



Mercy Hospital School of Nursing Alumni Newsletter Fall 2026

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Hello to my fellow Mercy Alums,

Summer has officially changed to Fall, and our Alumni Association has made some changes as well. I'm Mary Ann Curley McDonough, Class of 1975, and I will be taking over the role of President from Marian Kowatch Bindas. Marian has served 3 years of the "Bylaws standard 2-year term as President." While working full-time! We are very grateful for her leadership, good ideas, dedication, and hard work. Thank you for staying on to develop our new and improved website, increase communications with email blasts and social media, expand the newsletter and begin the transition to online newsletters, and for giving us a good start on developing an online system to register for alumni events and pay dues. Well done Marian! Know that we will keep you on speed dial.

I'm taking over as President after 6 years on the Board. During that time, I worked on expanding the alumni database and making it a more useful tool for record keeping and communication. As President, I see this as another chance to give back to MHSN for preparing me for a varied and fulfilling nursing career beginning on 2 West, 6 Tower, 4 South, and PRN in the ICUs. I went on to be evening supervisor at AGH, National Head Injury Foundation, DON at a SNF, Home Care, Case Management, and after my 1st retirement, an Office Manager for a high-end interior designer...no STAT orders there, but pressure just the same! I returned to nursing again as a supervisor for a county agency, clinical liaison for a SNF, and finally as a case manager for a private company before my final retirement. I'm married with 3 children and 4 grandchildren, all of whom live in Pittsburgh. I feel very blessed and grateful for my wonderful life, and Mercy was, and still is, a big part of it.

I'm hoping to see many of you at our yearly Memorial Mass and Luncheon on Saturday, November 14 as we remember our Mercy Angels and share memories with other Mercy nurses. The theme for the luncheon is **"Nursing Through the Decades."** Lots of changes in the past 50 years. We'll share with our younger alumni the way it used to be. Who remembers standing when a doctor entered the nurses' station, polishing our white leather Clinic shoes, and keeping an extra pair of white stockings in your locker in case you got a runner? How about our version of Epic: charting with blue ink for 7-3, green 3-11, and red 11-7. It's wonderful how the nursing profession has progressed with each generation and moved us way beyond the handmaiden days of yore. Theresa and Chris have a special program planned, so please attend if you possibly can. RSVP by mailing in the form on the last page with your check. Last minute RSVPs, email us at mercyalums@gmail.com.

Wishing you all the best,

Mary Ann Curley McDonough '75

EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Christine Arison Constantine '73

Emeritus Members

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Memorial Mass and Luncheon

Saturday, November 14

11 AM – Mass

Mercy Hospital Chapel

12 NOON – Luncheon

Clark Auditorium

Theme for the Day:

"Nursing Through the Decades"

We'll honor a special Mercy Nurse!

RSVP by November 1

■ Mail in form on last page ■

Introducing Our Board Members

Megan Melia Stiger, proud grad of the Class of 1985

I joined the board at the encouragement of my sister, Maureen Melia Chadwick (proud graduate of the class of 1984), and I currently serve as Treasurer. Along with collecting annual dues, the Alumni Association has a robust following and receives donations from members, friends, and family members of alumni who have passed. What I didn't expect are all the thoughtful notes and cards from alumni, wishing all alumni well. It's clear that MHSN made a tremendous impact on so many lives, and the alumni association keeps the lamp lit in so many hearts and minds. The bulk of my career was spent at UPMC Mercy as a staff nurse and leader, and returning to the halls for MHSN alumni events stirs the soul. UPMC Mercy has a way of drawing you back to the nursing foundations that we all lived for two years as students. I'm still working actively as a nurse leader, managing diverse work groups and projects. I am forever grateful for my experience at Mercy Hospital School of Nursing. My wish is that through the Alumni Association, proud graduates from the 90s, 2000s, and beyond will join us in keeping the mission alive!

Maureen Melia Chadwick '84

Following graduation from MHSN, "Mo" earned a BSN from Penn State University, MSN from St. Joe's College in Maine, and PhD from Gannon University in Erie, PA. Most recently she served as SVP, Nursing and CNO at Ascension from 2022-2025. Driven by an unwavering commitment to equity and human dignity, informed by her dissertation, understanding the lived experiences of racial and ethnic minority nurses and nursing leadership's impact; she transformed Ascension's nursing enterprise, building internal and external impact networks, engaging nearly 39,000 nurses in 12 states.

Disrupting legacy fall prevention strategies, leveraging patient/family engagement; "Mo" incorporated Harvard's Fall TIPS, in addition to universal precautions and fall risk assessment, across 118

facilities, resulting in prevention of 521 patient falls and 141 falls with harm. Mo negotiated with Baxter International to include the Monk SkinTone Scale in the annual International Pressure Ulcer Prevalence Study, establishing skin tone as a core stratification variable in the world's largest pressure injury dataset addressing inequities among dark skin tones. As our Board Secretary, Mo upgraded our use of electronic and internet resources by setting up a Google Workspace account. This enables easy scheduling of online meetings, automatic transcription of key points in the conversation, generating minutes, and storing all class lists and alumni databases in one place where board members can easily access them.

Linda Dunlop Fowler '62

As a 1962 Mercy Hospital School of Nursing graduate, I sit on the Alumni board as the person responsible for the spiritual needs of our association. The Alumni Association tries to reach out to the families of our deceased alumni (as we are notified) by sending sympathy cards as well as informing those families their loved one will be remembered at the annual Memorial Mass in November (11/14/2026). This Mass is celebrated in the Mercy Hospital Chapel, followed by brunch in the Clark Auditorium. In spite of my additional degrees (DrPH MPH BSN), my nursing foundation continues to be the education I received at Mercy Hospital School of Nursing. I am a MERCY nurse!

Deborah Lindsay Comunale Evers, Class of 1975

Since graduation, I have worked at Mercy for over four decades. From working on the All-male Urology Floor on 4W, I went to the Rehab Unit with Miss Carol and became her assistant head nurse in 1984. Then I moved to South Hills Home Care and did rehab nursing for 10 years until I got my bachelor's degree in nursing and then went back to teaching at Mercy School of Nursing for 16 years. In 2009 I went to work for Dr. Guterson with my CNS in Mental Health Nursing and did that for one year. I then transferred to Shadyside School of Nursing and taught Mental

Health to the diploma students. After getting my DNP, I went to Carlow for 8 years and taught undergraduate Mental Health Nursing and graduate Family Nurse Practitioner mental health integration in simulation. I then transferred back to Shadyside part-time and recently became a Behavioral Health Specialist with Western Psychiatric Hospital (WPIC) and evaluate medical-surgical patients in need of mental health services in the UPMC system I've been an Alumni Board member for 30 years, and I'm also a Sister of Mercy Associate.

Michele Buraczewski '86

I graduated from MHSN in 1986, and this year I have the privilege of celebrating 40 years of nursing at Mercy Hospital. Looking back, I can truly say that my journey began with the extraordinary nursing education I received at MHSN. Some of my most treasured memories are from those two years living at the hospital. Those are some great memories. What began as classmates sharing the experience of nursing school grew into lifelong friendships. Four decades later, we continue to support one another through life's challenges, celebrate its happiest moments, and remain connected by a bond that began at Mercy. My nursing career started on 9 Mercy Tower, caring for post-open-heart surgery patients. From there, my journey took me to the Emergency Department and eventually into Nursing Education, where I had the opportunity to share my love of nursing and help inspire the next generation. I am currently the Burn Programmatic Nurse Specialist, following burn patients through their journey and sharing burn care education with our community. So much has changed at Mercy over the past 40 years, yet there are moments that bring me right back to where it all began. Seeing Sr. Carolyn in the hallways can instantly take me back to that young nursing student walking into Mercy Hospital, never imagining the remarkable journey that awaited me. For many years, I have also been grateful to serve on the Alumni Association Board and as a member of the Scholarship Committee. Supporting the next generation of Mercy nurses feels like a beautiful way

to honor the education and opportunities that shaped my own career. I encourage our alumni who are continuing their education to apply for these scholarships. We want to invest in you, encourage you, and help you continue the proud legacy of Mercy nursing.

Dorothy Kornosky Mayernik '67

From Mercy's 8th Floor in 1967, I moved on to a few other hospitals over the next 30 years on staff in Adult Med-Surg, Outpatient Surgery, Endoscopy, Nursing Education, Home Hospice, and consultant for ONS doing book editing and proofreading. Along the way, I earned a BSN at Pitt and MSN at Duquesne University. I'm sure I was able to learn to function in different clinical and educational settings because of the excellent education and professional formation I received from my Mercy nurse instructors, Sr. Carolyn in Peds, and Sister Vincent who set the bar high. In 2001, it had to be a "Godwink" that led me to Mercy to take a 4-week Parish Nurse prep course, one of 3 sites in the US offering this new specialty training. I was able to start a ministry in my church to the sick and homebound, still active today. In 2003, I returned to Mercy in the Parish Nurse Program's outreach to 7 low-income neighborhoods in the PN role: Assessment, Screening, Health Education, Support, Referral, and Advocacy. After 4 years at the Millvale site, seeing clients in the office, area senior hi-rises and Senior Centers, I took over as Manager to oversee the outreaches, coordinate and teach in the prep course, CE classes, and Fall symposium. We did a monthly newsletter emailed to 1,500 PNs nationwide. It was the perfect 10-year last job for me. 2016 was "payback time"...so I became active in the Alumni Assn. on the Communications Committee, helping with the newsletter, email blasts, Facebook, and the website. I have never worked with a more fantastic group of nurses in my whole life! And what a privilege to work with Sister Carolyn! I highly recommend being a part of the Alumni Assn. and helping when you can.

Care for one...that's love. Care for hundreds...
that's nursing. ---Unknown

Kathy Corcoran Morouse '80

I graduated from MHSN in 1980. I worked as a staff nurse and other roles on many different units at Mercy (mostly critical care). I became an Informatics Nurse in 2011 because I was always interested in technology and the electronic health record since we were early adopters at Mercy. I started the local chapter of the American Nursing Informatics Association (ANIA) and then was elected to the national board. I became president of ANIA in 2023 and am still active in the informatics community writing published articles and presenting on informatics topics. I became full-time faculty at California University of Pennsylvania (Cal U) in 2019 and moved to UPMC Passavant as a casual Senior Professional Clinical Development Specialist. I became tenured and am Associate Professor at PennWest California University. I joined the Alumni Board and have enjoyed connecting with fellow MHSN Alumni. My hope is for the MHSN spark to continue to be carried out by future alums. I have included MHSN Alumni Association in my estate planning. I want to see it last a long time.

Theresa Brown Krzemien '73

Christine Arison Constantine '73

We are 1973 graduates. As board members, we have volunteered to direct the social events of the alumni. We are responsible for event planning and organization of the gatherings. This includes budget management, communication, vendor coordination, caterers, entertainment, choosing event speakers, and creating thematic decor. A most important aspect of the event planning includes integration of spiritual enrichment aspects to our gatherings with celebration of the Mass and thoughtful Prayer. With Sr. Carolyn, we coordinate asking a priest to celebrate the Mass, select the hymns, enlist a soloist and musicians, prepare a handout, and add appropriate flowers or decorative items in front of the altar. Following the Mercy tradition, we begin and end our activities in prayer.

Constant attention by a good nurse may be just as important as major operation by a surgeon.

--- Dag Hammarskjöld

Update: Mercy School of Nursing

Hi Alumni Friends,

Hard to believe another summer has come and gone and we welcome the Fall months.

Our School of Nursing continues to grow and thrive. This past year we graduated a total of 150 students and have maintained an NCLEX pass rate of 95%. We are proud that our graduates are working in many diverse areas across the country and carry with them the values and traditions of Mercy Hospital School of Nursing. We also welcomed 250 new students in 2026. We look forward to them starting their nursing career as students and developing and growing into professionals. We are proud to announce that we have opened our branch campus at UPMC Altoona. They admitted their first class of 100 students, who started the program Fall 2026. We look forward to their first graduation in December 2027.

We continue to thank you for your ongoing support of the nursing program.

Best Wishes,

Angela Balistrieri '96, Director

UPMC Mercy School of Nursing Graduates
Congratulations to 57 new Mercy alumni!



August 2026



Ribbon
Cutting
Altoona
Branch
Campus

A Message from Sister Carolyn

Dear Alumni Friends,

We have moved into a season of high activities! Halloween (hallowed eve!), All Saint's Day, Poor Soul's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and then New Year's Day. While each of us has personal and family obligations, I recommend some time for reflection.

My suggestion: Allow yourself for at least 10-15 minutes each day to ponder why and what you are doing. Your approach and attitude may enlighten you to change.

I pray for your openness to the Holy Spirit and blessings throughout these celebrations and every day. Enjoy the present, it is your everyday gift from God.

Would you be interested in a day of recollection next year? A good way to renew spirituality in 2027. We can discuss this idea at the November 14th gathering.

Scholarship Corner

Scholarships are available from the MHSN Alumni Association for members in good standing (i.e., dues paid in 2025 and 2026). An annual budget of \$2,000 will be distributed among applicants.

Scholarships will be awarded for:
College Courses, Conference Fees, Continuing Education, Certifications in Nursing Specialties, and for Memberships in Professional Nursing Organizations.

Application deadline: December 31, 2026

**For an application, email
mercyalums@gmail.com**

Nurse friendships

**are truly something special.
We bond through long shifts, sleepless
nights, stressful moments, heartbreaking
situations, and the kind of chaos only
another nurse can understand.**

**The memories may be messy, emotional,
and sometimes unforgettable—
but the friendships we make
along the way can be one of the
most beautiful parts
of nursing.**



Credit: We Are Nurses Facebook page

Mercy Angels

Frances Skindzier Glover	07/09/16	1948
Doris Marie Cagna Madonna	04/12/25	1950
Patricia Olmer	04/23/26	1951
Mary Vesco Englert	07/05/25	1954
Rosalyn Mary Tempers Hugus	04/11/26	1957
Elizabeth Sedlak Taufer	06/07/26	1957
Patricia Pratley Boehm	06/18/26	1957
Mary Carroll Miller	05/06/26	1958
Nancy Spenick Wielobob	08/07/26	1960
Karen Kreger	09/28/21	1967
Linda Staab Danihel	04/20/26	1968
Donna Griffin	12/12/24	1968
Linda Amoroso-McElrath	04/28/26	1976
Lynn Maher Kocan	09/18/25	1983

Why is the MHSN Alumni Association Important?

Alumni are vital to an institution of higher learning because they provide financial support, career pathways for current students, and as successful employees they exemplify the school's reputation in the working world.

Alumni give back by funding scholarships and tangible needs of the school to maintain a high-quality program. Successful graduates enhance the prestige of the school and help attract prospective students. Graduates encourage individuals in their families and social circles who show promise for a career in nursing, and they act as mentors. They serve as guest speakers, connecting classroom theory to the actual job. Alumni carry the spirit of our alma mater into the world.

The Alumni Association encourages life-long learning; personal development of body, mind, and spirit; and reaching out to alumni in need.

Social events and reunions offer time to enjoy ourselves with those who shared our nursing school journey...they understand our lived experience. Alumni gatherings often enhance our network of connections that may help you personally or someone you know.

Supporting the Alumni Association shows pride in our school and the education we received. Remember how you felt the first day you stepped up on the porch and walked in the front door of Mercy Hospital School of Nursing? Compare that with the way you feel now as a confident and skilled professional nurse, or a nurse retired from a long and fulfilling career.

Our lives are busy, with many demands on our time and energy. But please consider getting more involved with the Alumni Association. Meetings are on Zoom, and many "work from home" tasks are available.

Perks of Membership:

Staying connected with Alumni who graduated before and after you.

Interest in promoting the professional and educational advancement of Mercy Nurses.

Making new and lasting friends.

Having fun.



Mercy Hospital School of Nursing

Alumni Association

Memorial Mass

Saturday, November 14, 2026

Mass in Mercy Hospital Chapel at 11:00 AM

Officiant: Rev. James Dowds, CSSR

Luncheon in the Clark Auditorium 12:00 PM

Menu: Meatloaf, Potatoes, Corn, Salad, Cornbread, Dessert

“Nursing Through the Decades”

With a special presentation to honor

An exceptional Mercy Nurse

Cost: \$30.00 dollars

Bring a guest!



Mercy Hospital School of Nursing Alumni Association

November 14, 2026 ■ Memorial Mass and Luncheon

☐ Luncheon **\$30** ☐ Guest **\$30** ☐ Dues for 2027 **\$25** ☐ Donation _____

☐ Dietary Restrictions: _____

First Name _____ Maiden _____ Last _____ Class Year _____

Address _____ Email _____ Phone _____

Amount Enclosed _____ Make check payable to: MHSN Alumni Assn.

RSVP by
Nov. 1

MHSN Alumni Association
P.O. Box 4412
Pittsburgh, PA 15205

■ Also email your RSVP to mercyalums@gmail.com to ensure an accurate count for the lunch ■

MHSN Alumni Association
P.O. Box 4412
Pittsburgh, PA 15205