



# Handbook for Alumnae Clubs

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*"Too often, active alumni groups have not been recognized as the powerful factor they are in keeping former students definitely interested in their schools. The necessity for alumnae activity in colleges for women is even greater. They have no football teams. Therefore some specific movement must stimulate interest between the alumna and her school."* Marion McCandless

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## Preface

The Saint Mary's College Alumnae Association is the oldest among Catholic women's colleges and one of the oldest among all women's colleges. The first meeting of the Alumnae Association was held on June 25, 1879. For more than a century, Saint Mary's alumnae have provided a history of dedicated and loyal service to the College and to one another through Association activities. A vital factor contributing to the success of the alumnae program at Saint Mary's has been the national alumnae club network.

In a 1932 issue of *Courier*, Marion McCandless wrote about the need for alumnae club support and the critical role clubs play: "Too often, active alumni groups have not been recognized as the powerful factor they are in keeping former students definitely interested in their schools. The necessity for alumnae activity in colleges for women is even greater. They have no football teams. Therefore some specific movement must stimulate interest between the alumna and her school."

Since 1897, when the first Saint Mary's alumnae club was founded in Chicago, our clubs have continued to provide an essential link between the College and her alumnae. Today there are 57 alumnae clubs and contact areas serving approximately 18,000 alumnae throughout the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany. Maintenance of this network has proven to strengthen communications to and from the campus and has served to nurture the relationship between Saint Mary's and her alumnae.

As an alumnae club leader, you are actively participating in the history and traditions of the Alumnae Association. To help you, we have designed this Handbook to present some guidelines and suggestions for planning and implementing Saint Mary's club activities. Realizing that no two clubs are alike, we have attempted to provide information in this booklet that each club, regardless of size or location, can adapt to meet the particular needs of the club. It is recommended that each club president, whether new or a veteran, review this guide carefully and refer to it frequently. Ask other club leaders to use it as well, and please remember to pass it on to your club's next administration when you leave office.

When the answer to your question about Saint Mary's clubs does not surface in the following pages, remember that the Alumnae Relations Office staff is at your disposal. Please call upon us whenever we can be of assistance.

Good luck! Thanks for your work on behalf of Saint Mary's.

# History of the Alumnae Association

In June 1879, 35 years after the Sisters of the Holy Cross founded Saint Mary's Academy in Bertrand, Michigan, seven alumnae of Saint Mary's gathered at the new South Bend campus to establish the first Catholic women's alumnae association in the United States. First known as "The Association of Post-Graduates of Saint Mary's Academy, Notre Dame," the Saint Mary's College Alumnae Association is ranked seventh oldest among all women's colleges.

In the early days of the Association, alumnae worked closely with the sisters at Saint Mary's and met every two years to visit with old friends and to watch the progress of the current students. During World War I, alumnae joined forces with the students to raise funds for the war effort, and in the 1920s, they concentrated their energies on amassing funds for the construction of Le Mans Hall which was begun in 1924.

In 1926, the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae convened on the Saint Mary's campus. As a result of this meeting, the Alumnae Association reflected on its position and resolved to provide a leadership example to the students of Saint Mary's. Marion McCandless '00 became the first alumnae secretary and editor of the Holy Cross Courier, the alumnae magazine, and an Alumnae Association office was established on the Saint Mary's campus. Marion served as executive director of the Association from 1926 to 1954, and was succeeded by Helen Carroll '26 who served from 1955 to 1973.

"That the club is an indispensable factor in any successful program is self-evident in alumni/alumnae circles," wrote Marion in her history of the alumnae association's "Family Portraits." Eagerness to band together locally was evidenced by the founding of the first alumnae clubs well before Marion was appointed secretary to the Alumnae Association; and over the years their numbers have grown substantially.

Founded in 1897, our oldest and largest alumnae club in the country is the Chicago Alumnae Club, originally called the Bertrand Club. Its activities have included everything from a special Red Cross chapter set up during World War I, which donated a Saint Mary's ambulance, to lectures by faculty mem-

bers. The South Bend Alumnae Club, which has awarded an annual scholarship to a deserving student for more than 50 years, was founded in 1923. The next year Los Angeles and Fort Wayne followed suit; and in 1926 Cleveland organized its club. In addition to bringing together women who have a common interest in Saint Mary's, alumnae clubs have traditionally served a variety of functions. Most importantly, clubs have extended the College's influence throughout the United States.

By the time Sister M. Madeleva Wolff, C.S.C. became the third president of Saint Mary's College in 1934, 25 alumnae clubs had been formed across the country. World War II had pulled alumnae and students together again to initiate fund-raising programs; and as the College continued to grow, alumnae continued to contribute their time and money to support the growth of their alma mater. When the Alumnae Centennial Library was built in 1941, Alumnae Association president, Helen Holland Voll '17 led the ground-breaking ceremony.

The dedication and loyalty of the alumnae who worked so diligently in the early days of the Alumnae Association laid the foundation for the Association as it exists today. Currently numbering approximately 18,000 members, the Association is governed by an 18-member board of directors and sponsors a myriad of activities and programs for alumnae and students, including an international network of 57 alumnae clubs and contact areas.

# Alumnae Relations Office Services

If the answer to your question does not appear in this handbook, just ask! The Alumnae Relations Office staff stands ready to help you in your club work whenever possible, and performs a variety of services to make your job as club president easier.

## The Alumnae Relations Office:

- **Provides** an address list of alumnae that can be sorted by last name, zip code or class year upon request. The alumnae office provides additional alumnae lists in zip code or class year order, lists of current students, incoming first-years, parents, and mailing labels for any of these groups.
- **Provides** address labels or e-mailable spreadsheets upon request, in either alpha or zip code order. Labels are generally in the mail within 24 to 48 hours of your request.
- **Prepares and mails** newsletters, notices and invitations to club events. The club is billed for the cost of in-house printing and postage. (SEE APPENDIX FOR SAMPLE CLUB PUBLICATIONS.)
- **Makes arrangements** for College personnel to visit with the clubs.
- **Travels** to club functions and organizational meetings upon request (at no cost to the alumnae club).
- **Assists** with the development and updating of alumnae club web pages, using templates provided by the College. The office can also send out blast e-mail messages on the club's behalf.
- **Assists** in producing a local alumnae club directory (can give general counsel on the project and/or publish it).
- **Advises** the clubs on how to write a code of bylaws.

- **Assists** in the ordering of Saint Mary's name tags, napkins, gifts and mementos from the Bookstore.
- **Coordinates** purchase and distribution of any student gifts
- **Updates** the clubs on current on-campus activities via informational mailings.
- **Serves** as a liaison between the alumnae club and other administrative and academic departments of the College.

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