After a long year-and-a-half, we welcomed the Mount community back to our campuses. We are optimistically moving forward knowing that we have done everything we can to ensure everyone’s safety. Offices, classrooms and public spaces have been prepared to adhere to the most up-to-date health and safety guidelines; in person, hybrid and remote courses are available to our students. We remain vigilant and flexible regarding potential responses to the ever-changing landscape. Through it all, our students have persevered in all areas despite these unique circumstances, and the faculty and staff have worked tirelessly to ensure their continued success.

As we approach our Centennial, we are grateful to our alumnae for their ongoing support. They, along with friends of the University and corporate supporters, made our Unstoppable Campaign a huge success, and last year their generosity was crucial to ensure that our students had the tools and support necessary to continue their studies from home.

Our alumnae’s affinity for the Mount was also evident in the recent survey we launched to gauge how graduates are faring in their lives and careers. The main feature in this issue examines the survey results, in particular where the Mount shines, as well as steps we are taking to continue to offer new, exceptional services for our students and alumnae.

As we settle into what I know will be another successful year, I would like to thank the entire Mount community for continuing our traditions of academic excellence and caring for one another. Our nurturing environment is at the heart of who we are and is the glue that keeps us connected each year.

Sincerely,

Ann McElaney-Johnson
We asked, you answered
A LOOK AT THE RESULTS OF THE RECENT ALUMNAE SURVEY

The world according to Bob
BOB PERRINS’ HISTORIAN FOCUS TURNS TO MOUNT GRADUATES, OUR CENTENNIAL

Money multiplies
VERNICE GRAJEDA ’11 ADVOCATES GIVING AS SOON AS ONE BECOMES AN ALUMNA

An indelible loss
THE MOUNT COMMUNITY REMEMBERS BERNADETTE GONZAQUE ROBERT ’77

Updates
Accolades
Donor Community
Engage
Alumnae Community
Class Notes
Looking Back

Cover
GIANNE GONZALEZ ’22, A HEALTH CARE POLICY MAJOR, EXUDES JOY WHILE SHOWCASING OUR UNSTOPPABLE MOTTO.
Congratulations to the Class of ‘21! (HONK!)

The sound of car horns isn’t too unusual in Los Angeles. On May 10 and 11, rather than in response to traffic, car horns created a celebratory cacophony for Mount Saint Mary’s Commencement ceremonies held outside near the Doheny Campus to accommodate health and safety guidelines while honoring the Class of 2021.

Families and friends celebrated graduates from the safety of their cars and watched the proceedings on several large drive-in movie screens. Four separate ceremonies were held over two days to ensure that the University met the protocols established by the Los Angeles County Department of Health. Graduating speaker Eric Weintraub, who received his MFA in creative writing, welcomed the usual list of attendees and added, “Toyotas, Hondas, Fords and all vehicles with us today,” which elicited laughter from the students and honking from the cars behind them in lieu of applause.

Robert Perrins, PhD, vice president of academic affairs and provost, delivered the official commencement address for all four ceremonies. Ever the historian, Perrins discussed how Commencement addresses given during the last pandemic failed to mention the health crisis affecting the world. He noted that the effects of this pandemic made it clear that society is “a lot more fragile, broken, and actually fundamentally flawed than most of us would like to admit.”

His inspiring call to action, imploring those graduating to become the greatest generation in history and pursue solutions to social inequities, was far from the ordinary Commencement address. Perrins received so much positive feedback that his speech was included in a digital memory book that was sent to all 2021 graduates.

In addition to Weintraub, graduating student speakers included virtual speaker Ivette Jackson, MA in humanities; Alexis Sio, BSN; Julia Miscan, ABN; Michelle Manzano, BS in social work; and Daniela Ahumada, BA in accounting.

Anyone wishing to view the ceremonies — or to hear Perrins’ speech — can go to msmu.edu/commencement.
Strategic plan 2021-2026

This past spring, the Mount released its new five-year plan, “Educating Global Leaders for the Next Century.” The work toward creating the new plan began in the fall of 2019, with the planning committee gathering information from numerous feedback sessions with different groups throughout the University.

In developing the plan, the committee focused on how the various elements fit into the five pillars of distinction that are the foundation of the Mount education: innovative teaching and learning; women; global awareness and understanding; community; and spirit of the founders.

The committee views the plan as an evolving document, building on our past progress to shape our future.

Six strategic themes serve as focal points of the plan:
• Responding to the needs of the time: articulating our values, mission and vision;
• Becoming an anti-racist university: celebrating and promoting diversity, equity and inclusion;
• Advancing an education for the 21st century: enhancing academic and co-curricular programs and opportunities;
• Sustaining the Institution: finances, the environment and the health of the community;
• Instilling excellence: building a culture of service, collaboration and care; and
• Enhancing infrastructure: technology, data and facilities for the next century.

For more information on the plan, visit msmu.edu/about-the-mount/strategic-plan. This year’s President’s Report, which will be available mid-December, will also cover the strategic plan with highlights from programs and initiatives supporting its goals.

Campus reopening

On August 2, members of the Mount community were officially allowed to return to both campuses, safely following state and county health guidelines. According to Treemonisha Smith, director of emergency management and environmental health and safety, part of making the reopening a success was having clear rules for everyone’s protection and their feeling of security.

In-person, hybrid and remote courses are available, while students are living in only single- and double-occupancy housing, according to Rosalyn Kempf, assistant vice president for student affairs.

Dana Lopez, senior director of human resources, says that departments worked with their respective vice president or provost to decide how to best accomplish their daily work while reentering the workplace after the pandemic.

Lopez credits the careful philosophy of the COVID Task Force, comprised of faculty and staff from across the University. “It’s been a very holistic approach,” she says, “a delicate balance of caring and inclusivity, while also relying on the guidance provided by our partners at the CDC, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and Cal/OSHA to ensure the health and safety of our community.”

Lopez emphasizes that the University also recognizes the need to be fluid, knowing that things can change at the spur of the moment. “Flexibility is key,” she says.

Kempf commented on the stirring emotional energy of the students’ return. “We have second-year students who had never set foot on our campuses before,” she says. “They finally got the chance. We keep health and safety top of mind, but it’s about allowing them to experience college life — clubs, activities, hanging out with friends and just being students.”

Note: This article depicts the state of the University at the time it was written. The situation may have since changed based on the pandemic.
MSMU’s new certificate programs starting this fall

**Two new certificates offered in creative writing**

The MFA in creative writing program will begin offering two new certificates for both graduate students and the general public.

One certificate is in Latin American/Latinx Creative Studies, run by Juana Moriel-Payne, PhD, and the other certificate is in independent publishing, directed by Thomas Cook, PhD. Both certificates require 15 units of study.

“These classes are going to be very diverse in terms of materials because I’m integrating painting, photography and songs with the poetry and literary writing,” says Moriel-Payne. “The history of Latin America is so complex that you need an interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary approach in order to truly understand it.”

The five-course program in independent publishing covers the industry from different perspectives, including those of an editor, writer, publisher and agent, with a focus on literary publishing.

“The certificate can be an incredibly useful counterpoint to one’s own writing and writing life,” says Cook, “but also potential careers outside of one’s own writing and publishing. The certificate will help those trying to figure out how to get their work produced, but it can also guide those whose career goal is to work in the industry assisting others in getting published.”

For more information, go to msmu.edu/graduate-programs/creative-writing/certificates.

**Six new certificate programs target film, TV and photography**

The Film, Media and Communications Department has launched six new certificate programs that debuted this fall. These programs will help participants hone their skills — and gain new ones — in photography, documentary storytelling, producing, post-production, music production and sound design, and acting.

Current undergraduate and graduate students, alumnae, and the general public may enroll in one of the new certificate programs, pursuing it in person or online. To earn a certificate, a student must complete 12 units of instruction within three years.

“Offering these exciting new certificates will provide continuing education opportunities to the community and help address a demand for training and instruction from professionals,” says Charles Bunce, MFA, chair of the film, media and communication department (left).

Mount Saint Mary’s students may have up to six units earned in a certificate program applied toward the requirements for a BA, BS, BFA or MFA degree at the Mount.
Two co-directors lead a renamed and revitalized center

The former Center for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, now The Bernadette Gonzaque Robert Center for Equity, Diversity and Justice, has two interim co-directors: Kimberly Nao, PhD, director, induction and instructional leadership and the Fritz Burns endowed chair of education (left), and Chinako Belanger, PhD, associate dean of student life and leadership (right).

“When I think of Bernie [Bernadette], she created places of belonging, and I think that’s what students are looking for in the new year,” says Belanger. “They’re looking forward to having the opportunity to be on campus and be in community with each other in ways that are very different from just being on Zoom and virtual spaces.”

Belanger says that the Center has many plans for the fall, but some specifics are waiting for community input. “We want to be intentional with who is part of the conversation, so bringing in our student groups, other staff and faculty to help inform our programming will be really important.”

Both Nao and Belanger are thrilled that the Mount is creating a new position for a vice president of equity, diversity and justice who will be a member of the President’s Cabinet. The new vice president will drive the agenda to become an anti-racist University. “I hope this individual will be someone who has a vision for bringing in social justice on a lot of different levels,” says Nao, “but also who’s open enough to understand how to implement those things within the unique culture of the Mount community.”

Mount president recognized for excellence in education

The Girls Academic Leadership Academy (GALA), the only all-girls public school in Los Angeles and the state, honored President Ann McElaney-Johnson, PhD, for excellence in education at their Friends of GALA 2021 Women’s Leadership Breakfast.

The #LaunchHERFuture award recognizes McElaney-Johnson’s leadership and work dedicated to improve the lives of women and girls in higher education.

“I am deeply honored to receive this award. A school like GALA is critical because it prepares girls to become trailblazers in the STEM fields and helps them to develop into self-confident young women and strong leaders in any field they wish to pursue,” said McElaney-Johnson. The president encouraged young women to take full advantage of the opportunities offered during their college experience, get involved in different activities and be open to new perspectives. “Don’t worry about failing at anything. Try new things and give it your best,” she said.

This was the fourth annual event GALA has hosted honoring women for their leadership and impact to the community in different fields, including STEM, public service, education and the corporate sector. The other 2021 honorees were Nichol Whiteman, CEO of the LA Dodgers Foundation; Diana Trujillo-Pomerantz, flight director of the NASA/JPL Mars Perseverance rover; and Cynthia McClain-Hill, president of the Water and Power board of commissioners.

Founded in 2016, GALA provides a highly rigorous college preparatory STEM-focused education in an environment that fosters academic excellence, ethical leadership and intellectual curiosity. Similar to the Mount, GALA instills the core values of excellence, leadership and wellness throughout the school. The class of 2020 was the school’s first graduating class, with a 100% graduation rate. Eighty-eight percent of these girls will be first generation college attendees, with 75% planning on a major in engineering or biology.
Proposed Wellness Pavilion on Chalon Campus begins public hearing process

Mount Saint Mary’s newest project, the proposed Wellness Pavilion on the Chalon Campus, has just entered the first stage of the public hearing process with the city of Los Angeles. Over the next several months, the University will work together with elected officials and community members as it moves through the approval process, a standard procedure for construction projects in Los Angeles.

The idea of a Wellness Pavilion was born out of the Mount Wellness movement that began seven years ago. At that time, Mount Saint Mary’s administered a survey and discovered that two-thirds of students entering the Mount reported feeling unhealthy. In response, the University created a campus-wide wellness movement that focused on four key areas: Eat Green, De-Stress, Sleep Well and Move More. It implemented creative programming and innovative fitness classes and started new initiatives like a free farmers’ market and Peer Wellness Advocates. But the University knew it needed to do more. It needed to provide students with proper facilities dedicated to overall health and wellness.

The first major construction project planned for the Chalon Campus in 30 years, the Wellness Pavilion will replace the current, outdated fitness center and provide a comprehensive exercise and wellness space for students. The University believes in the importance of a holistic approach to education — mind, body and spirit; the Pavilion will ensure that students have the equipment, spaces and programs they need to have balance in all three areas.

When completed, the Wellness Pavilion will be the cornerstone for all healthy living initiatives at the Mount, with a state-of-the-art fitness center, basketball and volleyball courts, exercise studios and a pool. It will also include spaces to learn about healthy living. Students will be able to meet individually with Peer Wellness Advocates, as well as with students in the doctoral physical therapy program, to discuss their health goals.

“Health, wellness and caring for others have always been at the core of what we do. Now, more than ever, it is important that we give our students the means to lead healthy, resilient lives. They deserve no less.”

– Alison Halpern
WELLNESS MANAGER

By 2025, the goal is for at least two-thirds of Mount Saint Mary’s students to feel healthy by the time they graduate. The Wellness Pavilion is the key component to adopting a lifestyle that will positively impact all aspects of a student’s well-being.
Spread your wings and fly

The late Bernie Robert viewed butterflies as symbolic of people’s growth.
Bernadette (Bernie) Gonzaque Robert ’77, who passed away in May after a long illness, has been described as “the epitome of our heart and soul,” “the Mount’s angel in heaven,” and “a moral compass.” In 2018, the Mount bestowed her with the Carondelet Medal, the University’s highest honor, for her many personal and professional achievements.

In roles ranging from Mount Saint Mary’s student, alumna, staff member in Admissions and College Relations, Title XI coordinator and associate vice president for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Bernie touched the lives of many. But no role was more important to her than that of friend and mentor.

Mount President Ann McElaney-Johnson acknowledges that “Bernie had a gift of being fully present with everyone she met, and she managed to do this for her oldest as well as her newest friends and colleagues. Bernie gifted us all with her presence. When I think of Bernie, I think of love — abundant, generous, open and grace-filled love.”

Charlotte White describes how she attended a college fair with her daughter, Ann-Marie (White) Medeiros ’92 in their hometown in Hawaii, when they first met Bernie. They had never heard of Mount Saint Mary’s but were enchanted by Bernie’s charisma. The rest, as they say, is history. Bernie befriended not only Ann and her parents but her younger brother, who enrolled at Loyola Marymount after Ann graduated from the Mount. Bernie even offered up her home for storage when he had to pack up his dorm room belongings for the summer.

“In Hawaii, we pride ourselves on the aloha spirit, and that’s exactly what Bernie had,” says White. “Just a love for everyone, welcoming them and everyone becoming part of her ohana (family).”

Pam Gist, PhD, professor and chair of the psychology department, echoes other characteristics that come up in every conversation with people who knew Bernie. “She always managed to see the good in people,” she explains. “Bernie expected us to keep reaching for more but forgave us each time we fell short. Bernie always put everybody else first. She always asked about us, no matter what she was going through.”

Bernie loved butterflies, especially monarchs. “They reminded her of the process and metamorphosis that we as women learn from and experience as we grow,” says Sonali (Perera) Bridges’98, who was mentored by Bernie from the time she entered the Mount and became part of her extended family. Bernie officiated Bridges’ wedding and was “Nana” to her two daughters.

“There are times when we learn to crawl, times to reflect in our cocoons, times we must adapt, spread our wings and ultimately take off and rise,” Bridges explains. She reports that a white butterfly persistently circled her while she was in the garden of her parents’ home in Ohio and kept appearing during her stay there; her parents insist they had previously never seen a butterfly in their yard.

Bridges is not alone in her experience. “Since Bernie died, I have had a monarch flying around my house,” says Gist. “Friends of mine are reporting the same thing. I think she’s saying hello.”

White agrees. She was also visited by a monarch while tending to the herb garden in her front yard. “I said, ‘Bernie, you’re here! What do you think of my garden?’”

Bernie’s legacy at the Mount is indelible. Now a Mount Center bears her name: The Bernadette Gonzaque Robert Center for Equity, Diversity and Justice.

An interim co-director of the newly renamed Center, Kimberly Nao, says that the best way we can honor Bernie is to follow the model that she set, not just in terms of the work that she did but the kind of human being that she was. “I think of it as fulfilling the vision that she had of who we are as individuals,” Nao explains. “I want to fulfill the vision that she had for me as an individual, as well as the vision that she had for the Mount.”

Says Gist, “I’m trying to be more Bernie-like every day. It’s hard, but I’m trying.”

If you would like to make a donation to the Bernadette Gonzaque Robert Center for Equity, Diversity and Justice in Bernie’s honor, please go to givecampus.com/kpv6at.
Alumnae Survey 2020
We asked what our alumnae thought.
They responded and we want them to know —
we are listening. Here’s what we learned...

MSMU alumnae feel good about their alma mater
The majority of respondents have a positive opinion of Mount Saint Mary's University. In fact, 94% of survey respondents describe their experience as good to excellent.

- 81% of alumnae rate their decision to attend as good to great
- 91% have a high affinity for the Mount
- 92% of alumnae recommend the Mount to prospective students
- 94% describe their student experience as good to excellent

What matters most to the alumnae about the Mount
Alumnae want to know that the value of their degree is greater today than the day they graduated, and they want to understand what MSMU is doing to increase that value.

The diverse population at the Mount and the accomplishments of its students help define how the value of their degree is measured. Scholarship opportunities are also of high importance to alumnae, especially first-generation college graduates.

A graduate from 1954 wrote that the survey made her “remember the excellent education I received as well as the generosity of four years of scholarships. I am proud of the Mount’s diversity and quality of education.”

The current student experience matters to alumnae
Alumnae know that the value of their degree is in large part based on the current student experience. When asked what matters most to them about that experience, they said: quality of academic classes, skills training for career, and internships. Alumnae want to know if these important parts of the student experience are better today than they were when they were students.

The short answer is that they are and are continually improving.

Vernice Grajeda ’11, president of the Alumnae Association, views that response as reflective of the Mount’s culture of care where every single student matters. “The stories from current students and alumnae time and time again echoes the theme of individual care and attention.”

“We don’t see students as just being with us for four years — it’s for a lifetime,” says Rosalyn Kempf, EdD, assistant vice president of student affairs. “And they see it that way, too. It’s why so many alums return to campus, how many reach out and the love they show for our institution.”

Areas of highest interest in the current alumnae experience

- QUALITY of academics and classes
- SKILLS training for career
- INTERNSHIPS and practical experience

What MSMU alumnae think about themselves
HARDWORKING
RESILIENT
SELF-MOTIVATED
UNSTOPPABLE
OPEN-MINDED
Alumnae feel good about the way MSMU prepared them for life after graduation

Alumnae credit a lot of their success in life to the time they spent at the Mount. More than 80% of the alumnae feel the Mount prepared them well in areas ranging from learning to believe in themselves to being a leader.

Alumnae want to stay connected through communications

Alumnae care about what is happening on campus and believe we do a good job keeping them informed. Regular emails, invitations to University and alumnae activities, and communications about the benefits of being an alumnae rank highest in the survey. Our website and social media help alumnae stay informed about academics and student life.

“I enjoy reading about the new programs and opportunities the Mount is offering current and future students,” says a 2002 alumna. “It is important to know that the Mount is keeping up to date with the times.”

Alumnae, especially those who graduated prior to 2000, read our magazine and emails more than other forms of communication. While our post-2000 graduates also read the magazines and emails, they enjoy staying up to date through our social media platforms.

Our more recent graduates told us that they want more information about alumnae benefits, as well as events and current programs for students.

How alumnae prefer to access information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Access Method</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email from the Mount</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invitations to MSMU activities</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication regarding services and benefits</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSMU website (msmu.edu)</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invitations to alumnae activities</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>59%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Alumnae remember their student experience fondly

Alumnae most remember participating in their student clubs, on campus work-study employment, community service, honor society, their major or academic-related student clubs or organizations, and professional or career-related organizations.

“I was given the education and resources to grow,” says a 2020 alumna. “I found my voice as well as my passions in life, and I became a stronger leader because of everything I learned and everything I experienced during my time at the Mount.”

We also know that if current students see an engaged alumna on campus enhancing the student experience, they have a greater chance of wanting to emulate that alumna’s behavior and return after graduation to help students get the most out of their time at the Mount.

“One thing that’s important is knowing what the University has been doing regarding new programs, clubs and organizations, and buildings. A second important factor is frequent alumnae outreach. I like to know that the University never forgets about its alumnae and does its best to keep them engaged after they leave the Mount.”

– A 2014 ALUMNA
“Mount Saint Mary’s College — now University — is a classic liberal arts institution. The value of such an education cannot be overestimated. Influencing traditional students at a crucial, formative time in their lives, and expanding their worldview through travel, literature, politics, philosophy, etc., shapes people who make positive contributions to our shared world. I was lucky enough to have received such an education.”

– A 1989 ALUMNA
What inspires alumnae to support the Mount financially
We are continually humbled and appreciative of the generosity our alumnae and friends show in the many ways they support and promote the Mount. As part of this survey, we wanted to know what most inspires our alumnae to give to the Mount. We were told that the top five reasons for giving are providing financial support to students, increasing the quality of academics, lowering the tuition for our current students, attracting high-quality faculty and knowing how the gifts are used.

The first four reasons alumnae give correlate directly to our top funding priorities. We are committed to making sure that our graduates know how their gifts are used to further these and other priorities that are important to them. Every gift we receive is critical to our ability to further the vision and mission of the Mount, and we are grateful to all our alumnae for their support.

1. Providing financial support to MSMU students
2. Increasing the quality of the academics
3. Lowering tuition
4. Attracting high-quality faculty
5. Knowing how gifts are used

Alumnae engage and like to see other alumnae engage with the Mount
Through the years we have offered many programs and opportunities for our alumnae to connect with each other and the Mount. In this survey, we wanted to hear about which programs resonate most with our alumnae so we can meet their needs. Their responses told us two things. First, our alumnae care deeply about having us provide opportunities for them to learn and to support graduates and each other. Second, even if alumnae are unable to come to our events, they want to know what is being offered and that other alumnae and current students are benefiting from them.

“I really enjoy the fact that MSMU offers alumnae the opportunity to audit classes and participate without paying the whole class fee,” says a 2019 alumna. “For my career in the entertainment business, my skill sets always need sharpening, so to have access to these classes after graduation is invaluable.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifying job opportunities for graduates</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring students</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career development resources for alumnae</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving as ambassadors promoting MSMU</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing financial support for MSMU</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruiting students</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A message from Tom Arteaga, director of Alumnae Relations
First, thank you for all that you do to help make MSMU even better, and thank you for taking the time to give us this wonderful feedback. We are listening. In response to what we heard, we are implementing the most effective technologies and practices to keep our alumnae connected and engaged.

We will continue to grow our career services department to provide robust offerings for career development at all stages of the student and alumnae experience. This year, we will offer three to four webinars each month focused on professional development, and our alumnae have access to a career resources library with articles, books, podcasts and videos focused on career advancement, professional development, and health and wellness.

In addition, we are committed to building a network of alumnae, students, community members and corporate partners. Two ways in which we are doing this are Mount Connect and Handshake, which we have discussed in previous magazines and alumnae newsletters. We will host more events this year to help alumnae and students build their Mount networks. You may learn more about these platforms and upcoming events at alums.msmu.edu.

We continue to look for ways to better serve our alumnae. I will keep you posted as we design and implement new ways to stay engaged.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
When seeking to compile a history of the first 100 years of Mount Saint Mary's University, who better to call on than the Mount's provost and vice president for academic affairs, who is also a historian? Robert Perrins, PhD, or Bob as everyone on campus calls him, is an expert in the histories of modern East Asia, as well as the history of medicine and disease. In April of this year, he kept an audience of more than 300 people captivated during his hour-long virtual illustrated presentation for the University’s Lifelong Virtual Events Series, titled, “Reflecting on a Past Pandemic: The Bubonic Plague in California, 1900-1904.”

One of the audience members at Perrins’ talk was James Chan, a San Francisco-based filmmaker who is currently producing a two-hour documentary on the history of bubonic plague outbreaks in California for the American Experience series on PBS television. Chan contacted Perrins immediately following the presentation and the two compared research notes. With archives and libraries nationwide closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Chan’s documentary team had been unable to access many of the materials that Perrins had used in his talk — materials that he had digitized more than a decade ago during a research trip to the National Archives in Washington, DC.

Perrins has frequently used these materials in his classes on the history of medicine, both those he had previously taught at Acadia University in Canada and, since 2016, here at the Mount. In fact, for the past two years, Bob had assigned these digitized documents and a related book on the topic as the basis for the major course research project in his medical history classes. Perrins happily sent a USB drive to Chan with copies of more than 3,000 digitized telegrams, photographs, maps, handwritten notes, U.S. public health reports and assorted correspondence. Many of these images will now be appearing in the upcoming documentary that will be broadcast on PBS in May 2022.

Since giving his Lifelong Learning series talk on the San Francisco plague, Perrins was notified that his article, “Giving Clio a Helping Hand: Researching the Bubonic Plague Outbreak in San Francisco During the COVID-19 Pandemic,” had been accepted by the
peer-reviewed Journal for the Social History of Medicine and Health (Chinese Social Sciences Press). He has also been awarded a visiting research professorship for the 2021-2022 academic year at Shanghai University. Perrins will present a series of virtual workshops for Shanghai University this fall on the history of plague and other pandemics, historical epidemiology and the global impacts of modern disease outbreaks.

This past May, Perrins wove a historical narrative into his Commencement address. While drafting his speech for this year’s ceremonies, Perrins wondered what had been said to assemblies of graduating students and their families in the spring of 1919 during the last great global pandemic — the misnamed “Spanish flu” that killed approximately 675,000 people in this country and between 50 and 100 million people worldwide. In the course of his research, Perrins read more than 20 graduation addresses that had been delivered at U.S. colleges and universities in May 1919 and was amazed to find that none of them even mentioned the pandemic. Not one, despite the tremendous social, economic and psychological impacts that the influenza pandemic had had on communities and individuals around the world.

Given his penchant for searching for elusive information and tying it together into a story, it makes perfect sense that Perrins is helping to put together a book to chronicle the first 100 years of Mount Saint Mary’s as part of the University’s upcoming Centennial celebration. In 1975, Sister Germaine, who taught Latin for 30 years and was the first dean of the graduate program, had undertaken a similar project for the school’s first 50 years, and a decade later produced a tome that would rival the New York City phone book. Vicky McCargar, the Mount’s archivist, who will be collaborating with Perrins, says that the published 50-year history of the Mount is an excellent reference for everything that happened at the Mount, down to minutes from board meetings, but isn’t presented as a story, which is more of what this version will be looking to do.

“We have a rich history at the Mount that needs to be documented and celebrated,” says Perrins. “While there are many common threads linking the generations of students who have come to our campuses, we are evolving with the times and should record the forces and events that spur change and how we’ve reacted as an institution and community.”

“A cinematic view of the Centennial

A film celebrating Mount Saint Mary’s Centennial will bring our history to life. Mary Trunk, a faculty member from the film department, is at the helm of this project.

“It’s important that we show not just that women are unstoppable but why they are unstoppable,” says Trunk. “What was trying to stop them? You’re not unstoppable unless you’re pushing up against something.”

The film will examine women’s role in society and how the Mount, as the only women’s university in Los Angeles, helped generations of women find their voice and develop the confidence to be leaders in pursuit of their dreams.

“This film is definitely going to show the history of the school,” says Trunk, “but within that history I’m going to showcase very specific personal stories that highlight some of the accomplishments and some of the challenges that women have faced.”

“We have a rich history at the Mount that needs to be documented and celebrated.”

– Robert Perrins, PhD
PROVOST AND VICE PRESIDENT
FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS


**FACULTY**

"Light Through a Pane of Glass" is a collection of poems by Thomas Cook, PhD, which was published by Big Table Publishing. Cook teaches creative writing. A review by fellow writer and faculty member Marcos McPeak-Villatoro, MFA, says, in part: “Thomas Cook’s poetry yearns for hope and reconciliation, with a voice that both surprises and delights.”

Juana Moriel-Payne, PhD, has three Spanish-language poems in an edited volume published this fall by Brill/Sense. The poems — “Expresión,” “Encargos,” and “Anotaciones domésticas” ("Expression," "Pregnancies," and "Domestic Annotations," respectively) — are reflections from her life living on the border of Mexico and the US. Her book, “Drama Under the Skin: Fiestas, Cofradías, and Capellanías in San Joseph del Parral, Chihuahua, 17th-18th Centuries,” is due to be published by the end of the year by University of Arizona Press.

The book “Practicing Yoga as Resistance: Voice of Color in Search of Freedom” will include a chapter by Kimberly Nao, PhD, director of induction and instructional leadership and a Fritz Burns endowed chair. The chapter is “Yoga, engaged pedagogy, and the process of becoming: Explorations of a socially just yoga intervention.”

Michelle Samuel, assistant professor and traditional undergraduate psychology program director, received her PhD in higher education administration from Liberty University in the summer of 2021. Her dissertation was on the glass cliff phenomenon in higher education presidencies.

Marie Seitz ’98 received her DNP from the University of Utah College of Nursing; her practice project was “The Identification and Management of Suicidal Ideation in the Emergency Department.” She will be presenting at the upcoming DNV Healthcare Symposia and participating in the American Association of Colleges of Nursing’s Elevating Leaders in Academic Nursing program.

**STUDENTS**

Deniz Cizmeciyan, PhD, professor of chemistry and chair of the mathematics department, had two undergraduate research students participate in the Samueli engineering summer undergraduate research program (SURP) over the summer. Waree Protprommart ’23 (top), a biology major, and Kim Kha ’22 (bottom), a mathematics major, participated in the Stauffer Summer Research Program (SSRP-MSMU) at the Mount doing research in Cizmeciyan’s computational chemistry research group until mid-June. After completing their summer research experience at the Mount, they joined UCLA’s summer research program for two months.

Maxine Reynoso ’22, who is pursuing a teaching credential, was one of four winners of a Jack C. Mathews Scholarship from the Los Angeles Federal Credit Union. Applicants were judged on their academic achievements, letters of recommendation, extracurricular activities, community service and essays.

Stephanie Aguilar ‘20 just completed her MS in geographic information systems from California State University, Long Beach, and she’s currently interviewing for job positions.

Another Athenian, Monica Alamo ’21, will follow Aguilar’s footsteps in CSU Long Beach’s master’s in geographic information systems program this fall.

Tiana Merk ‘21 received a Daisy Award, which is given “to recognize and celebrate nursing students who demonstrate commitment to care and compassion and make the nurse-patient connection that makes such a difference in the healthcare experience.” The Daisy Foundation partners with schools of nursing to run this national recognition program.

Claudia Vanessa Reyes ’19 completed her MA in community-engaged education and social change from the Claremont Graduate University in May and will complete her MS in information systems and technology with an emphasis on geographic information systems this December. In addition to working on two master’s degrees, she started work as a GIS technician for the San Bernardino County Fire Department in April.

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Your individual retirement account (IRA) is an extremely easy way to support education opportunities at Mount Saint Mary’s University.

If you are 70½ or older, you can use the IRA charitable rollover (sometimes referred to as a qualified charitable distribution) to make a tax-free gift to MSMU.

You can transfer any amount up to $100,000 per year. Along with the immediate difference you will make at the Mount, your gift benefits you as well:

- You will not pay income taxes on the gift.
- Your gift will be put to use today, allowing you to see the difference you are making.
- Beginning in the year you turn 72, you can use this transfer to satisfy all or part of your required minimum distribution.

Another Way to Give

If you are not 70½, or you simply want to preserve your retirement funds for now, you can still make a difference by designating MSMU as beneficiary of a percentage of these assets. As little as 1% is all it takes to have a meaningful impact on our students.

Contact Maria Solano, CSPG, Gift Planning Officer, at 213.477.2536 or msolano@msmu.edu to learn more, or visit msmu.edu/plannedgiving today.

“I am so appreciative of your scholarship support, as it has given me the courage to pursue my career as a musician. It allows me to focus on studying, collaboration, and growing professionally, and I will make the most of it through the rest of my education.”

— Emily Webster-Zuber ’23
Creating a more inclusive donor community

With the successful Unstoppable Campaign and the Mount’s Centennial in 2025, we have been considering new ways to recognize individual donors. Renewing our giving societies is an opportunity to be more inclusive of all who give, no matter how, how much or how frequently. New visual identities for each group inspire a sense of community and engage with the Mount’s history and spirit. We also developed new, more accessible ways for younger donors to join the annual leadership giving society, and we reenvisioned The Mount Fund as the primary destination for unrestricted gifts.

We are excited to share the changes, which we hope will celebrate you — and what you make possible — in ways that are meaningful and engaging to you.
New and renewed giving societies

ATHENIAN CIRCLE
FOR DONORS WHO GIVE CONSISTENTLY FOR 3+ YEARS IN ANY AMOUNT
The Athenian Circle recognizes loyal donors who have given in any amount, for any purpose, for at least three consecutive years. Our very youngest alumnae who have given every year since graduation are also gratefully included. We will have special recognition opportunities for those reaching milestone giving anniversaries every five years.

BRADY LEADERSHIP SOCIETY
FOR ANNUAL LEADERSHIP DONORS TO THE MOUNT FUND
Scaling mountains requires teamwork, collaboration and a shared vision. Like Mother Margaret Mary Brady, the University’s first president, leadership donors pave the way for unstoppable women. Formerly known as the Mount Associates, members of the Brady Leadership Society are some of our most engaged supporters each year. Going forward, gifts to the Fund will be unrestricted. All gifts are unrestricted, allowing the University to direct support where it is needed most throughout the year. Membership begins at $100/month or $1,200 annually, and young alumnae are invited to join at lower levels.

LE PUY SOCIETY
FOR DONORS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED $100,000 OR MORE OVER THEIR LIFETIMES
Whether your giving has reached a significant milestone through one or two gifts or through smaller gifts over many years, we recognize the impact your support has had on the Mount. Like the original CSJs who supported their work by weaving beautiful lace that could become a treasured heirloom, Le Puy Society members create a magnificent framework to educate and empower unstoppable women who will build a brighter future for all.

HERITAGE SOCIETY
FOR DONORS WHO HAVE INCLUDED THE MOUNT IN THEIR WILLS AND/OR LEGACY PLANS
The Heritage Society recognizes and honors alumnae, friends, faculty and staff who build on the legacy of support that is the foundation of Mount Saint Mary’s University. These donors have named the Mount as the beneficiary of a planned gift in their will, charitable trust and/or beneficiary designation. In doing so, they have created a lasting legacy for themselves and for the University.

Thank you for all you do for the Mount and for what you make possible for our current and future students.
Mount professor and donor supports students’ leadership and career goals.

Vernice Grajeda’s education has come full circle. She graduated from Mount Saint Mary’s in 2011 with bachelor’s degrees in political science and Spanish studies. Two years later, a former professor invited her to teach a summer class at the Mount, where she has been teaching Spanish and Latin American studies ever since. In addition to teaching, Grajeda is president of the Alumnae Association and a six-year consecutive donor. She is actively involved in fundraising events and social media campaigns to garner support for the University.

“I started donating to the Mount early on because I want to help other young women have the opportunity to attend an institution that offered me so many opportunities and helped shape the woman I am today,” says Grajeda. “I also made sure to participate in different events and programs because those volunteer opportunities make a big impact.”

After graduating from high school, Grajeda had her heart set on being a doctor, but two years into her premed courses at the Mount she began to question her decision. “Although I was unhappy and stressed out, I had a hard time changing my major because I had wanted to be a doctor since I was five,” she recalls. “But everyone was very supportive of me changing my major. My second interest was political science, and talking to the department chair and teachers gave me the push I needed to make the change.”

“I encourage all alums — whether they are one year out or 20 — to give what they can,” she says. “A little goes a long way when everyone participates.”

Grajeda loved her political science classes and ended up adding a minor in international studies. After completing her degree in political science, she added a major in Spanish and stayed on at the Mount for another year.

After graduation, Grajeda pursued a master’s degree in Spanish studies from the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. In 2013, she returned to the Mount to teach and started donating soon thereafter.

“Upon graduation, I wasn’t at a place where I could give very much financially, but I gave what I could because I know every dollar counts,” she says.

In addition to teaching at the Mount, Grajeda is an elementary school principal for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and is pursuing her PhD in Hispanic studies from the University of Birmingham. She remains active in the Mount community, offering her time and financial support to the school that helped her define her career path.
Support
THE MOUNT

The Mount Fund and Brady Leadership Society
Contributions to the Mount Fund, the unrestricted fund at Mount Saint Mary’s, support key priorities like financial aid and faculty initiatives. Those who make unrestricted contributions to the Mount Fund of at least $100/month ($1,200 annually) are recognized as Brady Leadership Society members and receive invitations to an annual event hosted by the president.

To join the Brady Leadership Society, please contact Carly Bidner, director of development, individual giving, at cbidner@msmu.edu.

Qualified Charitable Distribution
As you plan your charitable gifts this year, you may want to pay special attention to how you give. If you are 70½ years old or older, you can take advantage of a simple way to benefit Mount Saint Mary’s and receive tax benefits in return. You can give any amount up to $100,000 per year from your IRA directly to a qualified charity such as ours without having to pay income taxes on the money. This popular gift option is commonly called the IRA charitable rollover, but you may also see it referred to as a qualified charitable distribution, or QCD for short. These gifts count toward your required minimum distribution, and there is a quick and easy way to make this donation from the MSMU website. (We encourage you to speak to your financial advisor to see if a QCD is right for your specific situation.)

Find more information at freewill.com/QCD/msmu.
For any questions, contact Maria Solano, gift planning officer, at msolano@msmu.edu.

Reunion Giving
Reunion is less than a month away! Don’t forget to give to your Class Gift. Reunion cycles begin and end with Alumnae Weekend. If your class year ends with a 1 or a 6, please consider a gift before October 16 in honor of your reunion. If your class year ends with a 2 or a 7, please consider signing up to be Class Ambassador to help engage your classmates and keep them connected with the University as your reunion cycle begins on October 17. We would love to get your class involved!

For more information, contact Tom Arteaga, director of alumnae relations, at tarteaga@msmu.edu.

#GivingTuesday
Save the Date — Nov. 30, 2021
#Giving Tuesday, a national day of giving, kicks off the holiday season by celebrating the spirit of generosity. More information will be available soon.

Need a will but haven’t gotten around to creating one yet? Good news! Mount Saint Mary’s has partnered with FreeWill to provide an online tool that allows you to write your legal will or living trust at no personal cost. Just as you have supported the future of Mount Saint Mary’s University, now you can dictate the terms of your finances — for free! Take 20 minutes today to complete this important task and protect the people and causes you care about.

Go to freewill.com/msmu to complete the process.

Fall 2021 Mount Magazine 23
Alumnae Weekend 2021

On Oct. 14-17, alumnae will celebrate Alumnae Weekend 2021. Last year’s virtual celebration was very successful in large part because of the volunteers who helped promote the reunion to their classmates. Thank you to this year’s Class Ambassadors for continuing to get the word out and creating FOMO [fear of missing out] around this year’s reunion.

On Saturday, the Class of 1971 will officially join the Golden Graduates Society. That evening, President Ann McElaney-Johnson will toast the class reunion years ending in 1 and 6 as well as the Class of 2021.

Register online, make your class reunion gift and view the full Weekend schedule at alums.msmu.edu/alumnaeweekend.

Although plans were being made to host events in person, the rise in COVID cases throughout Los Angeles County led to the decision to conduct all large-scale events virtually this fall to protect the health of our entire Mount community, even if the county health guidelines are less restrictive at any given time. Please plan to join us virtually from the comfort of your home. We look forward to catching up with you!

Alumnae stories capture Mount history

Since May, more than 1,200 alumnae stories have been captured through our Oral History Project. The MSMU Alumnae Association partnered with Publishing Concepts, Inc. (PCI) to preserve alumnae stories about the inspiring professors, sisters and friendships that made the Mount experience truly transformational. PCI’s staff is conducting all of the phone interviews and will be publishing the MSMU Oral History Project book. PCI staff will verify alumnae contact information to help keep our databases current so that we can stay in touch with you.

No purchase is necessary to participate in this project. This project is being done at no cost to Mount Saint Mary’s and is completely funded by the alumnae who choose to purchase the book. Several book packages will be offered, including an option to purchase other Mount Saint Mary’s merchandise.

Alumnae still have a short time left to share their stories or purchase a copy of the Oral History Project book. PCI will continue to call alumnae to record stories for the book until October 29. After that, they will enter a post-production phase, editing all of the stories and photos. The books are scheduled to be shipped in May 2022. Also, selected alumnae stories will be used for a Mount Saint Mary’s University Centennial history book and film project to celebrate our first 100 years in 2025.

Call PCI’s dedicated Mount Saint Mary’s phone line at 1.877.582.3192 before Oct. 29, 2021, to participate in this program.

Share Your Stories
Remembrances

Vincentia Ginevra Lesko ’45, 1923–2021
Vincentia “Vincie” Ginevra Lesko ’45 passed away January 21, 2021, at the age of 97. She is shown (below, bottom row, second from left) in 1945 with a few of her Mount friends in an amusement park “jail” in Santa Monica. Vincie served as student body president of the Mount during her senior year and was an active member of the Phi Kappa Gamma sorority. A history major, she taught for 26 years in the West Covina school district. She and her older sister, Beatrice Ginevra Langston ’41, were both longtime donors to MSMU.

(Char photo donated to MSMU Archives by Vincie Ginevra.)

Charlene A. Setlow, 1944–2021
Charlene Setlow was an ardent supporter of women in STEM. Following high school, she worked as a software consultant while pursuing her bachelor’s degree from San Jose State University. For the next 30 years, she worked as an IT specialist and software engineer until she underwent a heart transplant, at which time she turned to philanthropy, establishing and supporting numerous STEM-related scholarships and grants. Setlow wanted to endow a scholarship that could be guaranteed to be awarded to a female undergraduate in STEM, and in 2017, she approached Mount Saint Mary’s based on a friend’s recommendation. Setlow was so impressed by the scholarship reports that she received from the Mount that she not only renewed the Charlene Anne Setlow STEM Scholarship for Women every year, but she decided to leave part of her estate to the University and designated a set sum with that intent. In January 2021, she spoke with her Mount scholarship recipient and was again so impressed that she made the Mount a beneficiary to her estate, thereby increasing her total contribution by more than 2.5 times the original amount. Despite knowing she would eventually need a second heart transplant, Setlow was doing well physically and planning a trip when she unexpectedly passed away following a heart attack on Valentine’s Day.

(Photos courtesy of Setlow family.)

IN MEMORIAM
Charlotte Meyer ’42
Vincentia Ginevra Lesko ’45
Angela McDonald Kay ’51
Rita Ries Veatch ’51
(Mother of John Veatch ’92 and Adrianna Veatch Caseril ’13)
Sister Barbara Mary Sanborn, CSJ, ’52
Camille Lutfy Donaldson ’53
Margaret McInnis Verge ’53
Patricia Yeager Schaub ’58
Ann Howsley Steindberger ’58
Geraldine Haven Rios ’59
Husband of Kathleen McGowan Harriff ’60
Sister of Marguerite Roth ’60
Husband of Madeline Drnek Hamilton ’64
Mary Alice Alston Stevenson ’64
Husband of Betsy Dickerson Azariah ’66
Melinda Tighe Cotter ’66
Mary Feary Peaper ’66
Katherine Crowley Hagemann ’69
Husband of Kristine Kosak ’64
Mother of Mary Durando ’72 and Susan Durando Bravo ’75
Bernadette Gonzaque Robert ’77
Husband of Jill Pizzuti Crevier ’91
Husband of Rosa Sanchez White ’91
Leslie Parrilla ’96
Mother and sister of Irene Benavidez ’00
Father of Elsa Pazmino-Hunt ’03
Wendi Nelson ’09
1956
Pamela Brink RN, PhD, FAAN, has two new books being published this fall, “Tales of an Academic Nurse” and “My Love Affair With German Shepherd Dogs.” Brinks has written or co-authored five other books (pamelabrink.com).

1983

1988
“She Writes for Him: Stories of Living Hope,” by Redemption Press, includes work by Denise Goosby (denisegeoisby.com). “This second compilation of ‘She Writes for Him’ features brave stories of thirty women who have emerged from dark places, whole and full of life, speaking the truth on topics such as suffering, cancer, mental health, addictions, and abuse so others can find healing and living hope.” Goosby has two other books slated for release in 2021: “Thank You Daddy!” and “Scarred Like Him: Seeing the Beauty in the Life You Live.”

1990

1996
Petra (Acosta) Bantum was named finance director for the Kern County Housing Authority as well as the CFO for the Housing and Opportunity Foundation of Kern. It has been 25 years since Regina Perez started in Kaiser Permanente’s West Los Angeles new grad program a week after graduating from the Mount. In addition to being a preceptor, a charge nurse, a nursing union officer and obtaining her national certificate in OB nursing, Perez was part of a national commercial for the organization.

1998
Veraunice Rios-Sandoval has published a poem on poetry.com and has been working steadily in education for the past four years. Happily married since 2018, she is a born-again Christian, a child of God and follower of Jesus.

2003
A mom of two sons, Geovanna (Henao) Waters and her husband welcomed Grayson Daniel Waters in 2020. She also started law school this year.

2006
Marisa Smith has been accepted to the Open University Law School in London and is hoping to specialize in entertainment law. She works in the British film industry, enjoys writing workshops and lives in London with her husband, Trevor.

2009
After living in Salem, Massachusetts for the past 10 years, Erik Bauer and his family decided to move to Washington state in October 2020. They made the move because they love the area and have been wanting to move there for some time. It has been a transition, but they are settling in well so far. In May 2021, he graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee’s School of Information Studies with a master’s in library and information science and a concentration in archives and records management.
Alexis Goudeau Philius, RN, noticed homeless people on Los Angeles streets on her commute and was inspired to make a difference. She founded Highly Favored: A Blessing to Others (ablessingtoothers.org), a nonprofit organization that distributes food, toiletries, supplies and warm clothing to homeless people in Los Angeles County. Through United Nurses Associations of California and the Union of Healthcare Professionals, Philius has also established the Alexis G. Philius Scholarship in a new UNAC/UHCP program designed to provide resources and support to students of Black/African descent who are pursuing a career in health care. The lack of diversity has significant consequences on health outcomes, health equity for patients and communities of color, and UNAC/UHCP aims to help address the underrepresentation of Blacks/Africans in health professions with this new scholarship.

2014

This year, Cynthia Lua passed the Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist written clinical examination. She also completed the certificate program in expressive arts therapy in June.

2015

Yoana (Guerra-Cuevas) Kennedy married John Kennedy at St. Raphael’s Catholic Church in Goleta, California, on June 19, 2020.

A graduate of, and now a faculty member in, the Mount’s MBA program, Lequina Myles has earned her doctorate in regulatory and quality sciences.

2016

Mary Grace Meneses finished her master’s in education technology during the pandemic, participating in her program through Concordia University Irvine.

2018

Since graduating from the MSMU graduate psychology department, Dawn Jackson has worked as a clinical case manager at a permanent supportive housing site near Skid Row with The People Concern. She is also now a consultant group therapist for College Hospital’s partial hospitalization program/intensive outpatient program along with representing Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health as an African American Mental Health Promoter in Service Area 4. “I’m very excited for the initiatives DMH is supporting for mental health education, support and treatment in LA and invite you to connect with me at DJackson@dmh.lacounty.gov or on Instagram @LACDMH.Black.”

Starting a nursing career at the very beginning of this pandemic was certainly not the career start that Chris Gabriel Lorenzo had come to expect. Nonetheless, he is thankful for the education he received from the Mount. “I have been shaped to be resilient, courageous and self-assured in the face of a great many unknowns and sometimes scary horizons. My faith and values instilled in me by parents and strengthened during my time at the Mount gave me what I needed to weather any situation with resolve and to always seek out what more can be done for the dear neighbor. I’m excited to be coming back again to the Mount as an adjunct faculty member with the ABSN program this fall. In this capacity, I hope to pay it forward by passing on the good that has been passed to me.”

TO SUBMIT ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION FOR FUTURE CLASS NOTES, PLEASE GO TO ALUMS.MSMU.EDU/CLASSNOTES OR EMAIL ALUMS@MSMU.EDU.
As the centenary of Mount Saint Mary’s University draws near, the crucial role of its archives, located at the Chalon Campus, becomes clear.

Archives is about collecting evidence against an unpredictable need for validation in the future. This evidence says that we are what we say we are, for example, that the first words of the Mount’s mission statement (“Mount Saint Mary’s University offers a dynamic learning experience in the liberal arts and sciences to a diverse student body...”) are true.

The oldest of the archives reside in huge leather-bound scrapbooks maintained by Sister Agnes Bernard Cavanaugh, CSJ, PhD, professor of history and political science. In them, she pasted pictures, newspaper clippings, booklets, embossed napkins and programs, the occasional telegram from the CSJ Motherhouse in St. Louis and other souvenirs. Among them a marvelous treasure remains — the 1931 hand-painted Mount Seal from Baker Heraldic of London, and one can see from early news coverage that the Mount’s founding was a very big deal for Los Angeles.

In the early 1970s, Sister Margaret Lynch, CSJ, a retired Latin teacher, was tasked with formally organizing the MSMU archives. She received some professional training and then tackled the masses of archival materials stored all over the Chalon Campus. The detailed inventories she created make it possible to find thousands of documents today.

There are carefully preserved yearbooks (1947-2019), catalogs (1929-2020), newspapers (1945-2021), journals (1932-2019), magazines (1982-2021) and other publications and thousands of pictures (1925-2021)
that tell the Mount story. Through a generous donation by Sheila Thornton ’57, a professional librarian, the Mount’s publications were fully digitized in 2011. To start searching, go to stmary2.sdlhost.com. No login is required.

There are also decades of physical documents from student organizations, academic departments, on- and off-campus events and even people. One gem is a badly faded telegram from CSJ Superior Mother Agnes Rossiter, giving permission for Mother Margaret Mary Brady to start college.

The next Mount century

We are, of course, not done writing our history. But today’s Mount Archives confronts a very 21st-century problem. The student-run newspaper, Athenian Print, exists as a blog. The Mount’s websites from 5 or 10 years ago are no longer accessible.

Perhaps most alarming is the end of the print yearbook, which ceased publication in 2019. It provided a wide window into almost 75 years of student life, but today that history is being written almost entirely in social media. The technology interferes with permanent preservation; we must rely on the platforms — Facebook, Instagram, Twitter — to keep our content. What survives from today’s tech is anyone’s guess.

The digital archives are open to all. The physical archives are available to the Mount community and to those outside the University engaging in academic research. Appointments and a trip to Chalon are required; contact the Archives at 310.954.4377 or vmccargar@msmu.edu for more information and assistance with both digital and paper formats.

— Victoria McCargar, University archivist
Join us for this year's virtual event. See page 24 for more information.