

ACADEMY OF OUR LADY OF MERCY

Lauralton Hall

2020 CLAVEN AWARDS

EXCELLENCE • SERVICE • MERCY

YOU'RE INVITED: APRIL 25, 2020



Our Mercy Momentum

A LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

The momentum of an object is defined as its mass multiplied by its velocity.
Thus, momentum is a property of a moving object and is determined by its velocity and mass.*

*Source: Wikipedia

As we thoughtfully consider our lives during Advent, the word “momentum” resonates with me. Academy of Our Lady of Mercy, Luralton Hall is enjoying incredible momentum! I thank you—our students and parents, our alumnae and alumnae parents, benefactors and friends of Luralton, our faculty and staff, and our trustees for fueling that momentum.

Our School lives its Mission on our 25-acre historic campus with today’s student body of 370 young women. We revel in being an all-girls school. One of the many signature programs at Luralton is our “physics first” approach. Our 9th grade girls literally study high school physics before biology, chemistry, or other elective sciences, and I am quite certain that none of their teachers would accept my unorthodox twist on Newton’s formula. You see, I believe it’s our warm and welcoming Catholic community propelling Luralton. It’s our celebration of the Mass and the rousing expression of faith when student voices lead us in the recessional song “My Lighthouse.” It’s beloved school traditions like Mercy Day remembering our history and knowing we can “Make Mercy Real” in the world, as did Venerable Catherine McAuley. This is the spirit fueling our momentum as a school right now—and I believe the impetus for four new students joining the freshmen class in November. They joined a dynamic freshman class comprised of smart, kind, talented, entrepreneurial, and spirited young women who are already genuinely supportive of each other. It’s living our Mercy Mission that gives us momentum.

Inspired by the Mercy Tradition, Luralton Hall empowers young women to pursue their highest potential through lifelong learning, compassionate service, and responsible leadership in a global society.

Our forward motion continues. We have just completed a lengthy period of self-reflection culminating in our once-a-decade NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) multi-day accreditation visit. The visiting team raved about the energy on campus, especially what they observed when interacting with our students. The accolades for our girls were bountiful. The visiting accreditation team saw the student artwork, the commitment to athletics, our unwavering academic excellence, our music offerings, and our Mercy values in action. I ask you to consider this our velocity.

From our strengthened Board of Trustees that provides purposeful governance to our interaction with the Sisters of Mercy through MESA (Mercy Education System of the Americas) we have incredible momentum. Our Board engaged a new audit firm that just completed its second fiscal year audit, and the visiting auditors commented on the momentum as well. Although lean we are enjoying fiscal health—thank you for your support to **Keep Luralton Strong!**

While we were delighted to welcome more alumnae back to campus than in recent years for Alumnae Reunion - Homecoming, it was wonderful to also see so many alumnae at the Mary Ann Wasil Daisy Run, Christmas in the Mansion, and other signature events. I look forward to seeing many of you at Irish Night, February 29, 2020. Our Career Day on April 20, 2020 promises to be an unparalleled opportunity for our students. I hope each alumna can sense the momentum that I do.

With our commitment to innovation while upholding meaningful tradition it is my pleasure to invite you to the 31st presentation of the Claven Awards. After a five year hiatus the presentation to honorees receiving the Claven, the Fr. Doherty, and the McLean awards will be Saturday, April 25 on campus. Please consider this fourth edition of *Hallmarks Squared* as your formal invitation. Tickets are available online at luraltonhall.org/claven2020 or via the enclosed reply envelope. I look forward to welcoming you to campus for this important Luralton event.

Until then, as your Head of School, I wish you a reflective Advent and a joyous Christmas.

Appreciatively,



Elizabeth Miller, Head of School



Photos by: Aaron Joseph, Catholic Transcript

Archbishop Blair, pictured here with Head of School Elizabeth Miller and the entire student body, offered a blessed beginning to this new academic year.



Head of School Elizabeth Miller and Luralton Hall Board of Trustees Chair Paul Fama P'17 at the September 4 back to school Mass celebrated by Archbishop Leonard Blair of the Archdiocese of Hartford



Shades Shuttles Photography

Babette Gilles '21 (right) received her class ring from Dean of Academics Jan Powers '75 along with 90 other members of the Class of 2021 following the Junior Ring Mass held in the Luralton Chapel October 3, 2019.

2020

CLAVEN AWARDS

EXCELLENCE • SERVICE • MERCY

YOU'RE INVITED: APRIL 25, 2020

LAURALTON HALL CAMPUS

COCKTAIL RECEPTION, CEREMONY AND SEATED DINNER

HONOREES

MOTHER MARY AUGUSTINE CLAVEN AWARD

MARY KATE CURRAN '81

LINDA FRANCO GIORDANO '68

KARA KRYSYNSKI JUSTO '89, P'15, '18

DEIRDRE M. WALSH '96

DAWN RUSSO CROTTY '70, POSTHUMOUSLY

PATRICIA FORD MONEY '79, POSTHUMOUSLY

REVEREND PETER H. MCCLEAN AWARD

PATRICK J. MCNEELA P'13

GERALD T. SARGENT, JR.

REVEREND CORNELIUS J. DOHERTY

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

PATRICIA F. DOERR P'07

CORRINE M. CHACE

TICKETS ARE \$100 PER PERSON AND MAY BE PURCHASED

BY CHECK IN ENCLOSED ENVELOPE OR ONLINE:

LAURALTONHALL.ORG/CLAVEN2020



Lauralton’s co-chairs for NEASC Courtney Dwyer, History Department Chair (left) and Jan Powers ’75, Dean of Academics, along with all LH faculty, staff, and administration in LH “spirit wear,” welcomed the NEASC Visiting Committee in Claven Auditorium the evening of Sunday, November 3.

Continuous Improvement

Eighteen months ago Lauralton launched the intensive process–required every ten years–to secure Lauralton Hall’s continued accreditation with NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges). Each member of our faculty and staff served on at least one standards committee. We surveyed parents, students, faculty, staff, and alumnae. (In fact, based on student feedback, we made immediate changes). We “dug deep” to see how effectively our various departments implement the Mission of our School. We dedicated staff development days throughout the year to review and critique findings. We can attest that the work, as described by NEASC, is a “rigorous and comprehensive self-reflection process.”

Lauralton welcomed a visiting committee in November of nine educators from peer institutions. The committee carefully reviewed our detailed findings, visited classrooms, and spoke with a variety of LH constituents. “While it was a great deal of sometimes-painful work, the self study process required that we hold up a lens to everything from our programs to facilities,” said Dean of Academics Jan Powers ’75. “In the end, the process did what it was supposed to do–ensure the quality and integrity of our offerings and generate actionable steps to continuously improve and distinguish the Lauralton experience,” she added.



Georgia Douglass Dickinson ‘68, P’96

Provide Now for Future Generations of Lauralton Women

Planned giving is just that... a thoughtful philanthropic plan to make a contribution that is arranged in the present and allocated in the future. A bequest is one way to arrange now for a future gift to Lauralton.

We ask that you consider a bequest to Lauralton Hall in your will or living trust. Your gift would provide a legacy of ongoing income to support Lauralton’s Mission of all-girls education in the Mercy tradition. Your gift–exempt from federal estate tax–would bolster academic programs, financial aid, and scholarships. A planned gift to Lauralton is simple and will remain confidential if you choose. You can leave a specific gift amount, a percentage of your estate, or property.

Georgia Douglass Dickinson ‘68, P’96 has served Lauralton Hall in many ways–as an alumna, parent, director of development, and trustee. Her dedication to Lauralton was recognized with the 2002 Claven Award. Recently, Georgia reflected on her decision 25 years ago to include Lauralton Hall in her will. In an October 2019 letter to Director of Advancement Kathleen Kearns Donahue ‘80, P’06, ‘14 Georgia wrote:

“I want to leave this earth knowing that I have completed God’s plan for me, and that includes leaving Lauralton Hall a bequest in my Estate Plan and Last Will and Testament. I could not have received the strength and spiritual guidance during life’s struggles without the support of my parents, family, our Sisters of Mercy and Lauralton Hall lay teachers and personnel, as well as close classmates, who all held me close in their hearts during life’s unforeseen challenges. I feel truly blessed, and that is why I encourage all of you who can leave a legacy in any amount to do so. It is not the size of our gifts, but their significance in ensuring our alma mater’s future. Please join me and others in this endeavor to keep Lauralton Hall strong.”

To make arrangements for a bequest or to discuss other planned giving options, please contact Kathleen Kearns Donahue at kdonahue@lauraltonhall.org or 203.877.2786 ext. 129.

Making Mercy Real in Argentina

Lauralton is headed to Argentina in June 2020 for an immersion and service trip! Led by Head of School Elizabeth Miller and LH Spanish faculty Señora Marnory Hawes and Señora Gavy Duran, the group will stay at Casa McAuley and serve with peers at Colegio Santa Ethnea, one of Lauralton’s sister Mercy schools 20 miles from Buenos Aires. In addition to service, the itinerary will include visits to cultural sights such as the 18th century Cathedral Metropolitan in Buenos Aires’ city center.



“While at a Mercy meeting at Xavier University last summer, I met my counterpart from Santa Ethnea,” said Mrs. Miller. “The opportunity to serve at this K-12 Mercy school is a wonderful way for Lauralton girls to live our Mercy Mission of compassion and leadership, while connecting personally with another culture, honing their language skills, and building friendships. The circle of Mercy is timeless!”

ATHLETICS@LH

A Snapshot

15

Number of varsity teams: basketball, cheerleading, cross country, field hockey, golf, ice hockey, indoor track, outdoor track, lacrosse, skiing, soccer, softball, swimming and diving, tennis, volleyball

65

Percentage of LH students who participate in LH athletics

13

Number of alumnae from Class of 2019 playing collegiate sports this year

50

Percentage of LH athletes who participate in more than one sport

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Lauralton Hall’s Fine Arts Department presented the Gilbert and Sullivan comic opera *The Pirates of Penzance* October 25-27, 2019 at Parsons Auditorium in Milford. Erin Paranel ’21 (right) portrayed a heartbroken Mabel in this scene, as she pleaded for protagonist Frederic to stay. Rounding out the cast of Lauralton students were performers from Fairfield Prep and Notre Dame West Haven.



Shades Shutters Photography



LH student tour guides (from left) Mikayla Tracey '23 and Mia Anderson '23 welcomed prospective students and families to Lauralton's Open House October 6, 2019.

Strengthening Our LH Identity

As announced in 2018 in *Hallmarks Squared* and by email to the entire LH community, Lauralton has returned to our signature LH uniform jumper—an integral part of our school identity. The uniform now includes a lettered dress cardigan required as of September 3, 2019, to be worn by students on specially-designated “letter sweater days.” We love seeing LH pride and cohesive school spirit at our assemblies, enrollment events, Masses, and other special events.

LAURALTON CAREER DAY

Signature  Program

“I THOUGHT IT WAS AWESOME TO HEAR THE AMAZING JOURNEY THESE WOMEN HAVE TAKEN.”

“YOU MAY THINK YOU KNOW YOUR MAJOR BUT CAREER DAY REALLY CHANGES YOUR MIND.”

“MY FAVORITE PART OF CAREER DAY WAS HEARING ABOUT ‘A DAY IN THE LIFE.’”

“IT MADE ME REALIZE I COULD CHANGE THE WORLD.”

CAREER DAY SURVEY RESPONSES FROM LH STUDENTS

Envisioning the Possibilities

Career Day, a Lauralton Hall Signature Program, will take place April 20, 2020. The event brings more than 50 women to campus to talk about their professions. Already, more than six months in advance, a dozen dynamic alumnae have committed to participate. Our keynote speaker is Kathy Kelly-Brown '82, Senior Vice President, Strategic Initiatives for Comcast Cable and NBCUniversal in New York City. Ms. Kelly-Brown brings nearly 30 years of experience in publicity and strategy for entertainment programming.

Speakers meet with students in small group sessions to offer a look at the realities of their chosen roles and how they got to where they are today. Students have the opportunity to ask questions, and speakers provide valuable insights and advice about succeeding as women in today's workplace.

“Career Day inspires our students to really think about their talents and interests as they prepare to make big decisions about college majors and career options,” said Susan Fracker, Lauralton Hall College Counselor and longtime coordinator of Career Day. “We are thrilled to have Ms. Kelly-Brown as our keynote speaker and look forward to announcing the entire impressive line-up in early 2020.”



Are you a professional in law, health care, technology, engineering, arts, entertainment, financial, hospitality/travel, non-profit, or another segment? If you are interested in participating as a speaker, please contact careerday@lauraltonhall.org.

Career Day 2020 keynote speaker Kathy Kelly-Brown '82, Senior Vice President, Strategic Initiatives for Comcast Cable and NBCUniversal



Shades Shutters Photography

The Lauralton Hall swimming & Diving Team had an outstanding fall 2019 season including placing runner-up November 19 at the Class S State Championship where LH won the 200 free relay and broke the School's longstanding record in the 400 free relay.

Coach Pfeiffer to Retire After Decades of Inspiring LH Athletes

His name is synonymous with LH swimming. Lauralton's longtime dedicated swim coach, Fran Pfeiffer P '89, '90, '95 officially announced his retirement November 20. During his tenure beginning in 1994, “Coach Fran” has guided LH varsity swimming to earn seven state championships and to place runner-up at the state level 11 times. The Connecticut High School Coaches Association recognized him as “Swim Coach of the Year” in 1996 and 2012.



Swim coach, Fran Pfeiffer P '89, '90, '95

“Coach Fran is truly dedicated to our athletes,” said Lauralton Athletic Director and Dean of Student Development Jennifer Casceillo. “We will miss his expertise and enthusiasm—not only at the pool but in all the ways he has supported our athletes over the years.”

Fran's coaching history at Lauralton goes back to 1986, when he stepped up to coach the junior varsity softball team that included his oldest daughter Julie Pfeiffer Fisher '89. This was the start of Fran's 14-year run coaching Lauralton softball. Fran and his wife Christine are also parents of Heather Pfeiffer '90 and Danielle Pfeiffer '95.

“Retiring is bittersweet,” said Coach Fran. “My coaching career at Lauralton for more than 30 years has been very rewarding. I will miss the girls, their families, and the Lauralton coaches, staff, and administrators who have always been so supportive of the swim program,” he added.

Paul Katz P'14, Lauralton's associate head swim coach since 2014, will assume the head coach role beginning with the 2020-2021 season. Together with Fran, he helped guide Lauralton Hall to the 2014, 2015 and 2017 Class M titles and to produce 16 All-State swimmers over the last six years. Following a successful swimming career at Yale as a Division I All-American (he set—and held for eight years—a record in the 200-yard butterfly), Paul was a member of Team USA international champions. He also brings experience as a collegiate-level swim coach.

“Coaching under Fran's leadership over the past six seasons, I have come to appreciate the legacy of the LH swim program and the quality and strength of character of Lauralton's students in the pool and in the classroom,” Paul said. “I feel honored to take the reins of this program.”

We wish Coach Fran many years of happiness in retirement, and will honor him at the annual LH faculty and staff retirement celebration in June. And, we have a sneaking suspicion we will be seeing Fran cheering for LH from the bleachers next season.



Shades Shutters Photography

Discover Lauralton

5th, 6th, and 7th grade girls are invited to Discover Lauralton!
Sunday, March 29, 2020, 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

SAVE THE DATES

Feb 29, 2020

Irish Night

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Mar 26, 2020

Alumnae Reception, Manhattan

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Mar 29, 2020

Discover Luralton

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Apr 20, 2020

Career Day

~

Apr 25, 2020

Claven Awards

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May 30, 2020

Graduation

~

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*Luralton's historic Chapel decorated
for Christmas in the Mansion*

*"God preserve and bless you and
grant you all the graces and precious
gifts reserved for this holy season."
- Catherine McAuley*