As 2020 comes to a close, I am sure none of us will ever forget this year. What I will remember is how Mount Saint Mary’s responded to every challenge and uncertainty with hope and resilience. This response, rooted in our heritage and modeled to us by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, is evident throughout our fall issue of the Mount Magazine. You will see it in the story on our Athenians Care campaign, which shows how we are working together to help keep the most vulnerable members of our community and our families safe. You will see it in a feature on how our business graduates impact the world around them. As Michelle French-Holloway, our business chair, says:

“Sometimes business gets a reputation as a ‘taking’ profession but our students really epitomize using their skills to give back to the world."

And you’ll see it in the profile of this year’s Student Government Association president, Helen Umana ’21. She recognizes that effective communication is crucial for those working toward a goal. She says that our University is “a place where students learn to express themselves with kindness and an open mind. [It creates] safe spaces for them to have these open conversations.” Our students have long been a testament to what can be accomplished through collaboration. I’m so inspired by this generation that’s leading the way now, carrying our light forward—unbowed and unflinching.

As the fall semester comes to a close and the holidays are upon us, I wish you and your family peace, optimism and good health.

Sincerely,

Ann McElaney-Johnson
Business is Booming
BUSINESS DEGREES OFFER MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY FOR CAREER OPTIONS

Student Body President
HELEN UMANA PROMOTES UNIVERSITY AS AN INCLUSIVE PLACE

Coming Home
A “CRAZY QUILT” MADE BY ORIGINAL DOHENY MANSION OWNER HAS RETURNED

Safety First
TREEMONISHA SMITH BRINGS EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MEASURES UNDER ONE UMBRELLA

Cover
STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF SHOW THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE ATHENIANS CARE INITIATIVE TO KEEP THEMSELVES AND THE COMMUNITY HEALTHY
Deferred but Conferred

In August, we celebrated Commencement for the Class of 2020. Both the morning graduate program and the afternoon undergraduate ceremonies included congratulatory speeches by Ann McElaney-Johnson, Mount Saint Mary’s president; Holly J. Mitchell, state senator and MSMU Legislator in Residence; Eric Garcetti, mayor of Los Angeles; Nury Martinez, president, Los Angeles City Council; and Geena Davis, actor and founder of the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media at Mount Saint Mary’s.

The graduate program Commencement speaker was Maria S. Salinas, president and CEO of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce. Andrea Chavez, who received her master’s in instructional design from the education department, spoke on behalf of the students.

The undergraduates were treated to an additional message from actor Taye Diggs before hearing from their keynote speaker, Cecilia R. Aragon, PhD, a professor in the department of human centered design and engineering from the University of Washington in Seattle and world medalist in aerobatic flying. The three student speakers were Jasmine Siguenza, AA, business administration; Georgia Aguilar, BA, global politics; and Alina Asmarian, BA, liberal arts with a minor in psychology.

Tom Blumenthal, chair of the Board of Trustees, conferred the degrees.

An hour-long Zoom dance party, hosted by DJ Sophenom, followed both ceremonies. To view the ceremonies, go to the Commencement page on MSMU’s website.

Commencement speakers included (clockwise from upper left) Ann McElaney-Johnson, Geena Davis, Georgia Aguilar and Eric Garcetti.
Fall 2020 Plan

Mount Saint Mary’s Fall 2020 Semester Plan outlines a comprehensive strategy to provide the safest campus environment possible, following state and county health guidelines.

Access to both campuses is restricted to essential workers, with most students, faculty and staff working or studying remotely. While many facilities remain closed, extensive measures are in place to sanitize accessible areas on campus, and everyone is required to adhere to social distancing policies and wear face coverings in public spaces.

The faculty have adapted their courses to remote learning platforms and continue to provide personalized instruction. Scheduled virtual office hours and meetings by appointment ensure that students have the support they need to succeed and thrive. Women’s Leadership, Student Engagement and other clubs and organizations offer informative co-curricular programs, civic and community engagement opportunities as well as activities to build meaningful relationships and have fun.

Despite the shifts and challenges we have experienced over the past several months, the Mount remains the vital, engaging and special place it always has been—and always will be.

Download the report on MSMU’s COVID-19 webpage.
MSMU Turns Out the Vote

The Mount prides itself on high voter participation, winning a gold seal in the 2019 ALL In Campus Democracy Challenge for substantially increasing its student voting rate.

The push to get students to the polls continued into 2020, particularly as the fall semester got underway. The nonpartisan MSMU Votes coalition of faculty, staff and students first focused on maximizing student voter registrations before turning its attention to educating students about the importance of voting early, the validity of mail-in voting and the pros and cons of local ballot initiatives.

Several Mount students attended the virtual California Student Voting Summit in September and were energized to exercise their constitutional right—and many would say obligation—to vote. “One of the biggest takeaways I got from the summit was how important it is for college students to be involved in informing peers about voting and empowering them to take action in things they are passionate about,” says Summer Woods ’21. She added that students shouldn’t get complacent following the presidential election. “State and local elections count too because they affect you more rapidly and directly.”

College Rankings Roundup

In September, the 36th annual U.S. News & World Report 2021 Best Colleges list awarded the Mount No. 1 in Social Mobility. The West Regional University category includes 128 universities from 15 states and Guam.

Mount Saint Mary’s was also awarded the third spot on the “Most Transformative” list nationwide by MONEY Magazine, behind San Jose State University and Maine Maritime Academy. For this category, consideration was given to graduation rates, earnings and student loan repayments. Additionally, the Mount obtained a #6 ranking for best small, private colleges in the western region behind Cal Tech and four of the five colleges from the Claremont College consortium (in order, Pomona, Claremont McKenna, Scripps, and Harvey Mudd).

Sister Catherine Marie Kreta
March 22, 1933 – September 8, 2020

Mount Saint Mary’s bids farewell to Sister Catherine Marie Kreta, who passed away on September 8.

A graduate of Bishop Conaty—Our Lady of Loretto High School in Los Angeles, Kreta was proud to be a “Conaty girl” before coming to the Mount, where she obtained her bachelor’s in English and social science. She fulfilled her life of service in a number of roles, including provincial superior from 1986 to 1992 and on the Mount’s Board of Trustees from 2006 to 2015. Known for her energy, enthusiasm and humor, Kreta had served as justice coordinator for the Los Angeles CSJs since 2000. She chaired the board of the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) and was one of a group of people to receive a Founders’ Changemaker Award for her work.

Two lifelong friends from high school, Patricia A. Sullivan and Monica Valdez Weisbrich, wrote: “Kreta, as we called her, had a car—a black coupe of some variety, with a tiny backseat. There were sometimes five of us; sometimes eight. We somehow always managed to fit in ‘Kreta’s Kar.’ Great times; great memories. She was fun, bright and a leader. We were to have lunch with Sr. Catherine last fall, but she fell ill and couldn’t make it. A disappointment then; a heartbreak now. Rest in Peace. God is glad to see you.

Thanks for the buggy ride.”

Kreta will be missed by her many friends in the Mount community.

Sr. Catherine Marie Kreta (front row left) at the 2016 CAST gala with Sr. Joan Mary O’Dwyer, CSJ, LA councilmember Nury Martinez and Ann McElaney-Johnson.
How Are California’s Women and Girls Faring?

The 2020 Report on the Status of Women and Girls in California™ was unveiled on August 18. “Equity + Agency: From Earning the Vote to Claiming the Power” shines a light on a wide range of issues, from educational attainment and occupational disparities to earnings and wealth gaps; safety; and health and wellness—including areas of concern such as mental health, maternal and infant health, caregiving and food insecurity.

The format for the unveiling of this year’s Report was a series of three hour-long discussions on specific topics.


At the second event, Francille Rusan Wilson, PhD, associate professor of American studies and ethnicity, history and gender and sexuality studies at USC, and Camille Bethune-Brown, PhD, director of collections and the library, Women’s Museum of California, explored the suffragist movement and the exclusion of people of color from voting due to Jim Crow and other discriminatory laws.

For the final event on October 1, Emerald Archer, director of the Center for the Advancement of Women and editor in chief of the Report, led an in-depth discussion into women and girls’ successes and challenges in areas such as politics, health and wellness, education and economic prosperity.

Despite the sweeping improvements in this year’s Report relative to prior years, Archer said there is still a lot of work to do. “We need to continue to advocate for women and girls with intensity. We are all called to act.”

To download the Report or to view video of any of the three discussions, go to MSMU.EDU/RSWG.
Cultural outings are an important part of the ISAE experience; this group from several years ago attended a performance of “Wicked.”

ISAE Program Recipient of Title IV Grant

Mount Saint Mary’s ISAE (Institute for Student Academic Enrichment) program has received a five-year grant from the federal TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) program operated under Title IV of the United States Department of Education. ISAE provides support services to participants to help them persist and graduate. First generation, income qualifying and/or disabled students are eligible for the program.

“The ISAE program has been the recipient of federal funding since its inception,” says President Ann McElaney-Johnson, “and this renewed support is a testament to the Mount’s success in serving students from all backgrounds. I am so proud of the ISAE team and all who collaborated to create the winning application.”

At the Mount, Veronica Martinez, program director, Lisa Villa, associate director, Valeria Rizo, assistant director and Shantall Valencia, program coordinator, are all Mount and ISAE alums. The team works together to provide individualized academic planning, career development, financial literacy, peer mentoring and cultural enrichment to more than 200 students annually.

Celebration of the Holy Spirit

A comforting ritual marking the start of the academic year, this year’s celebration was the first time an official Mass of the Holy Spirit was not offered. While acknowledging the challenges of this time and an understandable desire to return to a pre-COVID normal, President Ann McElaney-Johnson inspired the entire community.

McElaney-Johnson suggested that we may be so preoccupied with what we are missing from our lives that we’re robbing ourselves of our ability to respond to the needs of the time. “This pandemic is not actually a time away from life; it is life,” she said. “It is not one we would have chosen, but it is ours.”

She added that our lives going forth may involve masks and social distancing—or staying within the walls of our homes. But emotionally and spiritually, going forth means advancing past the idea of waiting for life to return to normal.

“May this Spirit of love give us the courage to live this moment—in all its pain, its incertitude and its possibilities—fully, completely, abundantly,” McElaney-Johnson concluded. “It is our moment and although it is packaged in a surprising manner, it, like every moment, is a gift. We need to embrace it.”
Fletcher Jones Foundation Awards $200K Grant

A new $200,000 grant from the Fletcher Jones Foundation helped Mount Saint Mary’s directly support students who were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The gift, which was awarded this summer, was leveraged immediately to assist students this semester.

The grant enabled Mount Saint Mary’s to provide more scholarships to offset tuition costs for some of its most at-risk students. Additionally, the Mount used funds to purchase COVID tests to ensure the health and safety of the few students who are living at the Chalon campus.

“The Fletcher Jones Foundation is a longtime and generous supporter of the Mount, with numerous endowed funds and direct grants,” says President Ann McElaney-Johnson. “We are grateful to receive this additional investment in our University that will help us support our students who need it the most right now.”

The university is one of 18 organizations to receive a grant from the foundation specifically to help weather the economic impact of COVID-19. “The foundation’s board made the decision to temporarily suspend our regular grant making to assist some of our long-term partners through these trying economic times as a result of the pandemic,” says Mary J. Spellman, EdD, executive director and treasurer of the Fletcher Jones Foundation. “We want to help ensure the resilience of our partners who serve such diverse student populations.”

Leadership Lessons in Times of Change

2020 WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Under the theme #BeTheChange, the Center for the Advancement of Women at Mount Saint Mary’s hosted its Women’s Leadership Conference on September 24.

A conversation featuring Presidents Ann McElaney-Johnson (Mount Saint Mary’s), Suzanne Walsh (Bennett College) and MSMU’s Ann McElaney-Johnson on topics including women’s leadership.

Suzanne Walsh (Bennett College) and Meredith Woo (Sweet Briar College) discussed women’s leadership, engagement and how their institutions are preparing the next generation of leaders.

“Helping women to develop as leaders is literally part of our mission at women’s colleges. That’s what we are all about. All our programs are geared to helping students develop as strong, effective leaders who will make a difference in their communities,” said President McElaney-Johnson. “Don’t give up your dreams and put them on hold because we are in a crisis. I would encourage students to leverage this time to develop those skills that are going to be critical to their lives as leaders.”

A dozen recognized social justice leaders, authors and scholars—including poet Cleo Wade, Women’s March National activist Rachel O’Leary Carmona, and Time’s Up head of entertainment Ngoc Nguyen—joined the half-day conference to discuss social justice, systemic racism and how women are organizing to meet the challenges of the moment.

“From the global pandemic to racial injustice, 2020 has challenged communities across the country. And yet, women continue to rise. Achieving big results requires leaders to rise up and lead with courage and conviction so that everyone is empowered to be their best,” said Emerald Archer, PhD, director for the Center for the Advancement of Women.
Women’s College Coalition Celebrates One-Year Anniversary at the Mount

The Women’s College Coalition (WCC), the association and voice of women’s colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada, moved its headquarters to Mount Saint Mary’s in July 2019. Emerald Archer, PhD, the director of the Center for the Advancement of Women and an associate professor at the Mount, was appointed the new WCC executive director, and she has been advancing its presence during a period of strategic planning and growth.

“It is an honor to work on behalf of the Coalition, and I look forward to continuing to bring WCC’s priorities to life,” says Archer. “Women’s colleges and universities play a very important role in today’s higher education landscape by providing unique college experiences designed with women at the center.”

During this last year, WCC has expanded its footprint with a communication and advocacy plan involving more media engagement, strategic partnerships and Congressional outreach. As part of its strategy to raise the public profile of women’s colleges, the Coalition hosted a town hall during the summer with U.S. Rep. Karen Bass and students from various WCC institutions. More than 400 students and representatives from the WCC joined the powerful conversation on women’s leadership, gender equity and racial injustice.

“We are honored to have WCC on our campus and to support the important work of this organization to ensure that women’s colleges and universities continue to thrive,” said President Ann McElaney-Johnson, who has been the chair of WCC’s Board of Directors since 2014.

WCC currently serves a diverse group of 36 institutions, including public, private, historically Black, secular, and faith-based colleges and universities.

A Legend Retires: Sister Callista Roy, CSJ, ’63

Sister Callista Roy, CSJ, ’63 internationally renowned nursing theorist, has officially retired. She spent the first two decades of her decorated career at the Mount, where she was a student, professor and chair of nursing. In the 1960s and 1970s, she developed what’s now globally known as the Roy Adaptation Model. She described the then-revolutionary approach as “a lens through which you see a person not just as a sum of body systems but as a complex being in complex environments.” Roy earned her PhD in sociology at UCLA, served as a post-doctoral fellow in neuroscience nursing at the University of California, San Francisco, and spent 30 years as a professor and nurse theorist at Boston College’s Connell School of Nursing.

In 2017, Roy returned to the Mount to end her career where it began. As professor emerita, Roy remains available to deliver guest lectures and mentor students and professors—a gift from the retiree to her Mount Saint Mary’s community.

“Congresswoman Bass reminded us of how fortunate we are to be receiving our education at institutions that foster leadership, advocacy and inclusivity.”

– ANGELICA CRISPIN ’21

From top, left to right: Samantha Runyon, Sweet Briar College student; Uzochi Onwukwe, Texas Woman’s University student; Taylor Adkins, Bennett College student; Angelica Crispin, Mount Saint Mary’s student; Ann McElaney-Johnson, president of Mount Saint Mary’s (co-host); Taylor Dews, Spelman College student; Suzanne Walsh, president of Bennett College (co-host); Congressmember Karen Bass (D-CA); and Magdalene Asare, Cottey College student.
Two New Trustees Join the Board

Mount Saint Mary’s welcomed two new members to the Board of Trustees this fall.

James (Jim) P. Sarni is a managing director at Payden & Rygel Investment Management, where he has worked since 1991, and a member of its board of directors. Prior to joining Payden & Rygel, Sarni was a vice president and senior portfolio manager at First Interstate Bank, and an internal auditor for Atlantic Richfield Company.

Sister Barbara Anne Stowasser, CSJ, ’60, returns to the Board of Trustees after ending her earlier term in the 2017 academic year. She is a graduate of Mount Saint Mary’s, where she majored in history before continuing her studies and obtaining her master’s degree from Holy Names University in Oakland, California.

Stowasser served as an education coordinator for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and was an administrator and educator at eight different Catholic elementary schools during her career. She was also provincial director for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet.

A Homecoming Alumnae Weekend—From Home

This year’s virtual Homecoming Alumnae Weekend included class reunions, thought-provoking lectures, a celebration of Founders Day and the Mount’s first virtual 5K race. A total of 280 alums from the class of ’51 to the present registered for one or more of the events hosted by the MSMU Alumnae Association.

The tradition of inducting the 50-year reunion class into the Golden Graduate Society continued, with the Class of 1970 enjoying an afternoon tea with President Ann McElaney-Johnson. The class received a special reunion gift box with a scarf, fair trade tea and a copy of “That All May Be One,” published by the Association of Colleges of Sisters of St. Joseph.

There were some benefits to being virtual. “I have been to a couple of reunions, and I would never get this up close and personal with this many classmates,” says Mary Lillig Koenig ’70, a new member of the Golden Grad gift box, Class of 1970 Zoom gathering and Catherine Vallejo ’80 on her 5K Run.

Alums enjoyed making Mount-inspired cocktails and raised a glass to each other in a toast to their class, and several reunion attendees discussed plans to attend Homecoming and Reunions during the 100th anniversary of the University’s founding in 2025.

Next year’s Alumnae Weekend will be held October 16-17.
**FACULTY**

**Professor Mark Alhanati**, BA business program director, presented on the connections between vocational education and 5G technology at the 2019 Taihe Civilizations Forum in Beijing.


**Shani Habibi, PhD**, associate professor and director of the graduate psychology program, was one of two editors of “Bisexuality,” a unanimous winner of the Diverse Sexualities Research and Education Institute (DSREI) 2020 Book Award. The book discusses that when others refer to LGBTQ+ communities, the bisexual community tends to be ignored, which is a neglected topic and helped the work gain its recognition.

**Patrick Millsap, MA**, recently contributed a chapter to a book, “Transparent and Authentic Leadership: From Biblical Perspectives to Contemporary Practices,” which will be published this December.

This past spring, the journal Physical Therapy published the timely “COVID-19 and the Advancement of Digital Physical Therapist Practice and Telehealth,” by **Alan Lee, PT, PhD, DPT**, professor in the Doctor of Physical Therapy program. The editorial examined the need to answer broad questions regarding distanced physical therapy practice and what regulatory hurdles need to be addressed.

**Eddie Loussararian, MBA**, professor of business administration, published his second book, “64 Life Hacks for Success,” which enables readers to reframe challenges so that they are not viewed as insurmountable tasks that hold them back. The tips help build confidence as well as communication and leadership skills.

In May 2020, **JoAnna Novak, MFA**, associate professor, MFA in creative writing, won the FC2 (Fiction Collective Two) Ronald Sukenick Prize for her short story collection “Meaningful Work,” placed her third book of poetry “New Life,” and sold a memoir, “Contraction Days.” The first two books are scheduled for publication in 2021, followed by the memoir in 2022.

The Bulletin of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv published an article by **Lester Reams, JD, DPA**, on “Arbitration vs. Litigation: Has the Business Mindset Used the Mandatory Arbitration Clause/Agreement to Compromise the Right to Trial to Resolve Business Disputes in the United States?” Reams is also working on the book “Business Law Applications” for Kendall-Hunt Publishing and was recently promoted to associate professor.

**Christian Teeter, EdD**, recently had a peer-reviewed article, “Professional Networks Within U.S. Higher Education: Avenues to Foster Career and Institutional Success,” published in the Journal of Education and Training Studies. He also presented the paper virtually at the Academy of Business Research Fall Conference on October 28.

**ALUM SPOTLIGHT**

Not only does **Melissa Cook ‘12 MBA** teach business courses at the Mount, she’s also had recent roles on the Netflix series “The Ranch.”

The skills gained as a summer marketing and communications intern for the Association of Colleges of Sisters of St. Joseph has enabled **Nayeli Dominguez ‘20** to launch a YouTube channel which she uses to advise high school and college students. An early video on tips for online learning quickly racked up thousands of views.

**Catalina Pereira ‘13** successfully defended her thesis at Cornell University on the role specific DNA proteins play in fixing parts of chromosomes that aren’t pairing up properly. Breaks in proper pairing can lead to certain genetic disorders such as Down syndrome.
What do “Twinkle, twinkle little star” and the “Happy Birthday” songs have in common? Yes, they’re both associated with children, but they’re also both excellent songs to accompany a 20-second hand-washing session (although you’ll have to sing “Happy Birthday” twice).

Thorough—and frequent—hand scrubbing is always an excellent strategy during flu season, but it’s particularly vital now in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. This, social distancing, and other, more traditional elements of wellness, such as reducing stress, eating well, exercising and getting enough sleep, are features of Mount Saint Mary’s Athenians Care Campaign that launched this semester as part of the Wellness Movement.

The program serves as a campus-wide public health education effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19 on our campuses and within our communities. Linda McMurdock, vice president for student affairs, describes Athenians Care as epitomizing the work of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, as it was created to serve the community at large and respond to the needs of the time.

“It has been pretty remarkable to see that the institution really does live and breathe its mission. We’re trying to make sure everybody is being taken care of to the best of our ability,” says McMurdock.

The Mount community is asked to sign the Athenians Care Social Commitment pledge. The pledge states that signers will abide by social distancing and other safety measures to keep themselves and their community safe. Senior Julie Tapia, a psychology and religious studies major, says she signed the pledge “because I care about my Mount family. Stay safe, stay healthy and stay unstoppable.”

You too can participate in the Athenians Care Campaign by signing the pledge on the COVID-19 page of the MSMU website. More than 450 members of the Mount community have already done so.

Please follow the guidelines to keeping yourself and others safe. And add some fun into the mundane act of hand washing by finding your own 20-second spot playlists and get your hands wet, add soap, lather/scrub and rinse while singing.
Hope for the Best and Prepare for the Rest

Treemonisha Smith, Mount Saint Mary’s first director of emergency management and environmental health and safety

“People often don’t know that emergency management exists,” says Smith, Mount Saint Mary’s first director of emergency management and environmental health and safety. “I always say, ‘You don’t know you need us until you need us.’” Smith held similar roles at various other universities and with the Homeland Security Advisory Council, a nonprofit in Los Angeles that helped facilitate private and public partnerships with the government.

Smith got her start in emergency management quite by accident. In 2008, she was working as the interim secretary for the chief nurse at the Veteran’s Affairs Medical Center in her hometown of Houston, having graduated with a major in community health science. Hurricane Ike was approaching, and she was asked if she wanted to work onsite for the duration of the lockdown.

Smith saw that the coordination established by the incident commander enabled the charge nurses to continue to focus on patient care rather than get bogged down by safety meetings. That happenstance incident led Smith to obtain her master’s in disaster preparedness and biosecurity, and she started her career in Los Angeles as an intern with the city’s emergency management department.

As for the Mount, Smith is assessing needs and building upon the plans that are already in place. “I’m looking to do more exercises so that every department knows their role no matter what the incident or the emergency is,” she says.

Smith says that MSMU’s unstoppable campaign completely grabbed her attention. “One phrase that you’ll see a lot in emergency management is in omnia paratus,” she says, “which is Latin for ‘In All Things Prepared,’ which you can think of as ‘ready for anything.’ I would say being unstoppable means being fearless, but it also means being ready for anything. And being ready for anything means having a role in your emergency preparedness and knowing that it takes the full community to really be prepared and to be resilient.”

“I would say being unstoppable means being fearless, but it also means being ready for anything.”
HALLMARKS OF MOUNT SAINT MARY’S BUSINESS EDUCATION

A Competitive Advantage

Business students succeed by applying a mix of practical and critical-thinking skills

By Phillip Jordan
Last summer, Melissa Cook ‘12 MBA taught a management seminar course in Mount Saint Mary’s Weekend/Evening & Online College for working adults. Many of her students were looking to infuse new technologies into their work, so Cook—a former small business owner and marketing consultant—added a new wrinkle to the seminar: Each student would research emerging tech trends and become a subject matter expert in a technology platform of their choosing. Cook’s only rules were that the platform be something the students could use in their own careers or apply to their future coursework—and that they could teach the technology to their classmates.

Some students learned how to leverage the app Mendix and other e-commerce platforms for online stores and retail point-of-sale systems like Shopify and Wordpress. Others explored presentation software and graphic design platforms like Prezi, Canva and LogoMaker. Everyone learned how to use Zotero software to better manage research materials.

BUSINESS PATHS AT MSMU
No matter the program, a business education at the Mount prepares students to be real-world leaders. Degree options include:

**AA in Business Administration**
This two-year associate’s degree program focuses on business fundamentals while also stressing the communication and critical thinking skills necessary to succeed and advance in a business career.

**BA in Business Administration**
This traditional baccalaureate degree offers emphases in accounting, marketing, management and international business. Students progress through theory and business writing courses to career development and business ethics. The BA degree also includes travel study and internship programs.

**BS in Business Administration**
Designed for working professionals looking to advance their business careers, this bachelor of science program is offered through the Mount’s Weekend/Evening & Online College.

**Master of Business Administration (MBA)**
The University’s weekend-format MBA program enables students to graduate in 20 months. Coursework begins with “Sky View” courses that provide an overview of the primary business disciplines of management, marketing, finance, accounting and economics. The program highlights global perspectives and culminates in a real-life consulting project for a corporate client. Concentrations include entrepreneurship, project management and organizational leadership.
All that high-tech learning translated to real-world results. One student launched a new blog platform at the architecture firm where she works. Another student mastered Asana, a digital project management system that she used to coordinate a “drive-up” graduation event for her employer, an LAUSD high school.

Ileana Puentes ’21 learned best practices for creating and maintaining an Instagram for Business account—one that she now uses to earn supplemental income selling her handmade embroidery. “I love that in a class where we were learning a lot of business principles we were also learning practical skills,” says Puentes. “And we weren’t just learning technologies abstractly. Professor Cook encouraged us to learn them in a way that we could use them in real time to progress in our careers.”

Cook says the class demonstrates one of the distinctions of a Mount Saint Mary’s business education: Students learn from faculty who are real-world practitioners—who own their own businesses, work as business consultants and have a diversity of professional experience to draw upon.

“We understand that external business environment because we’re out there in it, too,” Cook says. “That understanding gives us the flexibility to adapt our classes to make them more timely, relevant and attuned to current trends or student needs.”

INNOVATION BEGINS HERE
In recent years, students have benefitted from a range of dynamic new programs and initiatives designed to add value to their degrees—and their careers.

A reimagined MBA program
In 2019, the MBA program earned a $3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Title V Program—Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans. This grant is helping the MBA program develop a new accounting concentration, create graduate assistantship positions and provide more scholarship support to new students. Some of the funding will also enable the University to offer financial literacy training to all Mount graduate students.

MBA-MFA dual degree
Launching in the spring, this innovative program trims one semester off each degree and provides a producer-centric, business-oriented entry into the entertainment world.

Business Administration and English double major
This combined undergraduate degree program—available through both the Weekend/Evening & Online College and the traditional undergraduate BA program—mixes the liberal arts disciplines and critical analysis of the traditional English degree with the professional preparation of the Business Administration major.

Spanish and Business Administration
Another interdisciplinary program, this degree mixes upper-division Spanish studies with business administration coursework. Graduates are prepared to join public- and private-sector organizations in need of business personnel who can effectively communicate with Spanish-speaking clientele.

Business writing challenge
This annual department challenge gives students a business case study to write, with cash prizes on the line. Each case study is designed to bring students into a hypothetical real-world situation where they’re in charge of a company’s business plans.

Vantage Point speaker series
Founded in 2006, this speaker series brings leading executives, founders and entrepreneurs to campus to share their career journeys. Thanks to conversations with these guests, business students gain new insights, chart new career paths and make connections that lead to internships and job opportunities.

At the spring 2020 Vantage Point Speaker Series event, Chalon business students gather with faculty member Dennis Signorovitch, MA, and speaker Leslie Appleton-Young, senior vice president and chief economist for the California Association of Realtors.

Business students and faculty mingle at their annual luncheon, this one held in February 2020. Katherine Whitman, MAM (center), and Michelle French-Holloway, MBA (right), are in the forefront.
Josie DeBellis isn’t one to miss an opportunity. As a first-year student at the Mount, she joined the Sigma Beta Delta business honor society (which later transitioned to Delta Mu Delta). Her sophomore year, DeBellis turned an encounter with a visiting speaker—the vice president and chief economist at the California Association of Realtors—into an internship. DeBellis then parlayed that internship into a job.

“My academic career at the Mount has provided me with the best possible learning experience imaginable,” DeBellis says. “The environment fosters a sense of intimacy, and I have never felt overlooked in the classroom. Our questions are always answered and we are always welcome to pick the brains of our professors.”

She’s grateful that her business professors also encourage and equip students to put their knowledge to work outside the classroom. For DeBellis, that has meant serving as president of Delta Mu Delta this year. In that role, she helps the honor society co-host the University’s Vantage Point speaker series, which brings business leaders to campus to share their stories.

“When I graduate, I will look back on Delta Mu Delta as more than just something I did in college,” she says. “It gave me the confidence to grow into the career woman I was destined to be.”

DeBellis carries that confidence into other arenas, too. Last year, DeBellis led the Mount’s ADthenians team, under faculty advisor Keith Gosselin, MBA, to a third-place finish at the District 15 championships in the National Student Advertising Competition. The annual competition pits Mount Saint Mary’s against Southern California rivals like UCLA, USC, UC San Diego and Chapman University.

As creative director, DeBellis helped Mount Saint Mary’s team research, execute and pitch a comprehensive marketing and advertising campaign for Adobe, a real-world client. It was a tall order, complicated by disruptions due to the Getty Fire and the coronavirus pandemic.

The hard work paid off. In addition to the ADthenians’ podium finish, DeBellis earned the award for Best Q&A Presenter. “We never let anything stop us,” she says, “not the fire, not even the pandemic. The day before the awards, I didn’t care what the judges said. I knew we were winners because I have never seen so much resilience manifest among such a small group of dedicated women.”
It’s a way to stay in touch personally and professionally. I love “The camaraderie is amazing. And it’s not just with students. The Mount was the perfect fit for what I needed,” Pile says.

The friends I made at the Mount, we still have a running group chat on WhatsApp called ‘MSMU FAM-BAM,’” Pile says. “It’s a way to stay in touch personally and professionally. I love that we still have this bond. Our shared journey continues.”

Years passed as the demands of adulthood took precedent. Without a degree, Pile missed out on some promotions that he was otherwise qualified for. All along, the promise gnawed at him, even as he found success as a human resources professional, got married and became a proud father of four children. Nearly three decades later, Pile’s promise was finally fulfilled. In December 2019, he earned his BS in Business Administration from Mount Saint Mary’s Weekend/Evening & Online College.

“The Mount was the perfect fit for what I needed,” Pile says. “The camaraderie is amazing. And it’s not just with students. You get to know your professors on a personal level, too. They’re so passionate about what they teach, and it shows in the classroom. It’s a really uplifting, motivating community you become part of here.”

He also gained new business acumen that he’s applied to his current job at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, where he recruits PhD-level academic and research scientists. “I learned so much about how to better work with people, how to communicate and understand different viewpoints,” Pile says. “I often find myself harkening back to scenarios in class that have come in handy at work.”

Pile has long championed his own children’s educational dreams. His oldest son will graduate from UC San Diego this coming spring with dual degrees in biochemistry and global health. When he does, Pile will likely send a crowing message to a certain group chat on his phone.

Beyond the degree: MAPs alumni network

A dozen years ago, Nancy (Valdivia) Antoniou ’05, ’09 MBA, founded the MBA Association of Professionals (MAPs) alumni network at MSMU. She also founded the first MBA scholarship. In each instance, she was motivated by her own experience as an MBA student.

“I transferred from another school and during the application process, the dean at the time called me one evening to learn more about me and my interests,” Antoniou recalls. “I was transferring from a school that was only interested in my student ID number, and here I found myself on the phone with the dean as he referred to me by name. That’s the difference at Mount Saint Mary’s that I love. That’s why I give back.”

Today, Antoniou is the senior vice president of strategic operations and chief human resources officer for a leading biotech firm. Meanwhile, the MAPs alumni group she started is flourishing.

“Any alumni group is only as strong as its network,” Antoniou says. “The benefit of the MBA alum community is that everyone genuinely cares about one another and wants to see each other succeed. I know that I can pick up the phone and ask an alum for guidance and receive it willingly—and vice versa—without judgment or reservation.”

Joy Bejarano ’15 is the current president of MAPs. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she and Johnathon Ngeth ’16 have worked with the MAPs board of directors to develop a webinar series that’s keeping resources flowing to its alumni network.

MAPs is also still helping connect current business students with alumni who can serve as mentors or answer industry-specific questions. Since the pandemic began, MAPs has hosted 14 Zoom networking sessions between current students and MBA alumni.

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Best of all, MAPs continues to serve as a valuable talent pipeline. “Our MBA alums know the rigor of the program and they consistently come back to us to tap this pool of talent for their own businesses and entrepreneurial ventures,” Bejarano says.
ALUMS WHO MAKE AN IMPACT
Here’s a sampling of where our recent business graduates have taken their talent to the top in director or vice president roles:

- Herbalife
- DreamWorks Animation
- City National Bank
- Union Bank
- Starbucks
- SoCalGas
- Kaiser Permanente
- Sony Pictures Entertainment
- AIDS Healthcare Foundation
- Los Angeles Community College District
- Good Samaritan Hospital
- T-Mobile

BEST IN CLASS
Getting a business degree at the Mount is a wise investment. Recent University rankings include:

No. 1
“Top Performer on Social Mobility”
– U.S. News and World Report, 2020-2021

No. 3
“Most Transformative College”
– Money Magazine, 2020

Top 7%
for alums’ return on investment out of all U.S. colleges and universities
– Georgetown University’s Center on Education and the Workforce, 2020

GLOBAL FIELD EXPERIENCES
Each academic year, global study opportunities are available to business students, including MBA field studies, spring break and summer travel courses through the Weekend/Evening & Online College and undergraduate credit-earning travel experiences with MSMU business professors.

At a Glance

DOUBLE ACCREDITATION
- Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP)
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)

2,751
The total number of all business graduates at Mount Saint Mary’s University
Lighting the Way

Helen Umana ’21, SGA president, is driven by the desire to help others and leave everything better than she found it.

While studying in Spain last year, Umana stayed connected with the Mount and ultimately applied to run for Student Government Association (SGA) president despite thinking that she’d have to run her campaign in a vastly different time zone— and ultimately having to do so from her quarantine bedroom upon her return home.

Connecting with New Students

“They saw my face all the time during orientation,” Umana says. “I know that it’s been rough. It’s been hard for me, so I can’t imagine how it’s been for new students, but I hope they know that I’m here, and I’m trying to help.”

An Open-minded Community

“We want students to know that they’re able to express their feelings,” she says. “Our founders, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, were open to a discussion of everyone’s views and being respectful of them. There are a lot of issues that students want to talk about. The Mount is a place where students learn to express themselves with kindness and an open mind. SGA, and many more organizations, are creating safe spaces for them to have these open conversations.” To that end, she participated in the student freedom of expression policy board over the summer.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Umana joined the Black Lives Matter student community action group in March. “Right now, we are working towards having an antiracist campus and focusing on creating an inclusive space for everyone.”

Student leaders run many affinity, safe-identity spaces in which students discuss their experiences. Umana, whose parents are from El Salvador, has run Latinx and first-generation affinity spaces.

Umana is looking forward to the ethnic studies minor that is being developed. “I hope we get more cultural enrichment classes that teach us different perspectives of people’s history,” she says.

Looking Ahead

“We will be starting off remote next semester due to the health and safety guidelines,” Umana says. “Although it is not the senior year I had hoped for, I know that everyone, including SGA, is working hard to support all students.”

“The Mount is a place where students learn to express themselves with kindness and an open mind.”
Mount Saint Mary’s Unstoppable Campaign is about people: our students, our faculty, our alumnae—and the power of their experiences. Through the generous support of more than 6,400 alumnae, foundations, corporations, and friends, we have raised $115.2 million—surpassing our goal by 15%. But we’re not done yet. The campaign doesn’t officially end until December 31, 2020. Your support will allow Mount Saint Mary’s to be a national leader in women’s education for years to come! Thank you. Stay tuned for a celebration to close the campaign.

MSMU.EDU/CAMPAIGN

Funding progress AS OF NOV. 2020
115% to $100 million goal

$115.2 million raised to date

Other key funding areas:

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<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Toward Goal</th>
<th>Goal</th>
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<td>Wellness Pavilion</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>$29,089,153</td>
<td>$35 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fund for the Future</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>$38,828,096</td>
<td>$40 million</td>
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New Online
Ways of Giving

Mount Saint Mary's University continues to be unstoppable and innovative, using new technology and platforms to engage our alums as best we can.

GiveCampus: We have implemented this new online platform that allows our community to see fundraising goals and challenges in real time as well as connect philanthropically through social media. You will be able to launch your own social media challenges, too.

Venmo: This digital wallet platform allows you to give to the Mount in a convenient, secure way from an app on your phone. Gifts will be donated directly from your account to the University. You “Venmo” your donation to @MountGiving, add your name and designate a fund in the description. It’s that easy! The entire process can be performed in about one minute.

FOR MORE INFORMATION on any of these new ways of giving, please contact Kevin A. Barry at kbarry@msmu.edu or 213.477.2875.

PROFILE OF PHILANTHROPY: PHYLLIS AMBROSE ’61
Every Little Bit Counts

From left: Phyllis (Lieb) Ambrose ’61 with her daughter Janis Ambrose-Shard ’02 and her late mother Bernice (Carls) Lieb ’37.

When Mount Saint Mary’s faculty and staff say that they appreciate every donation, no matter the size, that sentiment is true. Phyllis (Lieb) Ambrose ’61 is a perfect example of how the accumulation of smaller donations, every year, adds up. That has been her approach to helping the Mount, and while she was surprised to be profiled for her financial support, her total giving over three decades undoubtedly has helped a number of students.

Ambrose is not the first in her family with a Mount connection. Her late mother, Bernice (Carls) Lieb ’37, sister Anne (Lieb) Collins ’71 and daughter Janis Ambrose-Shard ’02 are all graduates.

For Ambrose, it was a given that she’d go to college. The women from both her mother’s and father’s families were college graduates. However, she was acutely aware that the same wasn’t true for many young women. “I want to keep—or start—that tradition of going to college for others,” she said in explaining why she donates to the University.

After graduation, she married Robert, and they ultimately settled in Playa del Rey to raise their four daughters and son, all college graduates. Janis, the middle child, initially took some courses at a junior college, then married and had two children. Ultimately, Janis got a job with Toyota when it was headquartered in Torrance. “Somehow it came up that she was good at what she was doing, but she could go further if she had a four-year degree,” says Ambrose. “The Mount had recently started its weekend college, she was able to enroll and she graduated in 2002.”

Ambrose is grateful for her time at the Mount and for the professional trajectory it provided her daughter. She enjoys keeping up with what’s going on at the University and is an active member of the Heritage Society, made up of alumnae and friends who have included the Mount in their wills. But Ambrose is happy that her many donations over the years have made a difference in the meantime. “I will continue to support the students who are at the Mount today and those who will come in the future. It’s a wonderful place to go to school.”
Support THE MOUNT

The Mount Fund and Mount Associates
Contributions to the Mount Fund, the unrestricted fund at Mount Saint Mary’s University, support key priorities like financial aid and faculty initiatives. Those who make unrestricted contributions to the Mount Fund of at least $1,000 annually ($83.33/monthly) are recognized as Mount Associate members and receive an invitation to an annual luncheon hosted by the president. To join the Mount Associates, please contact Kevin A. Barry.

Fund for the Future
Five years ago, we launched the Unstoppable Campaign to raise $40 million in planned gifts to the Fund for the Future. Because of your generosity, we are currently just over $38.8 million. This fund is essential to the long-term success of the University, as it provides continuous support for our students and programs. If you would like to have a deep and lasting impact for generations to come through a bequest intention, please contact Maria Solano.

Qualified Charitable Distribution
If you turned age 70½ or older prior to Dec. 31, 2019, you must take a required minimum distribution (RMD) from your IRA. While the CARES Act has waived the RMD for this year, it is still a great and easy way to save on taxes and support the University. By making a gift by December 2020 using your IRA Charitable Rollover, also known as Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD), your generosity will impact our students today. We encourage you to speak to your financial advisor to see if this gift is the right fit for you. To learn more about making a gift from your IRA, contact Kevin A. Barry.

Calendar Year End
As a reminder, the end of the year is a great time to make a tax-deductible donation to Mount Saint Mary’s University. Gifts postmarked by December 31st will be counted toward 2020. You can make your donation online at www.msmu.edu/giving. If you have any questions about your giving, please reach out to Kevin A. Barry.

Reunion Giving
It’s the start of a new reunion year! If your class year ends in a 1 or a 6, please consider a gift in honor of your reunion and/or sign up to serve as a Class Ambassador to help engage your classmates and keep them connected with the University. For more information, contact Tom Arteaga.

Save the Date – Mount Day of Giving
This academic year, the Mount will celebrate our Day of Giving on Friday, April 9, 2021.
Remembrances

Henry “Hank” Bowman, 1929–2020
Member of Regents Council, Heritage Society, Mount Associates Advisory Board

Long-time friend and supporter Henry “Hank” Bowman passed away peacefully on June 4, 2020. Bowman had been a member of the Regents Council since 2004 and a member of the Heritage Society since 2008. He also served on the Mount Associates Advisory Board.

Bowman’s late wife, Carla Wright Bowman, was a student at the Mount before they married in 1953. They ultimately settled in Northridge and raised five children while he worked as an electrician, serving as foreman on several large commercial buildings throughout the city.

Bowman’s support of the Mount and love for his wife will be felt by our science students for generations to come through the Carla Wright Bowman Endowed Scholarship (est. 2000) and through the use of the Carla and Hank Bowman microbiology lab (est. 2005).

He named dorm rooms 108 and 222 in Brady Hall to honor his wife’s steadfast friendships with Rosemary Brunet Giacomi ’55 and Marylu Mattson ’55. He also celebrated his and Carla’s life-long friendship with Rosemary and her late husband Jim by establishing the Rosemary and Jim Giacomi Endowed Scholarship (est. 2015) for students majoring in education.

His kind heart and generous spirit will be missed by all of us at the Mount.

Barbara Brown ’64, 1943-2020
First female and first Hispanic mayor of Fountain Valley, CA

Barbara Brown ’64 epitomized her family motto, “Si se puede” (Yes you can), during her lifetime. A devoted public servant, Brown passed away in August, but left her mark in her city of Fountain Valley, first serving on the city’s planning commission and city council before becoming mayor. She also served in many civic organizations and was on the board of directors of the Bowers Museum, the Boys and Girls Club of Fountain Valley and the South Orange County YWCA, among other activities. Brown, a first-generation college student, worked nights while pursuing a bachelor’s in microbiology at the Mount. She later received a master’s in public administration from California State University, Long Beach.

Class Notes

1982
A mother of two children whom she homeschooled from K-12, Denise (Anderson) Boiko learned the best tips and tricks that homeschoolers should use while planning the high school experience and applying to colleges. She shares all that knowledge in the 440-page book “Homeschooled & Headed for College: Your Road Map for a Successful Journey,” which is now in its second edition.

Lisa Barile Thomas, a board certified clinical nurse specialist, earned her doctorate of nursing practice degree from the California State University (CSU) Northern California DNP Consortium. She was also the recipient of the CSU Fresno Outstanding Doctoral Project Award from the College of Health and Human Services.

1996
Ronald Carpio completed a doctorate of nursing practice degree from Capella University and is currently a course instructor for the College of Health Professions at Western Governors University in Salt Lake City.

2008
Caleb and Danielle (Batol) Steele are happy to share news about the latest addition to the Steele family and future MSMU alumna, Aideyn Violet Batol Steele, born in June 2020. Her big sister Emilia could not be more proud or helpful.

IN MEMORIAM

’51 Kathryn Ashe Armstrong
’52 Marjorie Gegg Trengove
’55 Anne Bondan Ingebrigtsen
’55 Jude Longshore Nichols
’56 Ernestine Barton
’58 Sister of Mary Barton Schustrin
’59 Margaret Rude Bercaw
’60 Mary Bachman Makel
’61 Mary Lee Polchow Engstrom
’61 Sister Catherine Kreta, CSJ
’63 Patricia Orselli Zenone
’64 Barbara Ledesma Brown
’65 Carol Jones Boulger
’69 Rita Mahony Perez
’73 Patricia Keating Wright Spinak
’73 Mother of Joan Gumaer Tyhurst
’81 Lynne Londre Waters
’89 Mother of Michele Starkey
’90 Diane Bortle
’90 Barbara Zajac
’94 Rita Pasqualone
’11 Husband of Alexandra Erb Albrecht
– Sr. Ann Weltz, CSJ
Mount Connect:
Rethinking Mentoring During a Pandemic

When the Class of 2020 started their senior year, the national unemployment rate was at a near record low. Upon graduation, the pendulum had swung to a record high unemployment rate. Sadly, the economic impact of the global pandemic has affected nearly everyone, and job seekers must utilize every available connection to find employment in a complex job market. The Mount has a great opportunity for alumnae to share professional experiences and make new connections through our online mentoring platform Mount Connect.

Mentorships can take many forms. The most common connections are one-time informational conversations. Mount Connect allows alumnae to set a maximum number of mentees they can support at any given time. They can also indicate how they are willing to help: short-term mentoring, making introductions, reviewing a resume or speaking to students.

Join Mount Connect by syncing your profile with a LinkedIn, Facebook or Google account for easy login. Alumnae seeking career guidance can login and start building connections and also have access to the career department’s Handshake platform, which helps connect companies and organizations with candidates from the Mount.

For those of you with job opportunities, please utilize Handshake to promote them to the Mount community.

The need for mentors to share their experiences and professional connections is critical for our community.

Visit mountconnect.com to support your fellow Athenians!

More than 500 alumnae currently use Mount Connect including people employed at the companies shown below:

- Netflix
- NBCUniversal
- Los Angeles Unified School District
- Children’s Hospital Los Angeles
- Department of Defense
- Dignity Health
- Hulu
- Walt Disney Company
- Keck Medicine of USC
- Univision
- Wells Fargo
- DreamWorks
Virtual Resources
The MSMU Alumnae Association provides online tools and resources to keep our alumnae network connected and strong. In addition to career resources, virtual events and online prayer requests, we offer the following fun and entertaining online tools at alums.msmu.edu/connect/virtual-resources.

MSMU Digital Puzzles
Exercise your brain and improve your memory with six digital puzzles. Select the number of pieces for each puzzle from 24 to more than 300 pieces.

Virtual Event Series
Are you ready for cutting-edge conversations or mindful moments? Our virtual events series has something for everyone.

MSMU Zoom Backgrounds
Don’t worry about cleaning your room before your next Zoom call. Download our Zoom backgrounds featuring your favorite locations on campus.
MSMU Word Search
Need a break from Zoom calls? Try out our MSMU word search. Search for words that will take you back to your time at the Mount.

MSMU Crossword Puzzle
Improve your vocabulary and release stress at the same time. Test your knowledge of Mount Saint Mary’s history and traditions.

Coloring Pages
Would you like to see the Doheny Mansion decked out in purple and gold? Sharpen your colored pencils and try to stay inside the lines.
While times can be uncertain, your intentions do not need to be.

You have a tool for the long-term success of MSMU if you include the Mount in your estate plan. It documents your intentions for your family and others who are important to you. When you include MSMU in your estate plan, you can forever tie your legacy with ours. We are here to help you with your planning needs and ensure that what you love most is well taken care of in the future.

TAKE THE NEXT STEP IN PLANNING BY PARTNERING WITH THE MOUNT.

For more information, contact Maria Solano, gift planning officer
msolano@msmu.edu | 310.709.4376
msmu.edu/plannedgiving
Sarah Posey’s Quilt

Sarah Ellen Van Giesen Posey has been called a “force of nature”—an accomplished painter, published composer and musician, a real estate agent and building designer, popular socialite and church volunteer in 1890s Los Angeles.

One exquisite landmark she bestowed on the city is the Doheny Mansion at Mount Saint Mary’s. Through a generous donation, the Mount now owns another Posey creation, the fabulous crazy quilt she stitched more than 130 years ago.

Crazy quilts were popular in late 19th century America, fascinating for their irregular shapes, vibrant colors and lavish embroidery. Museum-quality quilts like Sarah Posey’s are constructed from bits of expensive silks, satins and velvets and delicately embellished using silk floss or thin ribbon. According to the experts, only wealthy women could afford to cut such rich fabrics into tiny pieces.

In 1893, with a new fortune from gold and copper mining, Sarah, her Civil War veteran husband, Oliver, and their two sons moved from Wisconsin to Los Angeles. In 1899, Sarah purchased two parcels of the recently subdivided Chester Place and hired a leading architectural firm to carry out her unique ideas for a home. The mansion was completed in 1900, a mix of architectural styles Sarah had admired on her European travels.

But the Poseys occupied the house for less than a year. Oliver traveled constantly, the boys were away at college, and Sarah was lonely in the big house. In 1901, she sold No. 8 to newlyweds Edward L. and Estelle Doheny. The quilt, meanwhile, passed from generation to generation. In the early 1980s, two of Sarah’s great-granddaughters in Portland, Oregon, decided to sell the quilt at a church auction. A newspaper columnist for the Oregonian, Beverly Butterworth, bid a couple hundred dollars. A later appraisal revealed it was worth many times her bid.

Now retired, Butterworth shared photos of the quilt with Archives and Special Collections back in 2012, wanting to know more about Sarah Posey, 8 Chester Place, and the connection to the Dohenys. This year, she decided the quilt belonged back in Sarah’s mansion, “where she had been at her very best.”

Butterworth is proud to be part of Sarah’s life, a woman she believes was ahead of her time. “She was creative, inquisitive, interesting, and thought like women of the next generation,” she says. “Sarah was a Victorian lady on the cusp of the 20th century. The stitches symbolize the brilliance of this woman, and the quilt has great meaning for me.”

In those “miles of stitches,” to use Butterworth’s phrase, we can see an unstoppable woman.

— Victoria McCargar, University archivist
Coloring pages. See page 26.