“I’m a proud supporter of the Mount and the direction that Dr. Ann McElaney-Johnson has taken as president. I donate to the President’s Strategic Initiatives Fund because it helps students from all walks of life develop into the unstoppable leaders that Los Angeles needs, and I know that they will go on to shape the future of business, health care and education in our city.”

- JOAN PAYDEN, CFA, PRESIDENT AND CEO, PAYDEN & RYGEL
It all began as a vision to fund the transformational educational experience that would launch Mount Saint Mary’s into the next century. A dream to cultivate a new generation of leaders. A hope to raise $100 million. An Unstoppable Campaign to serve as a reflection of an unstoppable community. President Ann McElaney-Johnson, the Board of Trustees and the Campaign Cabinet dared to relentlessly pursue this unprecedented milestone. The University has consistently propelled students to achieve more than they ever thought possible. It was time for the Campaign to do the same. The goal was far surpassed — by 32%, for a grand total of $132 million. Dreams do come true. And this community is truly unstoppable.
Educational Excellence
While many factors comprise a college experience — student clubs, campus traditions and the like — academic excellence is the foundation from which everything else emanates. Whether discussing Shakespeare’s use of iambic pentameter or conducting an experiment for the 20th time hoping for the consistent findings necessary for submission to an academic journal, the students at Mount Saint Mary’s are eager, curious, dedicated and resilient — as are the faculty who guide and encourage them. We create new programs to respond to the ever-changing needs of a global and diverse society and the industries in which our students work and serve. Our small class sizes and individualized attention ensure that students grow into focused, confident leaders. Our Centers, featured on the next two pages, focus on specialized areas of interest that are driving the agenda of our strategic plan and are representative of our ambitious vision.
Thanks to the generous contributions of corporations including GEARYS Beverly Hills, Guggenheim Partners, Locke Lorde, City National Bank, Southern California Edison and Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, alumnae like Ceci Stratford ’64 and Dolores Schiffert ’60, as well as the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, The Report on the Status of Women and Girls in California™ celebrated its 10th anniversary this year. The Center for the Advancement of Women, launched in 2017, is the nexus for gender equity research, advocacy and leadership development. Faculty and students assist with research and contribute to the Report, policy briefs and white papers, as well as Collectif, a collection of essays with an in-depth examination of some of the Report’s findings. The Center’s research has resulted in real change via legislation. The annual Report, an authoritative compilation of research focusing on topics that most affect the state’s 20 million women and girls, reaches 50,000 readers. The Center also produces the annual Women’s Leadership Conference and Legislator in Residence speaker series. Julia Vanella ’18 decided to pursue a master’s degree in public policy after meeting Los Angeles County Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell, our Legislator in Residence.

The CSJ Institute, launched five years ago, is dedicated to preserving the legacy of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and continuing their research and pursuit of social justice. Supported by donors Mary Caratan Sloper ’62, Mary C. Breden ’73, PhD, Thomas J. Blumenthal, chair of the Board of Trustees, and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, the Institute collaborates with ministries regionally and nationwide to continue to uphold the mission and vision of the CSJs and to respond to the needs of the time in their communities. In May 2016, the Mount embarked on an oral history project of CSJs in the Los Angeles province for archival, research and educational purposes. To date, 50 sisters, most of whom are alumnae or have worked at the University, have been interviewed to document their lives as well as their important roles in promoting women’s education and social justice initiatives. The University purchased the birthplace of Mother St. John Fontbonne in Bas-en-Basset, France, in 2018. Fontbonne was sentenced to be executed during the French Revolution for refusing to renounce her faith. She was saved by the fall of Robespierre and later reestablished the Sisters of St. Joseph. The Fontbonne family home will serve as an international hub for our students, faculty and CSJ-sponsored institutions.

We have helped nearly 60 students participate in global research and study abroad experiences during the course of the Campaign. I’ve met some of those students and they say their lives were transformed from these experiences, which is exactly the outcome I had hoped for.

— STEPHEN F. PAGE, JD
FORMER MOUNT TRUSTEE,
JUDY KELLY PAGE GLOBAL FUND
The Center for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion upholds the CSJ commitment to social justice, equity and the empowerment of diverse communities by fighting discrimination and honoring the dignity of all people. The Center has hosted more than 135 events since its inception in 2016, including timely lectures, national speakers, educational film screenings and trainings, as well as support spaces for students, faculty and staff. Mirroring the recent national focus, racial issues in particular have been at the forefront this past year. Expect work in this area to increase in pace and frequency. Ensuring that Mount Saint Mary’s is a diverse and anti-racist community is a priority for both the Center and the University. President Ann McElaney-Johnson says, “Our founders call us to be an inclusive and just community where all feel welcome. They also call us to speak up against injustice in all its forms. Our Center will be the heart of this work as we seek to live out the mission of the CSJs.”

With the goal of developing cultural fluency among Mount students and making them true ambassadors of the world, the Center for Global Initiatives provides a range of experiences spanning from traditional study abroad and exchange student opportunities to faculty-led research trips through the Global Women in STEM and Policy Undergraduate Research Training Honors Program, which has graduated 57 students since the program launched in 2016. Samantha (Sam) Vasquez ’21 traveled to India in May 2019 and examined how environmental science, medicine and political science intersect through immersion into the local population. “We learned so much about the people’s needs, wishes and desires for their community,” says Vasquez. Back home, Vasquez worked with Mount faculty and her peers to research how environmental changes could affect subsistence communities like the one in India. The research won an award at the Southern California Conference for Undergraduate Research. “I cannot stress enough how this experience was extremely valuable in preparing me to conduct research and for a future in higher education,” Vasquez says.

The Center for Academic Innovation and Creativity keeps our faculty and students on the cutting edge of educational and learning practices. This work was never more valuable than during the pandemic, when CAIC worked with the instructional design team to develop strategies to ensure that virtual learning was a success. CAIC also leads interdisciplinary initiatives like the University’s Honors Program, the Keck Undergraduate Research Program, in which students work with a small group of faculty mentors for 10 weeks during the summer, and the annual academic symposium that showcases faculty and student research each year. The recently concluded 2021 symposium featured 49 sessions, and students presented 80% of them.
Inspired MSMU program helps fill perioperative nursing vacancies

The MSMU nursing department has partnered with UCLA to give Mount undergraduates a chance to experience a combination of didactic and real-life clinical learning situations in the operating room—a unique program that is preparing our nursing students to fill a niche that is often overlooked and where opportunities abound. And the students are not just observing, they’re setting up and delivering instrumentation to the surgeons and serving as patient advocates. The program’s goal: to expose nursing students to the operating room and thus fill a vital need for perioperative nurses.

“Given the number of vacant, full-time positions as well as the average age of perioperative nurses nationwide, this sector of the workforce will be depleted in the coming years,” says Lauren Fujihara, nursing clinical placement director at the Mount. Part of the reason for the scarcity of perioperative nurses is that these experiences are not generally offered in an undergraduate curriculum. The MSMU-UCLA partnership is changing that. The two-month, 32-hour-a-week immersion program occurs between students’ junior and senior years. This summer, the program will expand with a new partnership with Providence St. John’s Health Center in Santa Monica.

“No one person can learn everything about the operating room,” says Jerica Magbitang ’21 about her experience last summer. “There’s always going to be new surgeries to be exposed to, new techniques and new technologies. I like that in the OR everybody is a student, including the surgeons. The whole team is continuously learning.” Nursing in general ranks high in job security—California consistently has some of the lowest numbers of nurses per capita. By being introduced to and subsequently choosing the perioperative specialty, Mount students will be entering a field in need of their talents, and our alums should be able to receive competitive salaries while filling vital roles.

“We are proud to support MSMU’s efforts to increase the number of culturally competent, highly skilled nurses eager to meet the health care needs of LA’s diverse community. Having met many Mount nursing students, we agree that they are truly Unstoppable!”

– THE RIORDAN FOUNDATION, RICHARD AND ELIZABETH RIORDAN
Poised for future groundbreaking results

The ability to gather data, analyze and interpret it is a vital skill in virtually all career paths. Whether exploring geographic information systems mapping (the Mount has a GIS-dedicated lab used by sociology and criminology majors) or participating in the Global Women in STEM and Policy Undergraduate Research Training Honors Program, Mount students continue to not only excel in research but also exceed already high expectations.

The Mount’s undergraduate research programs are incredibly unique in higher education. Most colleges and universities offer few research opportunities at the graduate level, let alone for undergraduate students. Thanks to the generosity and forward thinking of Mount supporters, any undergraduate science student can participate in a research program guided by faculty or through independent study. Funds from the John Stauffer Charitable Trust Summer Undergraduate Research Endowment in Chemistry and Biochemistry; the Fletcher Jones Foundation Endowment for Chemistry/Biochemistry Undergraduate Research; the Charlene Anne Setlow STEM Scholarship for Women; the Easton Family Foundation; and the Genevieve Castellanos Denault ‘53 and Karl Loring endowments enable Mount students to gain research experience that will prepare them to succeed in graduate school or the workplace.

Within the past five years, students from the physical sciences and math department published 33 papers in leading academic journals and presented many of their findings at prestigious conferences—a rare feat from undergraduate students at a small university. The Mount also has an impressive track record with women in top graduate schools, including Yale and Cornell universities, and at medical research companies tackling issues ranging from the role obesity plays in pancreatic cancer to how DNA repair proteins affect fertility. Alicia Mercado ‘22 (right) will continue this successful tradition. She’ll spend this summer in a Caltech immunology lab before returning to the Mount for her senior year. Mercado’s long-term goals: obtain a PhD in molecular biology and an MD. Could a Mount alumna someday be linked to a groundbreaking discovery or cure? Don’t be surprised when it happens.
Galvanizing our programs and ensuring we can continue to thrive

Prestigious government grants and funds from visionary foundations enable the University to provide our students with transformational educational experiences. Some of this support has come from government grants from the U.S. Department of Education, the National Science Foundation, the Health Resources and Services Administration, the National Institutes of Health, and the U.S. Department of Justice.

The National Institutes of Health grant provided $407,000 for us to continue our groundbreaking research on the prevention of disease progression in chronic diabetes. Despite NIH grants being ultra-competitive and difficult to procure, the promising work we’ve done in this area helped secure our fourth consecutive award, taking the total to more than $1M for this project. This rare milestone demonstrates the validity of the research results being produced. “The work being done by Dr. Luiza Nogaj and her students has potential applications in other areas as well, such as Alzheimer’s disease,” says Jennifer Chotiner, PhD, biological sciences department chair. “This grant continues the tremendous impact the lab has had advancing our students and the reputation of the Mount community overall.”

Numerous foundations have also served as stalwart supporters of the University over many years, enabling us to expand our academic offerings. Some of our biggest supporters specifically in the area of academic programs include the Confidence Foundation, the Fletcher Jones Foundation, the W.M. Keck Foundation, the Tom and Valley Knudsen Foundation, the Mericos Foundation and the Riordan Foundation.

In the past five years, we have launched certificates in Global Women in STEM and policy undergraduate research as well as spiritual direction; three online degrees (RN-BSN, BA liberal arts, MFA creative writing); programs in applied psychology and business administration in which students are in class one night a week with additional online work; a BFA in professional photography; an accelerated teacher induction program and a PsyD in clinical psychology. This fall will mark the start of six certificates in film; a BA in women and gender studies; an iMBA (international MBA) in entertainment management; an MFA in producing for film and television; and a dual MFA in film/television and MBA in entertainment management.

The Mount is grateful for the 119 grants it received throughout the Campaign. No matter if the funds come to us from government or foundation grants, each one helps our students flourish under the guidance and mentorship of our gifted and enterprising faculty.

Funds designated for new accounting emphasis pay off

Multiple foundation grants are also specifically earmarked for our graduate programs. For example, in 2019, the Mount was awarded a three-year, $3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education Title V program, Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans. The funds were targeted for the creation of an accounting emphasis within the MBA program as well as increasing financial literacy for graduate students across several programs. Ensuring the robustness of our graduate accounting offerings permeated our other programs, as our Weekend/Evening & Online bachelor’s degree in business administration with an accounting emphasis ranks fourth nationally among online programs. “These rankings provide a gauge for whether an accredited online degree program is worth the return on investment based on government data that calculates alums’ projected net earnings over 10 years,” says Michelle French-Holloway, EdD, business administration department chair and faculty member. “The academic preparation, real-world application and encouraging support provided to our students all make our accounting programs stand out.”
An astounding 98% of our students receive scholarships — usually multiple scholarships — large and small. These scholarships, coupled with the students’ discipline and resilience, enable them to pursue their goals. Many literally would have to abandon their dreams of a college education without this assistance. Thousands of donors are responsible for helping our students succeed, and we’re grateful for each and every one of you.

The stories on the following pages represent what student determination and passion can achieve when unburdened by crushing financial debt and uncertainty. The alumnae profiled here were all recipients of the Unstoppable Scholar award during the time of the Campaign.
Raising the bar

Melanie Sava ’17 performed with Mount Saint Mary’s chorus, took classes in the music department and studied literature. She seriously toyed with adding a third major to her dual political science and global politics degrees, but realized that a fifth year of undergraduate work would only delay her passion: law school.

Back up four years, when Sava was deciding where to go for college. She attended an event for admitted students and found herself in an information session with Helen Boutrous, PhD, JD. “The presentation was phenomenal,” says Sava. “She was so engaging, and she made the pre-law programs sound just incredible in terms of moot court and mock trial, the different courses being offered. I had to be a part of this.” Sava entered the Mount with a President’s Award, which paid roughly half her tuition, and her 4.0 GPA earned her many other scholarships along the way, including the Unstoppable Scholar award, funded that year by Michael and Carol Enright, and the Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher scholarship awarded to top pre-law students. Various individuals from that law firm are involved in mock trial and moot court, giving students feedback on their arguments and guest judging.

The experience helped prepare her for Yale Law School. “The fact that the Mount was able to help me narrow that information gap and feel prepared at the same level as my peers who weren’t first-generation professionals was incredibly meaningful.” Armed with her law degree, Sava returned to California, passed the state bar and is now working at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher.

“Melanie’s fellow students trusted her leadership and relied on her strength and confidence. She competed and represented the Mount with talent, skill, integrity and honor. No one rises to the occasion better than Melanie Sava.”

— HELEN BOUTROS, PHD, JD
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,
DIRECTOR OF PRE-LAW PROGRAM
Becoming a leader

Angel Iwuoma ’20 is currently working as a medical surgical nurse at Cedars Sinai and is enrolled in a graduate program at Texas A&M to become a nurse educator, with the hope of possibly returning to the Mount to teach someday soon. The Scholarship Luncheon in which Iwuoma received the Unstoppable Scholar award was a highlight of her time at the Mount. “It was memorable because I met someone who had supported me during my time there,” she says. That person was Dianne Schautschick ’65, who was being recognized as an Unstoppable Supporter.

The scholarships enabled Iwuoma to forgo working multiple jobs to make ends meet and instead focus on her academics, internships and student leadership opportunities that were important to her. Iwuoma honed her ability to manage studies and activities at the Mount by utilizing time management techniques. She was determined to balance both. “I was drawn to the Leadership Scholar Program,” Iwuoma says of her choice to attend the Mount. “Not many schools focus on developing women as leaders, and this was one thing that drew me to Mount Saint Mary’s. It allowed me an opportunity to grow myself professionally, as well as personally.” She most cherished her role as a Community Student Ambassador, helping high schoolers navigate the college application and financial aid process. “The other reason I was drawn to the Mount is its prestigious and rigorous nursing program.”

Like several members of her family who are nurses, caregiving came naturally to Iwuoma. “I found it joyful,” she says. “It’s not easy to take care of people, especially when they’re very vulnerable. I thought if I could go into a career that I enjoy doing, it’s a win-win.” Not being saddled by large amounts of debt also made it possible for her to immediately pursue her master’s and not put her career advancement on hold.

“Angel led by example with a grace and determination that encouraged and motivated her peers. I feel fortunate to have witnessed Angel’s dedication, commitment and spirit and am proud that she represents the Mount.”

– ROSALYN KEMPF, EDD
ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS AND WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP
Soaring to heights unimagined

Going to college was never an expectation for Blanca Duenas ‘16 growing up. But after a high school mentor encouraged her to continue her education, she became excited about the prospect. But first she had to figure out how she was going to cover the costs of her first semester books, let alone the tuition. The Carondelet Award enabled her to begin the pursuit of her dreams, and the scholarships kept coming based on her academic success. “The Mount was a big open door to endless opportunities,” says Duenas. “I can look back now and say what a great experience it was, and it was because of those scholarships.” Duenas found a new group of mentors among the faculty and staff in student affairs and the women’s leadership program, particularly Dean Laura Crow and Rosalyn Kempf, EdD, vice president of student affairs and women’s leadership, respectively. Their encouragement and guidance made her determined to persevere. “It was just so great to have these women leaders who were not only educating us to be better leaders, but they set the example,” says Duenas, “which speaks volumes of everybody at the Mount. It’s comforting when you’re 18 years old and trying to figure out the rest of your life.”

In an amazing leap for someone who hadn’t even envisioned herself in college, Duenas served as president of the Student Government Association. Duenas double majored in social work and gerontology because she wanted to help people in their time of need. Recently graduated from her master’s program in social work at USC, “I want to have a long-term relationship with my clients,” she says, “not that fast turnaround in the hospital where you see someone for as little as four hours and it’s on to the next person.” Duenas says that students leave the Mount confident in their skills and what they want to pursue. “The Mount provides that foundation and platform for us to thrive.”

UNSTOPPABLE SCHOLAR 2016
Blanca Duenas ‘16 says that the behavior modeled by the leadership at the Mount sets students up to thrive.

Blanca was optimistic, engaged and gave back to the Mount community through vast involvement in leadership roles. She epitomized the courage, exceptional leadership and unwavering resilience of a truly unstoppable Athenian.

— LAURA CROW, DEAN OF STUDENT LIFE
Wellness
The goal of the Mount Wellness movement is to provide our students with the tools necessary to achieve a healthy balance for the rest of their lives. When a wellness culture is emphasized, a byproduct is an improvement in academic performance despite competing demands. Also, more than half of our students graduate with degrees in the health sciences. By giving them the tools they need to be healthy, they can similarly affect their future patients, clients and communities for years to come. The movement was inspired by the sobering fact that two-thirds of students entering Mount Saint Mary’s reported feeling unhealthy. Our bold vision is to flip that statistic on its head: By 2025, our goal is for at least two-thirds of Mount Saint Mary’s students to feel healthy by the time they graduate. The emphasis on the new wellness initiative, with the priority of making it comprehensive yet fun, ensures that not only does the culture exist, but that it is also growing in an organic, sustainable way. It is becoming a lifestyle.
Mount Wellness: Something for everyone

The Mount’s Wellness Movement has created accessible, fun ways to engage in a healthy lifestyle. Thanks to the Carrie Estelle Doheny Foundation, a new walking path meanders between buildings on the Doheny Campus. Students joined a running club or club team sports. We created an award-winning Peer Wellness Advocates program (see next page), and in May 2017, the University joined the Partnership for a Healthier America’s Healthier Campus Initiative, chaired by former First Lady Michelle Obama, to implement guidelines around food and nutrition, and physical activity and wellness programming. The Mount was the first women’s university to join this national movement.

A 2016-2017 wellness needs assessment showed that 30% of respondents acknowledged some level of food insecurity. This was unacceptable, and we knew we had to address this issue head on. In the fall of 2017, we partnered with Westside Food Bank to bring monthly farmers’ markets on each campus, ensuring that not only are students fed, but that everyone has access to healthy food options. Food insecurity also leads to low energy and an inability to focus, which has a profoundly negative effect on students’ ability to succeed. Additionally, a student-led federal CalFresh program helps qualified students receive a monthly stipend for food. The Mount is the only private university in the state, joining the UC and CalState systems, to offer this program to its students.

The sports and wellness staff offered seminars and fitness classes, cooking demonstrations and a wellness newsletter, among other activities. During the pandemic, Sports and Wellness moved as many of its offerings online as possible and held virtual fitness challenges in which teams competed for prizes. The Farmers’ Market was converted to a Curbside Pickup service. The spate of wellness offerings helped bring students together emotionally during a time when they were physically apart.

And while wellness generally has an inward focus, the Athenians Care initiative was launched to encourage everyone to follow health directives aimed at keeping the community safe. The virtual commitment wall on the University’s COVID webpage displays the names of more than 800 members of the Mount community who have pledged to follow these directives. Our Wellness Initiatives are designed to instill habits that our community can follow for lives well lived.

COMMUNITY PRAYER

Loving God,

Bless our unstoppable community during this time of challenge and distance.
Bless our families and friends. Keep watch over health care teams and first responders, workers in all areas of society, those who have become ill, and those who mourn the dead.
Open our hearts to act and care in the gracious, compassionate, innovative and giving spirit of our founding Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet.
Help us keep our community close in our hearts while respecting a healthy space.
Give us wisdom to respect the guidelines of our community so that we all may continue to be well.
Guide us to continue to nourish our mind, body and spirit.
Grant us patience when frustrated, solace when lonely, strength when weak, and comfort when sad or ill.
Allow us to experience joy in the gift of nature, in time for reflection and rest, in remote gatherings, and with those whom we live, work and attend classes.
Create in us a continued awareness of the needs of the time in our society and our world, and motivation to act for justice in ways that we are able.
May we maintain a vision of the future that transcends the challenges of the present.
Let our lives be a continuous act of love and let us seek to be kind always to everyone, unkind to no one, and to be a people of hope.
Amen.
Revolutionary program recognized for creative approach to wellness

Mount Saint Mary’s Peer Wellness Advocates program, one of the first of its kind in the nation, provides a peer-based approach to help students get and remain healthy. This cutting-edge program was established to help the 60% of our students majoring in health-related fields become healthy health care providers and learn to model positive behavior for their future patients. This visionary program received initial funding and ongoing support from the UniHealth and Joseph Drown foundations.

In the fall of 2019, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators recognized our PWAs as the Outstanding Peer Group of the Year. PWAs undergo training before taking on fellow student clients to help them attain better skills, whether that be learning to cope with stress, incorporating more exercise into a busy day or establishing a healthy sleep schedule. PWAs learn mentoring and organizational skills and shoulder the responsibility inherent in improving others’ lives.

PWA Talynn Glenn ’21 says that this program has helped her construct solutions. “It’s rewarding to see how your ideas come to life and have helped others,” she says. Student-client Gina Moscozo ’23 enrolled in the PWA program this spring because she felt overwhelmed and hoped to learn new tools to manage her stress. “Talynn provided a roadmap for success. The teamwork between the two of us was outstanding and genuine, allowing me to feel safe and encouraged.” Moscozo appreciates that the Mount offers this program and trains people like Glenn to become coaches. “The tools, advice, and friendship that I received have helped me manage my stress,” she says. “I noticed how it had helped me with my finals and the demands on my time. I felt less frustration and stress and more energetic. I am more optimistic and happier overall.” And learning to manage stress can hold a person in good stead throughout a lifetime.

It is important for students to stay connected to their community as a way of taking care of their mental and emotional well-being. Wellness does not happen in isolation, it happens in community!

— ALISON HALPERN, RD
WELLNESS MANAGER
A much-needed center to educate and inspire health and wellness

The Wellness Pavilion will help the Mount community reach virtually every segment of the Wellness Initiative: Move More, De-Stress and Eat Green. The Pavilion will be the physical embodiment of our Wellness Movement and has everything one would expect in a gym — a fitness center, exercise rooms, pool and spaces for healthy living and learning — that satisfies the goal to Move More. Of course, the endorphins generated from physical activity will help participants De-Stress, and studies have shown that physical activity and lower stress will help enable exercisers to Sleep Well. While not in the Pavilion, food services in the cafeterias on both campuses already help students Eat Green, which is the fourth and final element of the Wellness Movement. An advanced training lab will be used by the Peer Wellness Advocates (see previous page) to meet with their student clients as well as by our students in the doctoral physical therapy program.

Research is clear. Studies have shown that people who strive to meet these four tenets are healthier, happier and perform better. Recognizing the role of physical well-being to academic success, generous donors to the Pavilion will help ensure that our students are functioning at optimal levels as they pursue their studies.

It will take a village to build the Pavilion, but we would be remiss to not acknowledge the major contributors who were instrumental in kickstarting the fundraising for this project, including the Ahmanson Foundation, the Carrie Estelle Doheny Fund, the Bill Hannon Foundation, the William H. Hannon Foundation, the Fletcher Jones Foundation, the Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Foundation, the Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, the Seaver Institute and the Von Der Ahe Foundation. With the help of these donors and numerous others, our students’ approach to wellness can be as vigorous as their approach to academics. And that’s a balance worth striving for.

“The Wellness Pavilion addresses a compelling need to provide for students’ physical and mental well-being. It’s a very good thing that graduates are going to be establishing healthier nutrition and exercise routines to carry over into their professional lives.”

— SISTER KATHLEEN KELLY, CSJ
BOARD MEMBER, BILL HANNON FOUNDATION
Our students’ experiences at Mount Saint Mary’s University would not be as vibrant, dynamic and life altering without your support. This report demonstrates what our students and alumnae have accomplished in the classroom, their careers and their communities. These examples are a mere snapshot of the impressive work happening in the Mount community. For every story we tell, there are many, many others. We’ve done great work because of you: Mount Saint Mary’s University is ranked first in Social Mobility for our students and one of the Most Transformative colleges nationwide. The University is home to one of the most diverse undergraduate populations in the country, with 83% women of color, as well as the first women’s leadership program on the West Coast. Mount students and graduates are, quite simply, unstoppable. And that’s because of your continued support. With more than 6,400 alumnae, foundations, corporations and friends giving to this Campaign, you’ve proven to be as unstoppable as our students, and we can’t thank you enough. All gifts, large and small, contribute to our success. You have left an indelible mark on our community, and we’re all better for it.
Mount Saint Mary’s University was proud and honored to receive a gift of $15 million from author and philanthropist MacKenzie Scott, the largest single donation in our history. Scott donated to only two institutions of higher education in California, with a focus on those serving regional, diverse students from vulnerable communities. Scott’s philanthropic efforts are data-driven and reflect the ideals and values of an equitable and inclusive society.

This recognition is due in no small measure to the tireless efforts of our faculty and staff, who are committed to our students’ successes while at the Mount and beyond. Unlike many large donations, Scott’s was unrestricted, providing the Mount maximum flexibility to use the money. The gift will be used to achieve goals defined by the new strategic plan, such as supporting diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, expanding academic offerings, increasing technologic advancements for teaching and bolstering the financial strength of the University.

Gifts that are designated as unrestricted become part of the Mount Fund. In recent years, these gifts have supported a range of initiatives such as research opportunities, academic and student support programing and classroom enhancements for learning. This past year, the Mount Fund was crucial as we responded to the pandemic. We appreciate the ability to spend such funds in areas we have identified as having the greatest need or that we have otherwise identified as priorities.
The outgoing chair of Mount Saint Mary’s Board of Trustees, **Thomas J. Blumenthal**, is passionate about the Mount’s mission of educating and developing women leaders who become active in their communities. Blumenthal (below, far left) — and his parents (the couple at the right in the photo) — have generously supported programs and initiatives to help those goals come to fruition. Wellness, the Center for the Advancement of Women, the CSJ Institute, COVID relief and scholarships are all areas, among others, that have benefited from his generosity.

Even more impressive, perhaps, is the work he has provided to the University, first as a regent, then a trustee. The president and CEO of GEARYS Beverly Hills, Blumenthal is an innovative and visionary leader who also has the ability to respond to the immediate needs of the time. This was certainly evident when, already diligently pursuing support for the Campaign, he quickly established a COVID Fund after the University shifted to virtual learning because of the pandemic. This fund lessened the impact of everything from job losses sustained by students or their parents to the students’ lack of personal laptops and wireless services in their homes.

Blumenthal admires Mount students for their strong values, work ethic and commitment to community. “They don’t take anything for granted, and they work and study so hard to get their degrees,” he says. “The students come from a sense of gratitude like no other. It gives me such a great feeling when I can help them.” Blumenthal modestly deflects any praise regarding his work for the University. “I think the Mount has done a great job of pivoting, first with the fire and then with the pandemic. I really credit Ann [President McElaney-Johnson], as those were both heroic situations that had to be massively coordinated.”

“The students come from a sense of gratitude like no other. It gives me such a great feeling when I can help them.”
Making the Mount an indelible part of their legacy

In 1992, Mount Saint Mary’s University established the Heritage Society for those individuals who have named the University as the beneficiary of a planned gift, which can come in many forms.

Father George O’Brien (1931-2019) was a talented educator and a beloved member of the Mount community for 40 years, serving not only as the University chaplain but also as the chair and a faculty member of the English department. His expertise included the role of mythology in society, literature and religion. An inveterate learner, he spent much of his time studying during his sabbaticals and summers, and he turned a critical eye toward the news media in order to improve the journalism curriculum at the Mount.

His hallmark kindness and generosity made him a favorite among the students, who named him Faculty of the Year multiple times. In 2018, the University awarded him with its greatest honor, the Carondelet Medal. Father George’s dedication to the Mount continues, thanks to his decision to leave a generous planned gift of $2M to the University. The funds from his gift will support the English department he loyally served for so many years, as well as provide general support for the University’s recently approved new strategic plan. Father George’s legacy lives on in our hearts and minds but also in tangible ways, and for that we are extremely humble and grateful.

Thanks to his planned gift, Father George continues to touch many students’ lives.

Thanks to his planned gift, Father George continues to touch many students’ lives.
Remmington Junior ‘01 cherishes her time at the Mount, where she was a biochemistry major with a minor in computer programming. Although she credits her success to several professors, the late Sister Annette Bower, CSJ, ‘59 and Eric Stemp, PhD, of biological and physical sciences, respectively, are two with whom she worked closely. Junior credits the University for helping her become a well-rounded woman who can talk about the arts and music in addition to science and math.

She is currently working as an ambulatory care pharmacist at Nellis Air Force base in Las Vegas. Pharmacy school tuition made Junior acutely aware of how much she was helped by the scholarships she received during her time at the Mount, and when her mother passed away several years ago, her contemplative mood made her question what her own legacy could be. “When she died, I really thought about my purpose in life, what I want to achieve and how I want to be remembered,” she says. “The Mount really made an impact on my life, so I decided to leave a gift and hopefully it can help another African American student, because I was the only African American biochemistry major at the time. I hope more people consider how the Mount provided them with a great education and financial support and that they consider giving back, too.”
Fueling our vision

Perhaps some donors give to their alma mater to ensure that others receive the education and experiences that meant so much to them. Others, like our corporate, community and foundation friends, give because they feel a synergy with the Mount’s mission or with a specific program. But don’t take our word for it. Here are some comments by a few of our many supporters.

“The Wellness Pavilion will broaden the students’ experiences not only in terms of their learning but in their own nutrition and health. With this new facility, the University will be giving students even more of the skills they need to go out into the world and help others.”
– KATHLEEN AIKENHEAD, PRESIDENT, WILLIAM H. HANNON FOUNDATION

“Guggenheim Partners is committed to recruiting, retaining, and developing women and upholding a culture that supports women in reaching their full potential. The firm is a proud partner of Mount Saint Mary’s University.”
– ERIN BAKER, SENIOR MANAGING DIRECTOR OF GUGGENHEIM PARTNERS AND CHAIR, WOMEN’S INNOVATION AND INCLUSION NETWORK

“City National Bank is determined to help close the gender gap and open up new opportunities by celebrating and supporting women in our workplace and throughout our communities. We are honored to support Mount Saint Mary’s University.”
– CITY NATIONAL BANK

“The Wellness Pavilion project helps the University fulfill its mission to educate the whole person.”
– VICTORIA SEAVER DEAN, PRESIDENT, THE SEAVER INSTITUTE

“The Mount has proven to be capable of providing the finest education and also able to administer a complex academic environment. I am very proud of the Mount from different perspectives as a student, faculty and regent.”
– JANE DELAHANTY ’65
“I give to the Mount because being awarded a scholarship meant that I would be able to attend MSMU, and I want to extend that to all other students in whatever small but impactful ways that I can. I choose to give to support my peers both financially and academically. The CSJs remind us that we are always able to serve, and no action or gift is too large or too small.”
– ELISSA DOERING ’24
MEMBER, STUDENT GIVING SOCIETY

“The Easton Family Foundation is very pleased to partner with the Mount to encourage more women to consider careers in STEM. The University provided Myriam Easton, now a senior scientist for America’s space program, undergraduate research opportunities. The Foundation wanted to help other students perform interesting undergraduate scientific research that would help prepare them for exciting and interesting scientific careers.”
– ROY AND MYRIAM ’72 EASTON
THE EASTON FAMILY FOUNDATION

“My Mount education showed me ways to fully engage with the value inherent in diverse communities and ideas. I’m grateful for the breadth and depth of my Mount experience, so giving back every year since my graduation is easy.”
– CHRISTINA LEGG ’95

“Locke Lord is proud to continue its long-term support of Mount Saint Mary’s University and applauds the University’s dedication to advancing women and girls, which aligns with the firm’s own commitment to diversity and inclusion.”
– LOCKE LORD LLP

“As a member of the business community committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion, we are proud to support Mount Saint Mary’s University.”
– MANATT, PHELPS & PHILLIPS, LLP

“It’s important to remember the education and skills that we received and, if able, to give back so the students of today can receive the same caliber of education.”
– DIANNE SCHAUTSCHICK ’65

“The Mount has always empowered women and encouraged them to become leaders and agents of change. The Center for the Advancement of Women will help the Mount influence change for women all over California and the nation.”
– DOLORES SCHIFFERT ’60

“We must carry on the work of the sisters. If we don’t, a valuable asset will be lost. They have influenced many lives, many women, and impacted more than just Los Angeles. They have impacted the world. We can continue their work as a community.”
– MARY CARATAN SLOPER ’62

“We are honored to support the enduring legacy of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and Mount Saint Mary’s focus on elevating communities by providing the highest-quality education.”
– MARY SPELLMAN, EDD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND TREASURER, THE FLETCHER JONES FOUNDATION

“I’m impressed by the Mount’s ‘unstoppable’ mission to develop women to their utmost potential and, most of all, to become leaders in our community. I want that to continue and am proud to assist in this endeavor.”
– CECI STRATFORD ’64

“The Easton Family Foundation is very pleased to partner with the Mount to encourage more women to consider careers in STEM. The University provided Myriam Easton, now a senior scientist for America’s space program, undergraduate research opportunities. The Foundation wanted to help other students perform interesting undergraduate scientific research that would help prepare them for exciting and interesting scientific careers.”
– ROY AND MYRIAM ’72 EASTON
THE EASTON FAMILY FOUNDATION

“We are honored to support the enduring legacy of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and Mount Saint Mary’s focus on elevating communities by providing the highest-quality education.”
– MARY SPELLMAN, EDD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND TREASURER, THE FLETCHER JONES FOUNDATION

“I’m impressed by the Mount’s ‘unstoppable’ mission to develop women to their utmost potential and, most of all, to become leaders in our community. I want that to continue and am proud to assist in this endeavor.”
– CECI STRATFORD ’64
An Unstoppable Campaign

FOR MOUNT SAINT MARY’S UNIVERSITY

Thank you!