the message of the Gospels and use it to make the world more just, equal, and kind.”

—Ryan McGoron

This project has motivated me to buy more foods that are locally grown or from sustainable farms. By making just a few simple changes to our lives, we can slow down the detrimental effects of climate change. I’ll try to buy more foods that are locally grown or from sustainable farms. By making just a few simple changes to our lives, we can slow down the detrimental effects of climate change.

Apple Blueberry Crisp Recipe

Ingredients:
- 4 apples
- 2 cups blueberries
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 1/2 cup oatmeal
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter

Directions: Peel and slice apples into small pieces, then put into the baking dish. Combine spices and juices with the apples, and mix while adding in blueberries. In a separate bowl, mix flour, sugars, salt, oatmeal, and diced butter. Use an electric mixer and mix until butter is pea-sized or smaller. Spread the topping across the fruit in the baking dish. Bake at 350 degrees F for 55 minutes or until the top is brown.

The class voted to make the new apple blueberry crisp the best recipe - she even brought it in for everyone to sample!
Mission & Service

Under the guidance of the Sisters of Mercy and their Critical Concerns, Campus Ministry sets the spiritual direction each year for Mercy High School. Support of marginalized communities has always been a key part of the Sisters’ identity and mission. Regardless of our personal political affiliations, our duty and obligation is to reflect on how and why the Sisters choose to address these issues.

Our aim is not simply to discuss the Critical Concerns in a theoretical way, but to infuse it into our curriculum and bring awareness to the issues in our daily lives. Campus Ministry and the religion department organize various activities and events to bring us back to our faith and humanity. —Peter Diaz; Teacher, Service Learning Coordinator, Mission Integration

URBAN PLUNGE

Twice a year, students visit San Francisco in an immersion experience to witness and address real Critical Concerns in our own neighborhoods.

This year, Mercy students made bag lunches for residents in SRO (single room occupancy) hotels and then passed out leftover bags to homeless individuals in the surrounding streets. In November, they visited St. Peter’s and held group discussions with 6th graders about Corporal Works of Mercy and how they can contribute personally. In February, they helped with habitat restoration on San Bruno Mountain with South San Francisco Weed Warriors and learned about the huge impact that invasive species can have on the native wildlife.

On a mural tour of the Mission neighborhood, students witnessed the consequences of gentrification. They visited the Bayview District to see the City of SF’s native plant restoration efforts, discussed recology processing and its important role in recycling for the city, and stopped by the SF-Marin Food Bank to understand its role in feeding the city’s hungry.

The students’ two days of service were capped off by a visit with David, a resident of Mercy Housing in Mission Creek. Formerly homeless, he is now thriving with a roof over his head and is making a living as an artist.

SATURDAY OF SERVICE

Now in its fifth year, Mercy students brought and shared dinner with residents of The Catherine Center, a supportive residential program that helps women transition from incarceration back into society. Students played card games and Wii with the residents, who shared their life experiences and how they came to the Catherine Center. Residents appreciated the energy and company of the Mercy girls, and of course encouraged the students to stay in school and to use drugs or alcohol. The students were moved by the residents’ honesty, which made for strong, lasting impressions.

MCAULEY SOCIETY

Early in the school year, students and Sisters of Mercy are paired so as to learn about each other and become friends. Students make monthly visits to the Mercy Center on campus and spend time learning about the Sisters’ experiences and perspectives.

MISSION GATHERING

Immigration was chosen as the theme for this year’s Faculty & Staff Mission Gathering. We had two guest speakers that shared their perspectives: Dr. Diane Clynne of the Sisters of Mercy and Mr. Francisco Gonzalez from Catholic Charities of San Francisco. They each led an engaging discussion about the church’s stance on and implementation of social teachings. They explained current state and federal laws and how they have personally witnessed the execution of those laws affecting communities. We ended the gathering by praying for our fellow brother and sister immigrants and challenging ourselves, as a community of mercy, to act courageously in whatever small or significant way we can to alleviate their suffering.

KAIROS 14 & 15 JUNIOR RETREAT

Kairos is a bonding experience for the juniors wherein students are encouraged to reflect on who they are and how they are transforming during their high school journey. They explore their faith and friendships, and they pray for their future. The senior class leaders and faculty members facilitate two engaging, reflective retreats each year.

FORT FUNSTON RESTORATION

For years, students have participated in service projects on Martin Luther King Jr. Day. This year, they enjoyed a beautiful day of physical activity, removing invasive plant species and replacing them with native vegetation in the native topography in San Francisco. They also learned about the original topography in San Francisco and the native plants that covered there.
Inspired to Give to Making A Difference

Vasant and Sumati Prabhu have a passion for education, particularly the education of young women. They are generous benefactors who are also on the Making A Difference Honorary Committee, and now their daughter Maya ’19 has joined the family tradition of giving. We sat down with Maya to discuss her motivation to give.

What inspired you to give to the Making A Difference Scholarship Fund? As I have gotten older, I am keenly aware of how fortunate and privileged I am. 2/5’s of the world’s 250 million children who do not go to school live in India. Of those, the majority are girls. Being adopted from India, I could have been one of those girls who would have never seen the inside of a classroom.

In 2016, my parents underwrote the education of 100 girls in India. That inspired me to do my own bit as well. On learning that 35% of the girls at Mercy are on financial aid, I was blown away. The Making A Difference campaign made it easy for me to make a contribution.

How did you earn the money you are donating? In the spring of 2017, I decided to start a babysitting business with the intent of raising money for the Making A Difference campaign. I got my Red Cross CPR certification over spring break, and that jump-started my childcare endeavors. Over the past 10 months, between babysitting and my summer job working with kids, I have worked hard to earn money. I set myself a goal of at least $1,000 dollars because my parents encouraged me by saying that if I got to that number, they would match it 100%. I just reached my goal. Hooray!

How has Mercy had an impact on your life? The power of Mercy’s all girls culture has taught me so much about myself. The support and kindness of the staff and the amazing teachers have made me more confident and motivated. Despite being a college preparatory school, Mercy cares about making sure there is a balance in our lives, which has allowed me to find time to pursue my interests and passions and also to help others.

“We are so proud of Maya for working hard to continue the Prabhu family tradition of supporting the education of girls. We have found an invaluable partner in Mercy High School, and are most grateful for all the support and encouragement you have shown to Maya so that she feels empowered, confident, and motivated to BE her best, and to DO her best.” —Sumati Prabhu

Sponsorships, gifts and reservations can be made at www.mercyhsb.com/giving/MAD

MAKING a difference Scholarship Benefit Dinner

Wednesday • April 25, 2018 • 6:00 pm
SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT MARRIOtT WAtERFRONt, BURLINGAME

Make Your Reservation Today!
Please R.S.V.P. by April 20

STUDENT SPEAKER

Mary Louise Castillo
46 years in Mercy education

Eileen Horan
52 years in Mercy education

Gianna DeRanieri
Mercy High School ’18
Our Lady of Angels ’14

HONORING

Gianna deranieri
Mercy High School ’18
Our Lady of Angels ’14

MERCY HIGH SCHOOL IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION, CHARITABLE TAX ID# 94-1230999.
Mercy Chorale was honored to sing for Alumna Congresswoman Jackie Speier and her constituents at the 30th Annual Seniors on the Move event at the San Mateo Convention Center! It is the largest gathering of seniors in California, where the 700+ attendees hear from experts on how to stay active and healthy. Mercy Chorale and their teacher Pam Matthews got attendees into the Winter spirit with beautiful renditions of classic Christmas carols and holiday hymns.

Sr. Marilyn Lacey ’66, rSM received the 2017 $1M Opus prize on behalf of her nonprofit for their faith-based humanitarian work. The Founder and Executive Director of Mercy Beyond Borders, Sr. Marilyn is a Mercy graduate and a former member of our Board of Directors.

Founded in 2008, Mercy Beyond Borders has operations in South Sudan and Haiti, and brings hope to more than 1,400 women and girls in extreme poverty every year by providing educational, economic, and empowerment opportunities. With the $1M award, Sr. Marilyn plans to endow more scholarships and grow her program staff so that they may expand their reach to help even more women and girls in South Sudan and Haiti.

Published Author Kevin Allardice

We all know Kevin Allardice as a beloved English teacher here at Mercy. You may even know that he has been noted in digital publications such as EdSurge for his use of innovative assessment techniques in creative writing. But you may not know that he’s also a highly-rated fiction author! His most recent book Family, Genus, Species, was released in May 2017 and is described as a wickedly funny satire that is simultaneously comedic, whip-smart, and full of sadness.

His first book, Any Resemblance to Actual Persons, published in 2014, is considered a searing and memorable debut. Mr. Allardice was awarded the Donald Barthelme prize and twice nominated for a Pushcart Prize for his short stories.

Check out Mr. Allardice’s critically-acclaimed books at your local bookstore or on Amazon!

Chorale Performs at Rep. Speier’s Annual Luncheon

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Tri-School Productions

This fall, Tri-School Productions told the story of the Radium Girls, female employees of the United States Radium factory who contracted radiation poisoning from working with luminous, toxic paint and courageously held their corporate employers accountable. It was a poignant piece about health, wealth, and moral responsibility in early 20th century America, and our girls played these historical figures with strength and relatability.

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Prestigious Opus Prize Awarded to Mercy Alumna

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When you’re writing fiction there’s always a danger that you will actually be able to get your arms and brain fully around the thing. Once you can do that, once you feel like you really have control of it, that’s death; that’s when it becomes inert. I try to push character and story to a point where it feels just beyond my understanding and control. That’s when it’s exciting for me because, as Eudora Welty famously said, if you haven’t surprised yourself you haven’t written.”

—Kevin Allardice

My first Tri-School Production was a gratifying experience; I learned so much from all the other cast and crew members, I feel humbled to have helped in the storytelling of this empowering drama that highlights the strong female figures of our past, and I hope that the strong female figures of our future left Radium Girls with a piece of the show. My favorite part was having a Tri-School family that I saw every day and making friends who I fun to work with on and off stage.”

—Sophia Poblete ’21

Don’t Miss the SPRING MUSICAL

March 16, 17, 18, 23 & 24
Gellert Auditorium - Serra High School
MOMAS - MOTHERS OF MERCY ALUMNAE
returned to Mercy for a pre-Christmas get-together. They reconnected with old friends over wine and cheese, and enjoyed the holiday decorations at the Mansion. It was great to have these wonderful Mercy Moms back on campus!

Wine, Brew & Food
at Kohl Mansion

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Bayside Printed Products, Mrs. Linda Giusto
Auto Exotics, Joe Ajam

The MOTHER DAUGHTER TEA is a beloved Mercy tradition and a chance to appreciate the special women in our lives. Each fall, students, mothers, and grandmothers gather to enjoy the event at the Mansion.

The 2017 Wine, Brew & Food Event at Kohl Mansion was a great success!

In February, the girls and their dads threw it back to the 80s at the FATHER DAUGHTER DANCE!
In September, more than 165 alumnae returned to Mercy for the 2017 Homecoming celebration - many of them for the first time since graduation! This treasured annual tradition included coffee with the Sisters of Mercy, mass in the chapel, and lunch in the mansion, where alumnae reconnected with old friends and beloved teachers. We're grateful that so many Mercy girls took the opportunity to come back home!

This year’s special guest was long-time Mercy Alumna Ruth Curran Dolim ‘41 who celebrated at the mass and luncheon with her daughter Judith Dolim Shafer ’77!
Catherine Kowalski ’03
BRIDAL VISIONS
Timeless Designs for Every Bride

Catherine Kowalski ’03 brings fresh ideas to timeless pieces in her bridal gown designs. She has recently been featured in Vogue Italia, The Knot, and Trends Magazine as an up-and-coming talent to watch! We caught up with her about her journey from the halls of Kohl Mansion to the pages of couture fashion magazines.

Where are you based? I work and live in Brooklyn, NY. My career has taken me to London, Milan, Como and Berlin. My husband and I love to travel and try to go somewhere new at least once a year. We have a family home up in Stratton, Vermont that we go to often to ski.

Your dresses have women’s names! How do you choose the name for each gown? Wedding gowns are so special, and giving them a name adds a level of personality that a number can’t do alone. When I design, I am often thinking about people that I either know personally or people that inspire me, and then I think about what I would want to dress them in if they were to come to me for a wedding gown. Also, sometimes when I make a dress for a friend, I will decide to add it to my line and I will give the dress her name.

Who are the biggest influences on your career? Sister Genemarie Beegan ’73, my art teacher at Mercy, has had one of the largest impacts on helping develop my skills. I knew where I wanted to go and she helped me get there.

I was lucky to have a similar professor at Parsons [School of Design]. Carolina Simonelli, a former designer herself. She was very similar to Sister in the way she nurtured my style and showed me how to improve my trade. These two women helped form me into the designer and business owner I am today.

What’s one lesson or skill you learned at Mercy that you still use today? Women are so quick to tear other women down and my experience at Mercy taught me the value of empowering other women. I do this in my own life by choosing to hire talented, driven women and giving them a platform to show their greatness.

What piece of advice would you give to current Mercy girls? Pursue what drives you and brings you happiness. Make sure you’re doing something that you’ll wake up and be excited to do day in and day out because most of your adult life is spent doing that one thing. I treasure every day I get to work because I’m doing what I love for hours on end, further developing a passion I have been lucky to have almost my whole life. Everything I have set out to do I have done, and I know my experience at Mercy helped me accomplish those goals, and motivate me to continue searching for the next challenge ahead.

To learn more about Catherine and her business or to inquire about designs, visit www.catherinekowalskibridal.com
Tell us a bit about your Postgraduate research. Why did you decide to switch your thesis to write about women of faith?

As a Mercy student, I loved hearing the stories of the pioneer Sisters of Mercy who traveled from Ireland to San Francisco in the 1850s. Their accomplishments -- schools, hospitals, and other charitable institutions -- were substantial, especially given the countless challenges they faced as religious women operating in the public sphere in the 19th century. These stories intrigued me, and stayed with me even after I left Mercy. Years later, as a PhD student in sociology, I took a class on women and religion that required a 30-page research paper. That paper served as the perfect opportunity to learn more about the sisters who fascinated me for so long. Instead of satisfying my curiosity, however, the project showed me just how little had been written about Catholic sisters, especially from a sociological perspective. The prospect of contributing to this growing body of research was incredibly compelling, and so I changed dissertation topics to focus on 19th century Catholic sisters in San Francisco.

What can we learn from studying these women that can be applied and taught today?

Even though these women lived over a century ago, their lives offer powerful examples of how to remain resilient and hopeful in the face of adversity. Despite countless challenges, Catholic sisters drew upon their talents, skills, and faith to care for those who were the most vulnerable in society. They were savvy businesswomen and fundraisers, creative problem solvers and compassionate leaders, who blended the spiritual and the practical to generate creative solutions to the problems they faced, all while observing the strict mandates of religious life. In learning more about them, I think we can look to their courage, strength, and dedication to service as core values that can guide our own lives.

What led you back to Mercy?

While I was writing my dissertation, I ended up working at a local youth-serving nonprofit and stumbled into fundraising and resource development. It was an area of work that I came to love. When I saw that Mercy was looking for a class projects, we were still firmly in the early days of the digital era. I had clunky overhead projectors, and even though we made the occasional PowerPoint presentation, the prospect of contributing to this growing body of research was incredibly compelling, and so I changed dissertation topics to focus on 19th century Catholic sisters in San Francisco. What has changed in these 10+ years, and what has stayed the same?

It’s been almost fifteen years since I graduated, and it’s remarkable to see how technology has transformed during that period. We had clunky overhead projectors, and even though we made the occasional PowerPoint presentation, the prospect of contributing to this growing body of research was incredibly compelling, and so I changed dissertation topics to focus on 19th century Catholic sisters in San Francisco. Where did you decide to switch your thesis to write about women of faith?

I decided to write about women of faith, and specifically sisters, because I was fascinated by the stories of the pioneer Sisters of Mercy who traveled from Ireland to San Francisco in the 1850s. Their accomplishments -- schools, hospitals, and other charitable institutions -- were substantial, especially given the countless challenges they faced as religious women operating in the public sphere in the 19th century. These stories intrigued me, and stayed with me even after I left Mercy. Years later, as a PhD student in sociology, I took a class on women and religion that required a 30-page research paper. That paper served as the perfect opportunity to learn more about the sisters who fascinated me for so long. Instead of satisfying my curiosity, however, the project showed me just how little had been written about Catholic sisters, especially from a sociological perspective. The prospect of contributing to this growing body of research was incredibly compelling, and so I changed dissertation topics to focus on 19th century Catholic sisters in San Francisco.

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What led you back to Mercy?

While I was writing my dissertation, I ended up working at a local youth-serving nonprofit and stumbled into fundraising and resource development. It was an area of work that I came to love. When I saw that Mercy was looking for an Alumnae Relations Manager, however, I knew I had to jump at the opportunity. The position seemed like the perfect fit for my experience and skills, and was a great way to give back to a school that has given me so much.

What has changed in these 10+ years, and what has stayed the same?

It’s been almost fifteen years since I graduated, and it’s remarkable to see how technology has transformed during that period. We had clunky overhead projectors, and even though we made the occasional PowerPoint presentation, the prospect of contributing to this growing body of research was incredibly compelling, and so I changed dissertation topics to focus on 19th century Catholic sisters in San Francisco.
1966
Patricia (Ercoli) Matthews ’66: (Queen Isabella 2017 Columbus Day Honoree) was crowned honorary royal of the Peninsula Italian American Social Club! She will be the face of the club for their most treasured activities - community service, education and the celebration of Italian heritage. She said, “It was a great honor to be chosen by the Italian community.” Photo at left.

1970
Kathleen (Wuerth) Sonnabend ’70 is an independent financial consultant, recently moved to Saratoga Springs, NY. She writes, “I love being back in a city environment (having spent the 70’s and 80’s in Chicago and Manhattan before moving to rural upstate NY). I enjoy having sidewalks for walking access to nearby museums, shops, restaurants and parks, as well as the diversity of people including international visitors. This area is rich in early American history and I am tracing my genealogy. I was surprised to learn that I have ancestors who lived in this region as colonists and patriots in the Revolutionary War. My interest in my genealogy, sharing, “it is with deep sadness that I share that my sister, Leslie A. (Higgins) Hartzheim ‘78 passed away October 1, 2017 after a long battle with cancer. Her husband, Glenn Hartzeim, preceded her in death on August 6, 2017. Their twin daughters, Bridgette and Gretchen are both seniors in high school. They reside in Leander, TX and will attend the University of Texas. In addition to the loss of Leslie, our other sister, Kelly A. Higgins, passed away after a 2 year battle with cancer on August 7, 2017. They are all in God’s arms now where I trust they are no longer in pain and enjoying eternal peace and comfort together with our father, Gerald “Bud” Higgins. Where there is death there is new life, and in 2017 I welcomed my second granddaughter, Lily Ann Culhane (April 18th) who joins her sister Lauren Grace Courche, born 2015, along with Mom & Dad. They reside in Rohnert Park and were very fortunate that when they had to evacuate during the Santa Rosa fires they were able to return to their home and find it still standing. I am celebrating my 39th year in the Financial Services industry and currently work for Silicon Valley Bank as a Senior Global Treasury Product Manager. I would also like to include news about my youngest daughter Grace who won The National Parliamentary Top Debater Award. She graduated from the University of Nevada this past May and was awarded a Proclamation from the Women Legislators of the State of Nevada declaring May 4th of honoring for Grace Miller being the first woman to win Top National Debater while at University of Nevada along with all her outstanding Debate accomplishments. Grace is coaching and judging debates around the nation, working at a law firm and teaching Kaplan LSAT prep classes in Berkeley. Grace will be attending law school this fall.”

1971
Nannette Morgan ’71: Since 2003, Nannette has been building a successful business as a certified professional dog trainer and behavior consultant, Pawsitive Pal Dog Training (www.pawsitivepals.net), based in Morgan Hill. She writes, “My own dogs are two Siberian Huskies, a breed I’ve been involved with since 1998. In the past we’ve done breed club dog shows, mushing and also visiting schools talking about the history and showing the children my dogs in sled harnesses doing training. I attend many training and behavior seminars to keep up my certifications and to keep learning more. In August 2017 I was accepted into the 3-day Advanced Trainers’ Seminar at the Wildlife Institute at Wolf Park, Battleground, IN. It was extremely informative and awesome fun working with wolves, wolf puppies, coyotes, foxes and bison to advance my skills in canine training and husbandry skills.” Photo above.

1972
Catherine (Rach) Parrish ’72 writes, “Our family welcomed a new grandson on September 24, 2017, born to our daughter Meghan (class of 2003) and her hubby Josh. Little Joshua Allen joins big sister Julia, age 2, in Siddell, Louisiana. I was thrilled to attend the birth and will be visiting again in February. In the meantime, I have started planning for my retirement from Sequoia Hospital after 40 years of service, hoping to enter a new season of life by the end of this year.”

1978
Holly A. Higgins ’78 shared, “It is with deep sadness that I share that my sister, Leslie A. (Higgins) Hartzheim ‘78 passed away October 1, 2017 after a long battle with cancer. Her husband, Glenn Hartzeim, preceded her in death on August 6, 2017. Their twin daughters, Bridgette and Gretchen are both seniors in high school. They reside in Leander, TX and will attend the University of Texas. In addition to the loss of Leslie, our other sister, Kelly A. Higgins, passed away after a 2 year battle with cancer on August 7, 2017. They are all in God’s arms now where I trust they are no longer in pain and enjoying eternal peace and comfort together with our father, Gerald “Bud” Higgins. Where there is death there is new life, and in 2017 I welcomed my second granddaughter, Lily Ann Culhane (April 18th) who joins her sister Lauren Grace Courche, born 2015, along with Mom & Dad. They reside in Rohnert Park and were very fortunate that when they had to evacuate during the Santa Rosa fires they were able to return to their home and find it still standing. I am celebrating my 39th year in the Financial Services industry and currently work for Silicon Valley Bank as a Senior Global Treasury Product Manager. I would also like to include news about my youngest daughter Grace who won The National Parliamentary Top Debater Award. She graduated from the University of Nevada this past May and was awarded a Proclamation from the Women Legislators of the State of Nevada declaring May 4th of honoring for Grace Miller being the first woman to win Top National Debater while at University of Nevada along with all her outstanding Debate accomplishments. Grace is coaching and judging debates around the nation, working at a law firm and teaching Kaplan LSAT prep classes in Berkeley. Grace will be attending law school this fall.”

1983
Cheryl (Curry) Mossino ’83 married Chris Mossino (Sierra HS ’82) in September 2017. Chris is a longtime friend and brother of Juliette Mossino ’80, who was Cheryl’s senior big sister at Mercy. She writes, “We celebrated our union at the historic Hotel Temecula and served wine from our family’s vineyard, Curry Vineyards. My daughter, Chantal Ross Blas ’10, was Maid of Honor.”
1991
Stefanie (Morello) Diashyn '91 and husband Ken (Serra HS '87) welcomed their daughter Frankie Pearson Diashyn on Sept. 29, 2017. Frankie joins big brother Cash, 7. Both of Frankie’s grandmas are also part of the Mercy community - Janet Morello currently works in Administration and Judy Diashyn retired after 28 yrs as a teacher at Mercy. Photos above.

2002
Jamie (Jweinat) Lachleitner ’02 and Ricky Lachleitner (Serra HS ’98) celebrated 5 years of marriage this past October. The couple have two children, Rya (2) and Ricky (1), and reside in Pacifica, California. Jamie is Chief of Staff for a Global Recruiting and Consulting firm and Ricky recently completed a 6 month intense Police Academy and now a Daly City Police Officer. Life is great for the Lachleitner family! Photo above.

2004
Jamila (Sinlao) Zanette ’04 and Joe Zanette were married on December 10, 2017 at Old St. Mary’s Cathedral in San Francisco, and a reception at Marines’ Memorial Club. The wedding party included Mercy alumnae Maureen Carey ’04, Sepideh Mousakhani ’04, and her sister and maid of honor, Rowena Sinlao ’10. Photos at left.

2005
Daniella (Klopocki) Vallurupalli ’05 and Aneal Vallurupalli welcomed their first child Aisak on October 18, 2017! The new family of three lives in San Francisco, where Daniella works as Head of Communications for Cloudflare. She also sits on two non-profit boards - the Saint Francis Foundation and The Saint Francis Foundation Associates - where she raises money for The Saint Francis Memorial Hospital and children and families of San Francisco’s Tenderloin neighborhood. Photo at right.

2010
Katharine Hooper ’10 writes, “I’m now living in Brooklyn New York for the most part, but traveling a lot for work (Reykjavik, Iceland, Miami, Denver, Los Angeles, and Austin to name a few) I work as a tattoo artist and spend my time tattooing people, making art, curating art shows, and traveling. I hope everyone is doing well! :)”

2011
Maggie Shack-Lambdin ’11 Photos from Maggie’s bridal shower. Maggie and Mom at left and Maggie with Mercy alums top. From left to right: Michelle Bradley ’11 (maid of honor), Amanda Molinari ’11, Maggie, Deanna Williams ’11, and Cassandra Bradley ’17.

Mark your calendars for Alumnae Homecoming 2018! This beloved tradition is the perfect opportunity to remember treasured memories, reconnect with old friends, and revel in the beauty of Mercy’s oak-clad acres. Individual rooms in the Mansion will be assigned to reunion classes on a first-come basis, so sign your class up today. To learn more or to register online, visit www.tinyurl.com/mercyhomecoming.

Don’t Forget! New system for submitting class notes
We’re excited to introduce a new system for submitting Class Notes! Our simple, easy-to-use online form can be found at www.mercyhsb.com/alumnae/update. If you prefer to email us, you can send your news to alumnae@mercyhsb.com. We can’t wait to hear from you!
—Jamila Sinlao Zanette ’04, Alumnae Relations Manager

SAVE THE DATE
Spring Alumnae Social
May 17, 2018 • 6:30 pm
Ladera Garden & Gifts
Hosted by
Adrianna Navarro ’03
More information to follow.
In Memoriam

PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING ALUMNAE, ALUMNAE FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE MERCY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY IN YOUR PRAYERS. As of this publication, we have noted the “In Memoriams” that have come in between September 1, 2017 and January 1, 2018. Those received after that date will appear in our Fall Oaks.

ALUMNAE
Patricia Louies Jean Arata ’60
Nancy Jane Flores Casey ’53
Lydia Ned-Jones ’76 sister of Carmen Ned ’78
Doris Angela Mendenhall ’53
Lori W. Schopper ’45
Carolyn Watt Selby ’81 cousin of Susan Kleinerd Nodwick ’59, Marlene Kleinerd Nodwick ’67
Maya Thome ’15
Jaimee Dalupan Troyer ’84
Jaette Napp Wood ’51
Jaimee Dalupan Troyer ’84

FAMILY AND FRIENDS
Conchita D. Azzopardi mother of Noelle Azzopardi ’66
Attilio Bazzanni father of Janice Bazzani ’69 grandfather of Kelly Bazzani ’98, father-in-law of Pamela Meuser Bazzani ’86
Barbara Bonanno mother of Gena Kundert ’89
Alice Aurora Boyer mother of Jean Boyer Morgan ’74, Geraldine Boyer Gordon ’75, Arlene Boyer Dugoni ’77, and Helen Boyer Garcia ’82
Elizabeth Bucki grandmother of Janine Waddell ’06 and Elizabeth Waddell ’09, (mother of Marian Waddell) and Carol Bucki, former Mercy Board member
Martha Clancy mother of Pam Matthews, Mercy Visual and Performing Arts teacher
Irene Clizbe aunt of Dava Kotta Sheehan ’83
Ilene Gadler grandmother of Madeline Williams ’09
Carol Galletta Mercy AMES Program Director
Vivian Hatt grandmother of Randall Thomas ’18
Frances Ann O’Donnell Hughes parent of Kathleen Hughes ’72 (dec), Mary Hugh Stone ’74 and aunt of Robert O’Donnell
Yacob Jaber brother of Christina Jaber ’12
Charles “Charlie” Keyser husband of Jacqueline Keyser ’84
CAPT Bernard J. Looman, USN grandfather of Jerlyn Marten ’12
Chuck McGugan father of Catherine McGugan Luzzi ’77, father-in-law of Valerie Bragg McGugan ’75 and grandfather of Rachel McGugan ’07 and Caitlyn McGugan
Julie Ann McGughlin mother of Melanie McGughlin ’70
Simon James McManuson grandfather of Meghan Sowers ’21
Jane Scerni grandmother of Shay Scerni ’13 and Mother-in-Law of Jim Scerni, Mercy Graphic Communications Coordinator
Theodore “Ted” Sheehan father-in-law of Dava Kotta Sheehan ’83
Carol Sue Somrak grandmother of Victoria Lessar ’09
Suzanne Stoval sister of Sister Suzanne Toolan, Sisters Mary Louise Toolan (dec) and Sister Patricia Toolan (dec)
Dan Turner brother of Judith Turner Harris ’72
Roy Uccelli father of Annamarie Uccelli ’77, Stephanie Uccelli Menner ’81, Lisa Uccelli Menner ’81 and grandfather of Alyssa Menner ’81
Fr. Florian Welstead Capuchin priest of Our Lady of Angels Church

In Memoriam Disclaimer: We have tried to note all of the alumnae relationships for those members of the Mercy community who have lost a loved one. However, if we have omitted your name or have omitted the relationships incorrectly, please contact Sandy Albors so that we can make the appropriate note in your file. Sandy Albors can be reached at salbers@mercyhsb.com or 650.762.1193

The Mercy Mass Program - At each of our school liturgies we pray for those people who have been acknowledged in the Merry Mass Program. Donations are made in memory of a loved one and to honor others for anniversaries, birthdays, or at times of illness. To enroll a loved one in the Mercy Mass Program, simply contact the Mercy Advancement Office at 650.762.1190 or salbers@mercyhsb.com or at www.mercyhsb.com.

Interested in helping Mercy High School, Burlingame with our mission but feel overwhelmed by the thought of writing another check or giving up your assets today? A simple, flexible and versatile way to ensure we can continue our work for years to come is a gift in your will or living trust, known as a charitable bequest.

By including a bequest to Mercy in your will or living trust, you are ensuring that we can continue our mission for years to come. Your gift also entitles your estate to an unlimited federal estate tax charitable deduction.

Following are some advantages of this gift option:
• Easy. As little as one sentence in your will or living trust complete the gift.
• Revocable. Until your will or trust goes into effect, you are free to alter your plans.
• Versatile. You can give a specific item, an amount of money, a gift contingent upon certain events or a percentage of your estate.
• Revocable. Until your will or trust goes into effect, you are free to alter your plans.
• Easy. As little as one sentence in your will or living trust complete the gift.

The official bequest language for Mercy High School, Burlingame is: “I, (name), of [city, state, ZIP], give, devise and bequeath to Mercy High School, Burlingame [written amount or percentage of the estate or description of property] for its unrestricted use and purpose.”

Legal Name: Mercy High School
Address: 2750 Adeline Drive, Burlingame, CA 94010
Federal Tax ID Number: 94-1230999
To learn more about a Charitable bequest in your trust or living will, visit our website at http://mercyhsb.planmylegacy.org/
For more information, contact Mary Lund, Director of Advancement at 650.762.1190 or mlund@mercyhsb.com

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A Flexible Way to Support What You Love
A Gift You Plan Now and Make Later

Legal Name: Mercy High School
Address: 2750 Adeline Drive, Burlingame, CA 94010
Federal Tax ID Number: 94-1230999
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2017-18 Board of Directors
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Michele O’Connor Tyler ’68
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Caroline M. Romeo

Catherine’s Legacy
If you have made provisions for Mercy in your estate plan (with bequests, charitable trusts, gifts of life insurance or retirement funds), you can become a member of Mercy’s Catherine Legacy Society. Please notify the Advancement Department at 650.762.1190 or Mary Lund at mlund@mercyhsb.com.
Tools for School
MERCY HIGH SCHOOL BURLINGAME
Summer Program for 6th, 7th & 8th Grade Girls

Experience new activities and topics!
🌟 Visual & Performing Arts training
🌟 Academic preparedness classes
🌟 Weekly educational field trips

June 18th - July 13th • 8:30am - 3:00pm

Register Today! Learn more at:
www.mercyhsb.com/toolsforschool

The Oaks is published twice yearly for alumnae, parents, and friends of Mercy High School Burlingame. A Catholic, all girls College Preparatory since 1931, Mercy High School is sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas West Midwest Community.

In an effort to go green we will only be sending one Oaks per household. Please share with all. Thank you!

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