

## The opportunity of an education

Looking back on my four years at Marymount, the word that sticks out for me the most is opportunity. We were given opportunities to expand our spirituality, our knowledge, our understanding and acceptance of others, our areas of interest and, realistically, our world.

Spiritually how could one not grow closer to God when spending time with the likes of Father Steve Letourneau and Sister Lucille Herman? Or watching Sister Julia Stegeman work endlessly to make the sunken garden a thing of beauty? And knowing that the Sisters of St. Joseph were dedicating their lives to the education of all of us who attended their college.

I fondly remember attending Mass in the chapels in the dorms at 10 p.m. on weeknights. Even though there were usually only six to 10 of us attending, Father Steve never shortchanged us but made the Holy Mass seem even more personal for us.

Then there was Sister Lucille treating every young lady in Antoinette Hall as her own, and Sister Mary Leon Pirotte who always made sure we were all right if she heard we weren't feeling well.

Being a part of the folk group that sang at Mass on Sundays helped turn the talents of many into a unified source of praise and fostered friendships that still exist today. Some of my favorite memories are from the folk group.

As a reward for traveling around with the president of the college, we were given a trip to Colorado over Easter Weekend. On a sunny morning, we loaded up for the trip, four in Sister Lucille's car and the rest in my 1972 Dodge van. Then it was off to the campsite — but when we arrived, we discovered we would have to hike up a trail to get there. I thought my old van could make it up the small trail, but no one else wanted to try it with me. They all loaded

### Alumni UPDATE

LARRY D.  
GEIST  
CLASS OF '79



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The instructors we had at Marymount were second to none. How blessed we were in the music department to work with Eric Stein, arguably one of the most amazing musicians to teach and conduct the orchestra and bands.

Having come from a small school, I had never experienced the thrill of performing in an orchestra or working with a “maestro” even close to the level of Mr. Stein.

I was also blessed to have worked in the theater department with Dr. Dennis Denning and Francis Roesner in plays and musicals. I also had the opportunity to work with such phenomenal actors like Tyrees Allen, Mary Murfitt, Kevin Willmont and Pat Dalrymple, whose presence on the stage made everyone better performers.

Marymount was also a place where we learned

their stuff in my van and away I went up the path as they hiked up to the campsite. I made it and the group was happy they didn't have to lug their luggage up the hill. We even got to perform an impromptu concert at Red Rocks.

acceptance and understanding of others, with a very diverse population of students.

Coming from Small Town USA, I had never met people from places like New York, California, or other countries and other cultures. I also met people who were from the gay and lesbian communities. Learning to accept people for who they are is a gift that I use on a daily basis. It has helped me discourage bias in the schools I have served in.

In my time at Marymount, I also learned the value of knowledge. Being around people who were devoted to education like the Sisters of St. Joseph provided us with the eagerness to learn and to never stop learning. Because of this, I have dedicated my entire professional career to education.

After serving nine years as a band and vocal teacher, I have been a building principal since 1990.

Last year at the ripe old age of 58, I decided to start my doctorate in Education Administration through Pittsburg State University and the University of Arkansas. At the end of this coming summer, I will complete my Specialist in Education Administration degree and the following year, God willing, I will receive my Ph.D.

The reason I mention this is not to brag because many of the students who graduated from Marymount have done much more and been much more successful. Rather, it's to emphasize the importance of what Marymount gave me: opportunity.

Marymount opened the doors of the world to me and because of that, I have been blessed with touching the future every day for nearly 40 years. I have also been blessed with a strong faith, the ability to accept every student who comes to my schools and the desire to make a positive mark on the world Marymount presented to me. Marymount might be closed, but its legacy will live on for centuries to come.

## Save the date: Nursing Class of 1957 plans fall reunion

The Marymount College Class of 1957 Nursing Graduates are planning their 60th class reunion. The gathering will be Sept. 25 through Sept. 29 in Lindsborg, Kan.

More details will be published in the next issue of The Messenger.

In the meantime, organizers are seeking information on eight missing classmates. They are (listed with the last-known name and hometown):

Allen, Phyllis — Herington, Kan.

Claeys, Bennie — Seneca, Kan.

Davis, Barbara — Fairview, Kan. or Neb.

Grayson, Helen — Kansas City, Mo.

Lewis, Charlotte Louise — Columbus, Ohio

Rhynes, Esther M Platt — Kansas City, Kan.

Smith, Elsie — Lincoln, Kan. or Neb.

Wood, Clementine — Elwood, Kan.

If you can help locate them — or for more information about the reunion — contact Elaine Chaput McRae at 623/386-5657.