



Katherine Arbuthnott: Learning leadership in the land of the co-op

1. Tell me about when you were younger. What were some early lessons for you?

I grew up in southern Saskatchewan in Regina and Moose Jaw, and also spent a good deal of time on my farms with my extended family. The biggest lesson (one that probably drove most of the others out of my memory) was when my mom died. I was 10 and my brothers were 8 and 5, and I learned that families (i.e., groups) could change drastically with a change in just one person. That was a puzzle I pondered until I was a young adult, and learned about group processes in my university psychology classes, and it still impacts the care I take when people enter or leave a group.

2. What did you learn from your parents?

My mom taught me the value of neighborliness. As a young child I went on the rounds of visiting the neighbors with her, and I always had many doors I could knock on when I need help (or just a drink of water). She took a genuine interest in others' lives, and was my first 'social skills' trainer.

The biggest lesson I learned from both my Mom and Dad was to pay attention and expect things (including myself) to change. My Dad is fond of saying "Watch what you say, because life has a way of making you eat your words" (which works well with "There but for the grace of God, go I.")

3. What were your earliest leadership roles?

Probably in Brownies, as a 'sixer'. The most challenging was becoming a 'substitute parent' very early in life (not a very good one, but I did learn some things about negotiation and management).

4. How has your leadership style evolved?

Over the course of my life I've had diverse leadership opportunities: teacher (all levels of education), workshop leader, mother, co-director of a private practice clinic, Internal Coordinator for Saskatoon Open School, professor, and I've learned from each.

For instance, in leading therapy groups I learned that leadership is always shared, with different people assuming different roles and functions as their abilities and the needs of the group indicate. That was a great training ground for 'servant leadership' – organizing my efforts (and those of others) to nurture the goals and well-being of group members. I've also learned 'in my bones' the importance of diversity – others' strengths will balance my weaknesses, as long as I stay open and pay attention.

These days, my favourite reminders to myself in leadership situations are 'Be curious' and 'Make mistakes and learn from them'.

5. What advice do you give to college students?

It depends on what they've told me about their goals and delights. I usually hope that, despite the stresses they encounter along their way, that they pay attention to their satisfaction – what makes them glad to be alive – and then encourage them to consider how to get more of that in their days.

# A Reluctant Leader; Liz Blume

## **What were your early influences?**

I was raised in Ft. Wayne Indiana, the oldest of six and had a great support network of family, relatives and friends. I can remember saying to people it was easy for me to take risks because I was always confident that if I messed up I had a safe place to go home and start again. My Dad was a great role model; he was the true servant leader. He was a lawyer who really looked out for the little guy. My mom was the keeper of the flame at the home front. I was very conscious of the support this background provided me, and I felt pretty fortunate. At the same time I really wanted to step out on my own, to make my own way. Moving to Cincinnati for graduate school seemed like a big deal to me at the time.

## **Describe your early leadership roles and how you came to them?**

I have had lots of leadership roles in my life but I think it was more about stepping up with a good idea, or wanting to forward the agenda, or get something accomplished for me than wanted to be the boss. I was actually a reluctant leader much of the time. I wanted to get my ideas out there and get things done, but I didn't really want to be the boss. The biggest leadership step for me was in Dayton when I went from being a staff planner to becoming the director of planning and managing a staff of 25. I was 34 and had never managed anyone. That was a difficult step for me. When the job became available I thought "I can do that" but when I actually got the job it surprised me. I had ideas about how to do planning in Dayton, but had not thought about how I would manage people. The planning director prior to me gave me two great lessons. He was a great role model for getting his people what they need and then letting them do their thing. On the "what not to do" side, he created a real "us against them" environment which made people loyal to him but did not connect us well to other departments. Collaboration is important to me and I worked to build relationships in a different way when I become the director.

## **How do you handle challenges?**

I try to be a good listener, and when things are going wrong it is doubly important to listen. It is easy to become defensive when you encounter criticism but I think those moments can be times of huge growth if you let them become learnings not setbacks. In Dayton my staff and I delivered a significant piece of work that we were very proud of to a steering committee and got some significant pushback. We took a deep breath, made changes that responded to their feedback and created a much better product and had the strong support of that group as a result.

## **What do you tell students and young professionals who come to you?**

Do something you love, because you work at your career for a long time. I have always been interested in the work I was doing, fascinated by the content of my work. I cannot image being bored by what you do every day.

What does being a leader mean to you?

A leader encourages by setting the example for her team of what is expected and by holding high standards. Students perform to the level expected of them and members of a team can do the same. I don't like raised voices, so to me, a leader can accomplish a project while all members of the team perform professionally.

How did you decide to become an academic?

When I was an undergraduate, I had the most amazing mentors in the chemistry department. I wanted exactly what they had. I also worked a year in industry, and I was miserable. I thrive in the academic environment with freedom to make decisions about what research projects I undertake and what service projects I take on.

You distinguish between being ambitious and being competitive. Why?

I am highly ambitious. I want to accomplish as much as possible in my professional life, but I can do that without pushing down others who are ambitious. To me, a competitive person can spend energy (wasted energy) trying to make sure others don't succeed. I am happy to have company in my success. I like to be surrounded by brilliant people who will challenge me to continue to grow.

What do you want next?

Having just achieved tenure on a short clock in a very rigorous environment. I am taking a brief amount of time to enjoy that accomplishment. I am not sure what the next step will be for me at JCU. I will continue on the path to Full professor. My research program is strong. I am building my service record, and I am engaging in new instructional initiatives at JCU. Whether I take on an actual administrative role (department chair is a possibility) is unknown yet. Many members of my and other departments want me to be the next chemistry department chair. I am just not sure yet that I have thick enough skin for that. I am hopeful that this Salon will provide me with some tools for developing thicker skin. I have survived a lot as a female physical chemist, so I consider that good preparation for administrative work. I also don't know what would happen to my research program if I undertake more administrative work. Thankfully, I have time to consider that decision.

## *Trying things on for size*

Leah Busam

### **What was your first leadership role?**

When I was in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, I started a club with my 3 best friends – The Beach Girls – and was selected as President. Our club was highly organized – with meeting agendas and minutes and fundraising activities. I recall our efforts to raise money through recycling. We collected enough aluminum cans to buy two sets of “best friend” necklaces. We also made tie-dyed club t-shirts and friendship bracelets. I think the organization lasted a year.

### **How has your family influenced your leadership?**

I’m the second youngest of six competitive and successful children. From my vantage point in the family, I had a lot to aspire to and yet wanted to differentiate myself from my siblings. My older siblings helped me see the variety of opportunities available to me – many of which I sampled at one time or another. Their constant presence and the habit of people to recognize us by our relationships to one another or our place in the family, was often the source of great pride and frustration. I think these factors instilled in me a desire for independence – to do what felt right for me and to be known and valued as myself, not just as a member of my larger family unit.

Both of my parents are outspoken and encouraged me to find my voice. I have learned from both of them the importance of speaking up for myself and for those who don’t have a voice; and accepting the consequences of those actions. My parents helped show me the importance of doing what is right, and that doing what is right is not always easy. They have sacrificed opportunities, money, and status and witnessed a lot of pain by doing what’s right; and I believe they would do it all over again.

### **What are some key lessons learned from your family?**

My brother once asked my mom why she continues to be part of organization that frustrates and often angers her; why not just leave. She answered that she believes she has more power to affect change as a member of the group than as an outsider. My mom is also a doer. Whenever I felt overwhelmed with the amount of work ahead of me, she’d say “just do one thing” and inevitably that’s all I need to hit the ground running.

From my dad, I learned the value of strategic breaks. I recall being stuck on an art assignment in my first year of high school. No matter how many times I tried, I couldn’t capture the image the way I hoped. During that moment, my dad asked me to take a break to play tennis with him. I didn’t think I had the time to do that and still get my work done, but I realized I didn’t have the time not to play tennis. That game (and many times since a run or physical activity) was my saving grace. It cleared my head and gave me perspective. I understand now why my dad did and continues to make space for exercise daily.

### **What did you want to be in high school?**

A forest ranger. I loved the idea of a job that allowed me to be outside and use my abilities in science while also teaching others. In college I majored in political science and later added minors in economics and theology. For a moment, I dabbled with tough class like organic chemistry and Shakespeare because I wanted to challenge myself and explore what I could be. I’m fortunate that I have a wide and varied skill set, yet have often struggled with how to apply that skill set in a meaningful way. Which of these skills can I use in a way that matters most to me – that brings me joy and fulfillment, while also serving a greater good? I continue to ask those questions in my work in higher education.



**What decisions/choices have you made the shaped your trajectory?**

As I entered high school, I believed that varsity sports would play a key role in my next steps. I played four sports throughout elementary school and envisioned myself as a star volleyball and basketball player in high school. I tried out and made the high school volleyball team. Within a week, I knew it wasn't the fit for me. In the most difficult phone call of my 13 years, I called the coach and quit the team. It was the first time I recall quitting and I wondered if I was making a big mistake. By doing, I freed myself up for a world of possibilities for my first year of high school and beyond. I joined clubs and eventually became President of Student Council. I don't think I could have done those things or explored so many interests had I focused on sports.

**Tracy A. Chapman**  
**Associate Dean, Adult and eLearning**  
**Executive Director, Center for Academic Innovation**  
**Creighton University**



***Q: How would you describe your leadership philosophy or style?***

A: Grow and go. My role as a leader is to help shape and advance the goals of the organization *and* to help develop future leaders. I try to identify individuals, those within and outside of my units, to be involved in projects, committees, and the work of the University. This helps bring visibility to our future leaders, provide them a variety of experience, and connect them to potential mentors.

I also seek out individuals with skills complementary to my own. I think more conceptually and am comfortable with ambiguity and less structure. I will seek out others for whom details and structure are strengths.

***Q: Did you seek out or want to be in a leadership position?***

A: I was a stay-at-home wife and mom for about 15 years, then taught K-6 special education for a few years. So, when I started working at Creighton I had no aspirations to assume a leadership position, quite honestly, it did not even cross my mind.

I was working in an office of about 5 folks and was asked to be the assistant director, primarily to handle personnel issues. About a year later I was in my office working one day and the Dean came in, clearly upset, I thought I was going to be fired. He told me that he is appointing me as director of the office, he was going home to have a drink and cool down and we would talk about compensation the next day, and he left. The former director, a tenured Associate Professor, now reported to me. The next 6-8 months was leadership training by fire. The lessons I learned during those months have stuck with me. The importance of knowing your supervisor “has your back,” finding mentors

you respect and trust, patience and tolerance for mistakes you and others make. The office grew to encompass additional functions and eventually a team of 18.

***Q: What aspects of leadership at a Jesuit institution have you found particularly meaningful?***

A: I have enjoyed and appreciated working in an environment in which ones faith could be part of the daily workplace and where decisions were made not only to ensure financial viability but to advance the Catholic, Jesuit mission. However, I found I did not have an effective and succinct way to talk about how working at a Jesuit institution is unique.

Last year I participated in the inaugural cohort of the Creighton Colleagues program, modeled after the Ignatian Colleagues program. We discussed Ignatius as a spiritual administrator and how these lessons translate to our individual administrative roles. This experience was so valuable to my own development and to giving me language to talk about how administrators serve the mission. The tenets of inspiration, implementation and information, using familiar terms with the added mission-focused context, provides an easily understood framework to describe serving from a mission-based perspective. The Creighton Colleagues experience also provided the language and confidence to take about the importance of focusing on cura apostolica as well as care for the individual.

***Q: In conclusion, do you have any closing reflections on leadership or “words of wisdom?”***

A: Leadership is a journey; not an individual journey, but one with others in which we learn from failure, we must be honest with each other, honor the culture and context in which we each work, and in which we must take the time for reflection and spiritual growth.

Women's Ignatian Leadership Salon  
"A Corner Office"  
Lauren Cobble  
Associate Director of Admission, Xavier University  
8/11/15

Q: As a woman in a leadership position, who have been some of the most influential women leaders that have helped to shape your management style?

A: Having attended a private, all-girls high school, I was surrounded by women empowering women. I watched my teachers and administrators act with firmness and compassion. I am also fortunate that I chose a profession full of female leaders. The field of college admissions is filled with women who have chosen this as a career, and have helped to further the careers of other women and act in mentoring roles. Specifically I look to former managers, both here at Xavier and at my previous institution, as women I would like to emulate and be associated with. I have also learned so much from female colleagues in leadership positions. The difference in our perspectives provides such opportunity for my own personal and professional growth.

Q: What has been your biggest challenge as a female manager?

A: My biggest challenge has probably been the choice to have a family and excel in my career. It's a tough balance, and being a mother is demanding in a way that is different from being a father. While I have been fortunate to have many female mentors in my professional career, many have chosen not to have families. As a mother and a manager, I am sensitive to the needs of those with families, and work to allow my employees to keep that balance between what is demanded of them at work, and what is demanded of them at home. In the interest of fairness, I work to keep that balance for those without children as well.

Q: What leadership positions did you seek out in high school, etc?

A: Honestly, I didn't seek out many, but I found myself in them for one reason or another. I'm an introvert, so not someone that comes across as seeking out the attention that often comes with leadership and management roles. However, when working in a group or on a team, I often found that others looked to me to speak for the group. I often didn't self-select to be a leader, but found myself in the place of leader when working with others. What I realize now, is that while not always the most vocal, the fact that I thought through things from many different angles was what others valued in me - my ability to provide a well-thought out response, using the viewpoints of the group to support our stance or position.

Q: How long have you been in your management role?

A: Five years, and I would not claim to be an expert. I still learn from my employees quite a bit. I'm not afraid to try new things – sometimes it's a win, sometimes I spend a lot of energy making up for the failure.

Q: What do you value in your employees?

A: The willingness and ability to see the big picture, and work towards it. And more importantly, helping peers and colleagues to see it as well. The ability to motivate others is often underrated, and is so important. It can help to build your own leadership skills and build confidence amongst your peers, as well as help you to excel to the next level.





## Corner Office- Kathy Coffey-Guenther

### Headwinds and Tailwinds:

I had never experienced overt sexism on the job until I arrived at Marquette U. 8 years ago. Until then, I had worked in feminist non-profits or clinical private practice sites. My boss at the clinic was a bit of an old fashioned white male with a sense of men and women's roles, however when it came to work and the business, all had an equal opportunity at the table. The invitation came as a result of your contributions- ie. Your monthly billings, consulting work and expanding client load. The criteria were equal for all of us, and because I had a successful practice, I was always a mainstay at the table. When I got to Marquette, however, I found out that the "boys club" was alive and well. I remember early on in my first days at Marquette. My boss invited me to attend at lunch with him and a Jesuit to discuss some possible programming. When we got to the lunch table, the two of them turned their chairs to face each other and literally ignored me the entire lunch. I was livid. When we were walking back to the office, I confronted my boss on his behavior and the lack of richness to their "planning" when 2 60plus year old white men are planning for a younger and more diverse faculty and staff on campus. My boss was very offended that I would question him, and he became even angrier with me when I told him that I planned to discuss the issue with the Jesuit as well. Happily, the Jesuit was very happy that I told him of my feelings and experience with him, and we had a good conversation and a healthy working relationship from that day forward. Not so much for my first boss at Marquette. My "insubordination" as he said, at confronting him at this type of behavior became an ongoing issue until I transferred to a different office in the Mission department working for our vice president.

As eye-opening and difficult as that situation was, I have had so many great teachers, colleagues, companions and mentors since arriving at Marquette. While some of the org. development pieces are stuck in a time-warp of "churciness", the people are true blessing in my life.



## *Leadership: Forming, Informing, and Transforming Individuals and Organizations*

*MaryAnn Danielson*

*What were you like when you were younger?*

Active! While others lounged around, I was kept very active—Girl Scouts, honor band, sports, speech competitions, school—and because my family and teachers continually encouraged me to try new things and apply for unique educational opportunities, I grew up with a sense of “I can.” This led me to select a high school that was “experimenting” with self-paced curricula, where teachers not only challenged but also allowed me to propose and create new course that I completed. As a result, I graduated with 63 credits rather than the 36 credits required.

*What did you want to be when you grew up?*

From a very young age, I wanted to be a teacher. In fact, I had my own personal schoolroom in my grandparent’s basement. In junior high, I volunteered after school with a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher, and through much of my high school years, I planned to become a teacher. In my senior year accounting course, I encountered a teacher who persisted in discouraging my teaching plans; Mr. Klaussen taped articles on teacher burnout and low teacher pay to my desk. He and other business teachers praised my business acumen and following a State DECA award and national competition success, I was swayed from my initial vocation.

*What did you study in college?*

I studied and graduated with a BSBA in Accounting, but it was in my senior year that I realized I really didn’t want to do taxes or auditing or really “be” an accountant. Thanks to my high school speech experience and collegiate competitions, I was invited to coach a college speech and debate team while pursuing a Masters degree in Communication. I went on to complete both a Masters and Ph.D. in Organizational Communication.

*Having studied and taught leadership, what advice would you offer scholars?*

“Study ‘real’ leaders in ‘real’ organization.” Leadership studies too often theorize about what could or should be and too infrequently empirically study what is.

*What are ‘real’ leaders?*

Leaders are first and foremost humans, whose experiences help form them and inform their worldviews and actions. Therefore, to understand leadership or leaders requires an understanding of the person and their formative experiences and invites a dialogue about vocation, passion, and purpose. When passionate individuals find their purpose or vocation, they can transform themselves and possibly others around them.

*What qualities are necessary for leadership success?*

I believe leaders are successful to the extent they: are self-aware and self-actualized; recognize and nurture the potential and passion in those around them; communicate a clear and inclusive vision; engage others in formative and transformative growth; and remember to celebrate the personal and small accomplishments as well as the public and significant successes.

(Spitzer's) Ignatian-Inspired Leadership: Vision, Communication and Heart

Tina M. Facca-Miess, PhD

John Carroll University

Associate Professor of Marketing

Director, Non-Profit Administration Program

### *Gordon Drive*

Growing up on Gordon Drive, walking distance to Holy Family Parish in Parma Ohio, my parents were active leaders in parish life and Christian Family Movement (CFM). For a while they were even the "President Couple". My grandmother lived with us, we had a built in swimming pool and many "priest-friends." My dad was a construction superintendent and carpenter, and we went on ski vacation each winter with other families from CFM and our parish. Every summer we went to the National CFM convention at a different university (Notre Dame, Robert Morris College, St. Mary's). We had block parties, a newspaper (the Gordon Times), shared and celebrated every day of school all our sacraments as Christian family events. We were cool. The families of Gordon Drive are to this day very close, we all live in the area, hang out with our surviving parents and celebrate our faith together. Faithful formation and living in service to others was deeply embedded in all of us on Gordon Drive.

### *Vision Communication and Heart*

Having published in the area leadership, I am familiar with and have tested a good number of leadership principles, styles, traits, etc. Long story short, and saving the validated statistics, it comes down to what Fr. Bob Spitzer SJ calls "inspired leadership," A leader who truly inspires others does it with vision, communication and heart. And is this not precisely the Ignatian way? Students understand these three principles, I can remember them and most often, people respond positively. Keep it simple and authentic.

*Jessica Graner – Seizing opportunities when the moment is right.*

*Creighton University, Associate Provost - Finance*



*Q. What were some early influences on you?*

I grew up in small town Iowa where girls did not have the same opportunities as boys. I loved sports but we had no girls high school teams. I was involved in our church but girls were not allowed on the altar. I decided there was an opportunity for change.

While in high school, we organized a small group to convince the school board girls should have the opportunity to compete at the high school level. Before graduating, I was able to participate in softball, volleyball and track. Today, the school system has very successful, state tournament participating, girls athletic teams.

My best friend and I took on the priest and parish council and after many meetings convinced them that females can be on the other side of the communion rail. In the early 70's, I had the opportunity to be the first female reader at mass in our Catholic church.

*Q. Did you go to college to study accounting?*

When I went to college I thought I would be a doctor, started taking all the sciences. As I got more involved in college life I loved the debating and thought I would become a lawyer. After two years I got married and transferred to U of South Dakota, known for its business school. My goal was to receive a business degree and then enter law school. One of my professors introduced me to a CPA in town where I worked during school. That experience and his advice encouraged me to enter public accounting. I entered the world of public accounting right out of college, earned my CPA, and never looked back as it has opened the doors to many opportunities.

*Q. How did your first job impact where you are now?*

The accounting profession, primarily public accounting, provided me with the opportunity to work alongside many gifted professionals in many different situations. Although the first few years were brutal with hours and travel, I appreciated the opportunity to talk to and engage with many executives in large and small firms and observed leadership and decision making styles. As my life situations changed, so did my professional career. With each change, a new opportunity presented itself, even when not looking. I became a consultant, because a partner at Arthur Andersen, my employer, suggested an opportunity. I had a very successful consulting business. As my children grew, and I needed less "flexibility" I found my way to Creighton when I was recommended for a position. While at Creighton, I have been fortunate to work with very talented and dedicated people that have supported me and provided opportunities that have allowed me to grow within the university.

*Q. How do you hire?*

I am the interviewer who prefers to talk then drill with questions and tests. I look for the individual who can explain to me how this position will make a difference in his or her life as well as how he or she will make a difference at Creighton. The two turn-offs to me in an interview are, "I deserve the job because..." and "I want to supervise people." I believe if you are sincerely looking to make a difference you will become a leader with a very deserving and rewarding career.

*Q. Advice for those entering the work force?*

Learn from those around you. Although title and the money may be attractive, the opportunity to be mentored by someone seasoned may be more valuable. Many times it is not in your best interest to be on top right away. Take every opportunity to learn and grow, both intellectually and spiritually. Take advantage of every opportunity when the moment is right, most likely you have earned it

Angie Harris  
Marquette University

1. When did you first learn about social justice?

While in kindergarten, as with most Catholic elementary schools, on the first Wednesday of the month, we would go to church for mass and the priest would often come to the school afterwards. The Sisters of St. Joseph—a Catholic religious order of nuns focused on education and helping the poor—ran the elementary school. Many of the sisters who taught at the school, including my teacher, lived in a convent next to the school and shared an old, beat-up, blue car. Meanwhile, the priest lived by himself in the large rectory across the street and next to the church. He also drove a really nice Cadillac. Confused by this disparity, I asked my teacher why she became a nun instead of a priest. I clearly remember her telling me that only men could become priests because Jesus was a man. It simply did not seem fair; that logic puzzled me. It was the first time that I consciously remember being bothered by the fact that people were treated differently for seemingly minor reasons that they could not help, such as the color of their skin or gender; and I could not understand why people allowed this to happen. From that point forward, everywhere I looked I saw some form of injustice and wanted to address it.

2. Describe your family.

My father is of West Indian descent and from Cape Breton Island, off the coast of Nova Scotia, and my mother is African American and from Harlem. Both my parents grew up poor and eventually moved to Boston to attend college as first-generation college students; eventually, they met and married. My mother became an elementary school teacher and my dad, an accountant. Growing up, my sister and I were very close to my father's siblings who lived in Boston, and they had a tremendous influence on our upbringing. Both my parents and my dad's sisters all have at least a master's degree, and one aunt has a doctorate. Thus, education was always an important part of my life; obtaining an excellent one was not only highly encouraged, it was expected.

3. What made you want to study sociology?

In high school, I wanted to become a criminal profiler for the FBI. I entered college with a major in social psychology with the hopes of graduating, getting a masters, and then entering Quantico. My criminal justice career plans began to unravel when, during my sophomore year, I took a sociology course called *Insiders and Outsiders*. This was the first college course that really challenged me and addressed the issues of oppression and injustice that had interested me since I was a child. The professor, a sociologist, was the first teacher who shared my worldview; she saw the inequalities and the problems. It was here that I first was introduced to C. Wright Mills' idea that our personal "troubles" were based on larger social and historical processes, and that unless we better understood these social "issues," that our personal troubles and experiences with social justice could not be addressed.<sup>1</sup> This made so much sense to me. Before this course I had always focused on aspects of social injustice, but I had never thought much about the larger framework or the social structures that created the injustice. My professor thought I would make a good professor and researcher, and encouraged me to

focus on sociology and to pursue a doctorate. She argued that I could do more for society as a sociologist than as an FBI agent. I was not that interested in sociology and, not really knowing what a doctorate was, I didn't seriously consider her suggestion. However, after a lot of nudging from my professor and some research on my part, I decided to challenge myself and to work towards both the doctoral program and a career in law enforcement—I figured that I could decide later which career path to choose. My professor took me under her wing and mentored me on what was necessary to get into a doctoral program. I took her advice and began to look for employment that would help make me well-rounded, and expand not only my horizons and teach me about the social world, but also make me stand out among other graduate school applicants. From there, I went on to graduate school and then became faculty.

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<sup>i</sup> C. Wright Mills (1959/2000), *The Sociological Imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press, 8.

## **Sheryl Johnson-Roulhac**

### **University of Detroit Mercy**



#### **What were some early influences for me?**

I grew up in a small town in northwest Florida attending segregated schools until I entered 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Although my mother was sixteen when I was born, she continued her education and graduated high school on time. She then commuted to/from Florida A & M, an hour's drive each way, to earn her degree in elementary education while working part-time as a substitute teacher. I spent my summers walking around the FAMU campus and attending classes with her.

#### **Leadership roles early on?**

I was always a natural leader. My cousin and I were the only kindergartners who knew how to tie shoes so we were tasked with taking care of shoe tying for our classmates. Ultimately, we taught them how to tie their own shoes. I was president of the youth department and choir of my church in middle school and led a high school club beginning in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

#### **Favorite expressions heard early on?**

The men and women in the "amen corners" of the church would often repeat the refrain, "Let Him Use You" as I stood before them to make speeches. Those words meant that I should surrender myself to God and make wise use of the talents He instilled in me.

#### **Thoughts about future career while in college?**

Somewhere along the way, I forgot who I was. I did not have a career direction when I attended college. I actually dropped out of two different colleges. It was not until I was in my 30's, married with three sons that I re-remembered that I was smart enough to finish college. When I made up my mind, I earned 67 credits in 18 months and graduated with honors. But, I still didn't have a career in mind. I stumbled back to the natural leader I was after 'fell into' leadership roles.

#### **Advice to college students**

Figure out who you are and what you have to offer. Know your value and worth. Stay true to you self.



## Nursing: A career that cares

Suzanne M. Keep Ph.D., RN  
University of Detroit Mercy

Q: What pointed you in the direction of nursing as your profession?

A: My mother was my inspiration to become a nurse. Growing up in Catholic schools we were taught that God had a plan for each of us, and in the Catholic spirit, I knew I would be in a helping profession. People would always tell me what a great nurse my mom was; how caring she was and how she helped them. One day, my mom even saved a man who collapsed at a bus stop. My mom is humble. At 82 years old, she continues working part time as a nurse.

Q: How have your bachelor's degree in nursing from Nazareth College, your master's degree in nursing from Wayne State University and your Ph.D. from Rutgers University prepared you to be a leader in nursing?

A: My education at Nazareth College instilled in me, the importance of serving others and being a leader. We were encouraged to follow our passions. At age 25, I became Program Director at Hospice of Greater Kalamazoo. As I was learning the role and responsibility of being an administrator, I worked on my master's in nursing full time from Wayne State University, and continued to work full time at hospice. At Wayne State University, my focus was community health with a minor in nursing administration. My education from Wayne State, taught me the importance of nursing administration and how to become a nursing leader. Through my education at Rutgers, I learned the value of research and how research is essential in nursing. I learned the value of being involved in my nursing profession and to be an active member for making positive changes in nursing.

Q: You are teaching the next generation of nurses. How are they different from your generation?

A: I am of the baby boomer generation that values integrity, hard work and selfless work. My generation will get the job done at all costs, we are hard workers and do not give up. The current generation of students, the millennials, seem to me to think of getting the job done, but not at the risk of taking time away from themselves. Maybe they have it right – taking care of oneself first is critical in caring for others. I believe technology has had a huge impact on the next generation of nurses. I want them to know the art of nursing. I want them to be present to the people and families they are caring for. And I want them to take care of themselves. As chair of our nursing department, I feel it is my obligation to create a culture of caring among the nursing students that will carry over to being a professional nurse.

Q: What do you see as the biggest challenges/obstacles facing nurses today?

A: Some of the largest challenges/obstacles facing nurses today is the workload and stress the nurses have. It is vital to provide optimal care to individuals without missing the important things. The intuitiveness of nurses comes with being truly in touch with patients, and if one is always rushed, things may get overlooked. The balance of technology versus the art of nursing will be a challenge.





Eva Martinez Powless  
Marquette University  
Division of Student Affairs

### **Compassion & Humility as a Leadership Characteristic**

How has your family influenced your leadership style?

I am the oldest of two. In Mexican culture the oldest daughter/son has the responsibility to set a good example and take care of younger siblings. I loved school and I was a highly motivated child who excelled in every subject in school despite poverty obstacles. To me, I never knew I was poor. I was a very happy child who was hungry for education.

At age 7 my father left us for the American dream. I spent five years without seeing him, and it truly shaped who I am today. I matured into a very happy and compassionate human being. Knowing the pain of not having a father allowed me to be a more caring child who loved life—and school. I was a good role model for my younger brother.

My grandmother has influenced me at every level. She worked her entire life and raised 8 children on her own. My grandfather died when my mother was 8. I experienced firsthand how to be a strong, nurturing, and assertive woman. I learned at a very young age that if I was going to pursue an education, I had to go against all odds, particularly gender roles. My grandmother never worked for anyone. She had her own business, and she was extremely successful (at least financially). She built homes for four of her children, and left land/financial assets to the rest of the family. What I admire most about her is her sense of humility.

How do you see the world?

I see the world from a very humble and compassionate perspective. I think the world needs more love. I see human interactions as the most important aspect of leadership. I treat everyone with respect for who they are and their experiences. I have learned that the person in front of you is the most important, and it is my social responsibility to leave that person better than how I found them. No excuses!

Where are you in your career and where are you going?

I am in a very comfortable place, but I often think of my personal mission in the global context. I know that what I currently do in my career and family life is leading to a much bigger picture, and that is part of the mystery of living. I have a lot of faith in where I am going, which is unknown, and I am completely okay with that.

Malia McAndrew, Ph.D.

*Dr. McAndrew is an Associate Professor of History at John Carroll University in Cleveland, Ohio. She also serves as director of the Arrupe Scholars Program, a four-year scholarship that produces leaders who promote social justice in our local community and in the world.*

**Q. Tell us about your family growing up. What lessons did your family teach you?**

A. My brothers and I were raised in a small town in Northwestern Pennsylvania. My mother and father were the type of parents who always told me I “could be anything I wanted to be.” More than their words, however, it was their actions shaped me into the person I am today. My dad was (and at the age of 70 still is) a truck driver who hauls petroleum products across our region. I can remember occasionally waking up early to get him a glass of OJ before he went out the door at 4am. He often joked that he only intended on working a half day - meaning that he thought he could be back in 12 hours. (After all, when the winds were high and the snows were fierce you can’t just leave a truck full of fuel in the middle of nowhere because it is 5pm) If I got my tenacity and work ethic from my father, I inherited a sense of compassion from watching my mother. She was a teacher of the deaf and worked primarily with young children and their families. From an early age my Mom introduced us to members of the deaf community and inspired me to learn more about the many rich and vibrant cultures that make up our diverse world.

**Q. What brought you to a Jesuit school?**

A. I’d never heard of Jesuit Education until I was on the market for my first academic job. I had been asked for first-round interviews by several schools and was peppering my academic advisor with question after question. Was “school A” *better* than “school B?” Would I have better research opportunities and teaching opportunities over here or over there? Sonia wise advisor and stoic woman with Jewish roots and no connections to the Jesuits herself. She quickly shut down my rampant over analyzing, and cut straight to the chase: “Take another look at that John Carroll, Malia. They know who they are.” She was right. From my first steps on the JCU campus to the present day I’ve always felt that we are an institution grounded in something special which, manifests itself in all that we do. We seek not just to educate or enrich our students but to empower them to be agents of positive social change in our world. What better atmosphere could a young scholar hoped to mentor in?

**Q. What is one goal like to accomplish in the next phase of your career?**

A. Recently I accompanied a group of Jesuit administrators on a week-long immersion experience in the Dominican Republic and Haiti. During our stay we visited several grass roots organizations that take their lead from local community organizers. We visited a rural farming co-operative in the Dominican highlands, an orphanage for the victims of human trafficking in a Haitian border town, and several non-profit organizations that advocate for human rights in both nations. It was on this trip that I felt like I was truly part of a Jesuit network, and that I worked at an institution that was part of a larger system of international partners with a common goal. It is easy to get bogged down with everything we have to do at our own institutions, in the next phase of my career I want to better harness the power of our collective agency.

## **Sarah Melcher's *Group Discernment: the Ignatian Way***

This is a "Corner Office," autobiographical piece about Sarah Melcher, chair of the Theology Department at Xavier University. Sarah is a Hebrew Bible scholar (Ph.D., Emory University).



### **What early examples did you have in your life of women in leadership roles?**

My mother was a very strong woman who earned a Masters degree in Piano Performance after her children were grown. She was determined and earned very high grades. She was a gifted pianist and she offered her creative gifts in diverse contexts. My maternal grandmother was a very strong person as well. When her farmer-husband was confined to the house with asthma and emphysema and unable to do field work any longer, my grandmother ploughed the fields and harvested the crops, as well as raising six children. All six offspring were college graduates, though my grandmother obtained an eighth-grade education. Later in life, she sought further education and worked as a nurse.

### **How did you come to choose academia as your vocation?**

I initially intended to become a pastor of a parish. However, when I attended seminary and took Hebrew language as a requirement, I discovered I had a gift for learning ancient languages. My professors also liked the papers that I wrote and encouraged me to seek a Ph.D. When I was in seminary, I was elected Moderator of Forum, which was a form of governance for the seminary. Forum consisted of faculty, staff, and students. This body made binding decisions for the seminary. After my leadership, the president of the seminary praised me for my leadership skills and encouraged me to seek a Ph.D. I went on to earn my Ph.D. in Hebrew Bible at Emory University.

### **What has been the most challenging part of your role as chair? How have you negotiated this challenge?**

The most challenging aspect of being chair of the Theology Department at Xavier University has been to find a humane way of bridging the deep differences among us. There is a diversity of vision in the department and it is very difficult to find consensus even about what it means to be a Catholic Theology Department and how that should impact our curriculum. However, all of us were deeply committed to the Jesuit mission and vision, so I looked for a way of doing group discernment that could be accepted by all department members. I discovered the "Apostolic Discernment in Common: A Letter of Father General Peter-Hans Kolvenbach to The Whole Society." This document outlines an Ignatian method of group discernment that helps us to arrive at decisions in such a way that people feel heard and hurt feelings are kept to a minimum. One of the principles is to cultivate an attitude of indifference as to the outcome. The process also seeks the guidance of the Holy Spirit and recommends that we seek the will of God in what we do. It is important that everyone participate in the process, as Kolvenbach indicates: "It goes without saying that the involvement of everyone in searching for the will of God seems more appropriate at a time when the complexity of situations renders more difficult the analysis of their various aspects" (§ 31, p. 27). If everyone participates in the process and has a chance to speak, then department members are more likely to accept the outcome. The process is characterized better as a listening to the opinions and feelings of others, rather than a debate. The Ignatian way of group discernment as outlined by Kolvenbach has led to greater peace within the department.

## Gwyneth Mellinger bio



My own educational career was profoundly impacted by my education at a small, liberal-arts college, where I was surrounded by politically aware and socially motivated peers and faculty. I then worked for about fifteen years as a journalist, before beginning a career in academia. Throughout my adult life, first as a journalist and later as a college professor, I have been aware that my work had a direct impact on people and might at times even qualify as a form of activism. That is one of my motivations for teaching and research.

By activism, I do not necessarily mean direct political engagement. Rather, activism for me is a form of service. Both as a journalist and as a college professor, I have been able to inform audiences and to prompt them to consider specific information and to think about their relationship to the world in new ways. Social justice and community service have often been central concerns; however, it was not until I came to Xavier and began to participate in Ignatian professional development that I was able to clearly articulate this process and to tie it to a commitment to social responsibility.

As I reflect on my work at Xavier, I find the emphasis on service as an expression of spiritual kinship with others to be a key motivation for all that I do. I truly believe that higher education should be a transformative process and that students who come through my classrooms should leave better prepared to be engaged citizens of a global community. I also see striving for excellence in teaching and research as a form of service to society. By constructing knowledge that enlightens and informs, we have an opportunity to live the mission every time we walk onto campus.

**A Word about Team Ministry with Stephanie Molloy,  
Campus Minister and Director of Pastoral Studies at Campion College**



**Q: *How did you get involved with the Jesuits and Campion College?***

A. It was all kind of serendipitous. I had been in professional ecclesial ministry in priestless parishes for several years after completing my MDiv. I decided to take a year off to complete the DMin I'd been working on but hadn't finished because of the demand of parish ministry. I was moving to another city, and as I was getting ready to change my phone number, it (the phone) rang. It was the Dean at Campion. Their chaplain had had a stroke and would be on sick leave. Would I would come and fill in for only one year. That was ten years ago.

**Q. *Was it difficult to go from parish ministry to university chaplaincy?***

A. It was a fairly easy transition. The ministry was more or less the same; just the demographic changed. One of the first things I did was to start a student peer ministry and begin to develop a team mentality.

**Q. *What does team ministry mean to you?***

A. It's about me being the leader as the campus minister, but in a collaborative style. I love to see the students take responsibility for the different things we're involved in, to see them grow in confidence, in awareness, and to see them being transformed. I expect a leader to model the kind of leadership expected, so for example, I would never ask a student to do something I myself had not done first or wouldn't do. I like to expose them to different kinds of things and then ask them to take a lead in them.

**Q. *Can you give an example?***

A. Since this just occurred last year, I'll use an Ignatian example. For the first time, we'd been made aware of the Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice (IFTJ) held annually in Washington. I invited our new, young Engaged Learning Coordinator (who had been a peer minister in the past) to join me in a pilot project which would involve attending the IFTJ. We selected two students to attend with us to help ascertain whether or not this could be an ongoing initiative for us. Though the social justice advocacy network it teaches about and builds is admirable, is it worth the time and cost for our students to continue to attend? For the pilot trip I financially sponsored the students, but would not in the future if we would continue participating.

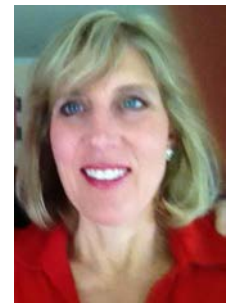
After the trip, at least one of the students was very enthused and even initiated a weekly meeting of students who were interested in social justice. They took on the project of seeing if we could make ourselves a Fair Trade campus. So this year we will again invite students to attend, though without my attendance.

**Q. *What other qualities do you respect in a leader?***

A. In the Spring 2015 edition of [www.accunet.org](http://www.accunet.org) Debra K. Mooney outlined 15 leadership characteristics inspired by Pope Francis. Though addressed to the Curia, Mooney says that they can be applied to leaders within a variety of groups:

1) Engage in genuine self-evaluation and continuous development; 2) maintain a balanced work-home life, which includes taking time for rest and leisure; 3) be sensitive to the thoughts, feelings, and attitudes of others; 4) allow for flexibility and adaptability in planning; 5) coordinate with others — be a team player; 6) be open to possibilities, inspiration, and the Holy Spirit; 7) be collegial and humble; 8) be authentically companionable; 9) have the courage to speak directly; 10) be genuine with your supervisor and avoid being a brown-noser; 11) support the success of colleagues; 12) be optimistic and joyful; 13) be generous with resources; 14) be inclusive; avoid developing informal subgroups; and 15) share the limelight; avoid being showy.

I think these are excellent rules to follow for any leaders.



## Debra K. Mooney of Xavier University on 'Soft Skills'

### **What was your first leadership experience?**

I was a lifeguard and swim instructor during my teen years. Although I was a painfully shy girl, my years of competitive swimming experience made me surprisingly confident as an instructor – even with a pool surrounded by on-looking mothers. During my college years, pre-professional training and early career time, I felt that I would know I was a “true professional” when-, and looked forward to the time when-, I would feel that same sense of assuredness and comfort.

### **When did that happen?**

A cycle of “stretch-comfort-stretch-comfort...” has continued with every “next step” in my career trail – and I think it is a good sign. I remind myself of the advice of Eleanor Roosevelt during the stretch times - “You must do the things you think you cannot do.”

### **What about your college years?**

I was a psychology major and a D1 scholarship athlete throughout college. I learned a lot during my athletic career that I have found invaluable in my personal and professional life – time management, goal setting, motivation/positivity, etc.

### **Do you find having a psychology background useful in your current position?**

Definitely – and not only in my current position but in all positions. While I am no longer practicing professionally (although I am a volunteer psychologist with Mental Health America) I believe that leadership is all about interpersonal relations. While others call them ‘soft skills’, I think they are the ‘essential’ skills.

### **What lessons did you learn from your parents that you find useful in your professional life?**

My father often stated, “you don’t want to burn bridges.” From him, I have learned the importance and value of navigating, maintaining and deepening close relationship of all sorts. My mother is very respectful of authority. From her I learned to affirm and support the complex structures and systems within organizations.

### **What do you look for when you hire?**

After qualifications are reviewed and finalists are selected, it all comes down to personality – the ‘essential skills’. I value interpersonal sensitivity and awareness as well as conscientiousness and creativity. I typically ask the question, “If you were in charge of hiring for this position, what would you be looking for?” The responses reflect **an applicant’s** beliefs and values – and personal qualities. I also ask an individualized/unique question stemming from an item on their resume – not a standard HR question that they have planned and rehearsed. I am less interested in their specific answer and more on their style of relating.

## Make it your responsibility to learn, encourage others to do the same

Kerry E. Murphy  
Major Gift Officer, Xavier University



### **Tell me about your family?**

I am one of five kids; I know now how lucky am to have grown up in such a close knit family. My parents were strict and set high expectations. They instilled in us a great work ethic, and as kids and in college our job was school. Every night two questions were asked at the dinner table, “what did you learn today?”, and “did you finish your homework”? Which, if answered affirmatively, was quickly followed by “then did you read for 30 minutes?” One evening, my brother quickly dismissed the question about learning anything by misquoting facts about the Russian Revolution figuring that would go undetected; he was wrong. My dad gave us a 2 hour lecture at the dinner table on those events and consequences. Our parents made a lot of sacrifices for us to go to private schools, and we learned not to take that privilege for granted. It was also important to read, not just text books, but novels, newspapers, magazines. My mom reads a book for each year she has been alive- a fair number of books. Learning is not just in the classroom, but everyday invites the chance to discover something new.

### **Did you have any leadership roles as a kid?**

I was always involved in extracurricular activities, mostly sports but also Girl Scouts I also ran for Student Council a few times. My favorite story is when I petitioned the School Board to institute a trip for 6<sup>th</sup> graders to participate in a three day camping trip called Outward Bound. I was very passionate about this idea and thought it would offer great lessons about resiliency, team work and leadership. My mom took me to the meeting I gave my pitch and answered their questions. But ultimately my request was denied. The real victory came 4 years later when my brother’s 6<sup>th</sup> grade class participated in the inaugural program at our grade school. I still remind him that I was the reason that trip ever happened by taking the first step to ask. Nothing is given, but earned and requested.

### **What qualities are important to you as a leader and team member?**

Honesty. There is always a solution, an opportunity to make something better or improve, but this cannot be done if you lie or withhold information. The other is inquisitiveness, someone capable of saying I don’t know with a willingness to question, figure it out and improve.

### **How do you make hiring decisions?**

I’ll answer this by sharing how it is important to be respectful of all experience, no matter how short lived. When I was a few years out of college and interested in what appeared to be lateral career move, the interviewer dismissed my experiences and called me a bunny, someone who hops from job to job. I was insulted, by projecting his opinion in a dismissive elderly tone, I resolved that I would learn to hire for talent, insquitivesss and ambition, no matter the tenure or longevity in a positon. The best team members are those who continue to learn and bring perspective other than yours, with a work ethic that is uncompromising.

### **What advice would you give to college graduates?**

I was recently asked what I would tell my 18 year old self entering college, and I think the advice is the same. Study what is interesting; you will remain engaged in your learning. Choose a career with that same mindset, be open to learning, be open to new things and take advantage of opportunities especially when you are young and mobile.

Lisa R. Reiter, Ph.D.



**How did you first learn about leadership?**

I grew up on a family farm in Iowa, the second of four children. The farm was homesteaded by my great, great grandfather through the Homestead Act. Farming is such an integrated way of living with the land and community. My parents were very involved in our parish community and 4-H. I think that one of my first positions of leadership was as an officer in my 4-H club. 4-H teaches great skills with project management, public speaking, organization, and team building. The summer after my freshman year of high school, I participated in a national 4-H leadership and civics trip that brought me and 400 other young people to Washington, D.C. for a week.

**What responsibility do you have for forming others to be leaders?**

As an educator, I have been forming young people to be leaders from the time that I graduated with my bachelor's degree and first began working in a parish. Years ago, I was a trainer for the Christian Leadership Institute. I have taken those skills and continued to apply and refine them as I have developed college students to lead retreats, faith sharing groups, and immersion trips. Today I apply those leadership skills broadly as I form and lead a team of twenty professional staff members and graduate assistants. In turn, they have direct responsibility for forming our current student leaders.

**What have you learned about leadership from the Jesuits?**

About ten years ago, I had the opportunity to make the 30 day Spiritual Exercises. That experience was transformative for me in coming to a deep and rich understanding of how I am called by God to live my life and to use my gifts to serve the common good. I continue to live out and practice the Spiritual Exercises in my daily life. Second, I have very close friends among the Jesuits who have been my tutors in Jesuit governance and leadership. One of my "aha moments" was understanding and learning to practice the Jesuit style of decision-making: broad consultation, narrow decision-making. As a leader and manager, broad consultation is so very important for buy-in, but as the decision-maker, I have to take responsibility for the consequences of the decision. There have been times that my decisions have had unintended negative consequences. Taking the responsibility to rectify these consequences has been a growth filled experience which has taught me much about humility.



## **Sandy Richtermeyer at Xavier on “Developing as a Leader”**



### **How have you developed as a leader?**

My main leadership development has been outside of my academic life. When I was in my doctoral program, I realized that if I wanted to grow as a leader, I had to find opportunities myself because my academic training was focused largely on research and a small amount on teaching. I was also very concerned about becoming disconnected from my profession as I entered a full-time academic career. I responded to this by becoming very involved with boards and professional organizations. I have over 20 years of experience serving professional organizations and have found that it has not only helped me grow as a leader, it spurred my academic career and gave me opportunities I never imagined possible.

### **What types of organizations outside of academia have you served in leadership roles?**

I've done a lot of work with professional associations as well as voluntary health and welfare organizations. I've found that both have so much to offer in terms of service opportunities and although they require different skill sets, there is a lot of overlap that is complementary.

### **What are some of your favorite leadership roles?**

My most favorite role was serving as President of a Research Foundation. I loved this role because I was able to help both new and seasoned scholars obtain access to funds and/or data for their research. It was also very challenging as the Foundation was about to shut down due to some very complicated leaders who didn't quite have the right motivation to get it back on stable ground. We stabilized the Foundation and it is now stronger than ever. In this role was also able to create an initiative and fund to help doctoral students. I have stayed connected to this Foundation and observed its success over the last 8-10 years. It is so nice to see how initiatives that you start are not only still in place, but they grow stronger every year.

Another favorite role I had was serving as Chair of the Board of a professional organization. The organization had over 65,000 members from over 100 countries and offices in the U.S., Dubai, Beijing and Zurich. I had the opportunity to officially launch the office in Zurich and the presence in Europe. The organization was over 90 years old and I served as the fourth female chair, the youngest and the fourth academic. They board was most often chaired by a white male over the age of 65 who had just retired from a corporate CFO type of job. The organization has a very complex volunteer culture and many governance challenges and overall "drama". I was very different than the typical board chair and I like to think I was good for the culture and the members of the organization.

### **What are your biggest concerns about women's leadership opportunities?**

The fact that only 10-12% of women are on corporate boards annually. The fact that only 4% of CEOs of major corporations are women. The fact that we have declining numbers of women in business schools. The fact that many male leaders are not proactive about these declining numbers – they are supportive, but not proactive. What can we do to raise these numbers in our lifetime? I realize we couldn't even vote 100 years ago, but I would like to see some major increases during the rest of my career.



# "A Corner Office"

**Catherine Sherman, Ph.D., M.F.A., NCC**  
**Teacher, Counselor, Consultant**

## **Describe your supervisory style:**

My supervisory style has been informed by my doctoral studies in counseling supervision. I learned about various models of supervision, and one that particularly inspired me embeds three roles—teacher, counselor, and consultant. When I supervise, I am mindful of audience and context and attempt to tailor my approach based on individual needs and circumstances. I may be more of a teacher to a graduate student intern and a consultant with a seasoned administrator. The counselor role certainly informs my interpersonal communication skills—how to facilitate discourse, to listen well and be present, to understand human differences and be empathetic.

## **What makes a good team leader?**

A strong team leader is figural and distal in the action: She moves to the front in order to share the plan and clarify expectations and then steps back to manage and monitor her team—allowing others to come forward and take ownership of their specific tasks and responsibilities. She builds community and positive workflow by facilitating team member communication and engagement. A good team leader doesn't shy away from hard decisions or conversations. But she also knows how to praise.

## **Why does academic administration appeal to you?**

Academic administration appeals to me because I am, at heart, an interdisciplinarian who is deeply animated by the diverse functions and duties embedded in administrative work. It calls for multi-tasking, planning, innovative and systems thinking, communication, and collaboration. Everyday are new student cases or policy questions or projects to address. Over the years, administrative work has afforded me with many wonderful opportunities to collaborate with community members across divisional lines. I delight in getting out of my office, partnering with colleagues, and developing something new or making it better.



Office of Academic Advising  
1 John Carroll Blvd.  
University Heights, OH 44118  
(216) 397-1620  
csherman@jcu.edu

Pauline Villapando  
Chaplain, University Ministry, Loyola Stritch School of Medicine

**What inspired you to take on leadership roles?**

My first memories of leadership were in high school. I was invited to be a lector and Eucharistic minister at my parish. The power of invitation, especially as a young woman who had a lot of energy and no direction was a game changer for me. Throughout a majority of my teenage years and into my vocation as a campus minister in various settings, I have been invited by mentors who saw something in me and invited that to flourish through particular opportunities. I was less inspired in my youth and more prompted by the idea of formation from my mentors. Now what inspires me is a desire to add my voice to the waves of change and influence; to contribute to the mission and/or the common good. I also hope to lead to be a voice for others who might be marginalized, or not invited to the table—to speak on their behalf and for the greater good of the community.

**Who were your biggest female influences growing up?**

Hands down, the first people who come up are my mom and my aunts (her two sisters). Their unwavering faith (even when I disagree with their theology) has always grounded them in a deep desire to wish for, and work, for the best for their kids. They are outspoken women who are not afraid to argue their point—for better or worse. So I grew up debating with them a lot, but it formed my sense of having a voice and opinion that I was not afraid to share. I grew up in a family where all my first cousins are females, so this gender-biased dynamic definitely shaped my sense of female strength, power and leadership in the family, which certainly extends into the work place.

**What is your measure of success in leadership?**

My measure of success is that every person on the team, or in the community, feels valued and knows that they have something to contribute to the larger picture—from the high powered administrators to the housekeeping staff. Everyone should feel valued in the work that they are contributing to the larger picture of success and service to a particular community.

**Who is a mentor who has influenced your theology of ministry?**

In college I had a spiritual director who was also the director of our college campus ministry. Not only was she a compassionate listener and provided amazing guidance as my spiritual director, but she had a way of making everyone feel loved and accepted and part of the community. She would listen to you in a crowd of people like you were the only person in the room. She was very present to each person and spoke to the dignity of each of us, including the marginalized in our community. She exuded joy and gentleness, while having a deeply strong sense of self. She wasn't afraid to gently challenge us when we had differing opinions, judgments, or sweeping generalizations. Her influence on me has greatly impacted the way I see my role in the university community. God has placed me here to serve, to humbly listen and attend to the dignity of all people—including those outside of our university walls, our neighbors, as a witness to God's special love for each person.

### What advice would you give to college graduates?

Pay attention to, and honor, your interior life. Staying rooted in your true self will help guide you in the sticky situations that can sometimes arise at work, and when discerning minute decisions as well as major ones about vocational direction. Also, surround yourself with a support system of mentors and loved ones who will hold you accountable to always giving your best to the larger mission—whether it be the university or for a world with many needs.



View from the Corner Office

Janet Watters Sisler, Director, Gannon Center for Women and Leadership, Loyola University Chicago



**What are some insights into leadership that you learned from your family?**

I am the middle child of seven children and when I say middle, I mean smack dab in the middle, with two older sisters and one older brother and two younger sisters and one younger brother. Although our mother would often comment that she was one of the few women in the world to have seven only children (we all have very distinctive personalities, sets of talents, and exercise various emotional intelligences); we still did have some characteristics of birth order. In the last few years, mother and father asked me to serve as their power of attorney and power of attorney for health care. They took me aside and explained that I, as the middle, would make sure that everyone had access to information and to an inclusive decision making process. They also reminded me that I had learned how to engage,

negotiate and keep everyone in right relationships. I suppose this is not a bad place to start understanding leadership.

**What early experiences of leadership did you have?**

I found out early on that having intriguing ideas that caught hold of peoples' imaginations was a great springboard for leadership. The VISION thing is captivating and people do like to follow someone who has ideas that are significant, meaningful and positive. I served as class officers in elementary and high school and then when I entered college I ran and served on the community government board. When I was a young teacher, I served on a search team for the principal and thought I could not only interview better than most of the candidates, but had a love for the people and the school's mission that was deeply rooted and future oriented. I decided then to pursue my academic credentials and within three years I was the principal of a Catholic high school of about 1000 students.

**What kind of mid-career experiences did you have in leadership?**

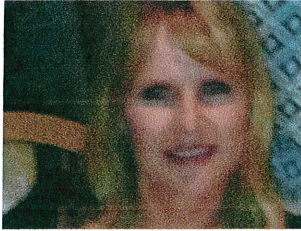
I was recruited to take a position with the Office of Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago. The superintendent called me up and asked me to come down to talk with her. After discovering that I was not in trouble (I had been in the domain more than once), I told the superintendent that I was happy where I was. She quickly responded, "Do you think I would be calling you if you were unhappy?" I loved the professional challenges that I encountered at the Office and was thrilled by the educational reforms we were able to make within the largest Catholic school system in the United States. It was at the office, that I saw the power of social justice and how that power could transform life opportunities for children and their parents as well as for teachers and school administrators. From the Office, I was recruited to establish a Community Benefit program to provide health, housing, educational and psycho-socio services for at-risk women, children and elders. In these positions I learned the importance of continually learning, becoming informed over a broad spectrum of environments, and nurturing people of influence and affluence to support others at the margins.

**Now that you are at Loyola, how has your leadership changed?**

Although I have worked at Catholic organizations my entire life, I believe I have found a niche at Loyola that is deeply rooted in a spirituality of leadership and in a profound respect for the talents of all. It is clear that our mission is focused on working toward the full flourishing of all of creation. I have never worked in an environment with so many talented people who are focused on using the resources of the University to shape our world into one which is more just. What a great place to lead!

## ***Finding the Right Path***

***Teresa Young***



### **How have your parents influenced your career path?**

My parents were very hard working people. They taught me about dedication and commitment in all facets of life. But, I think they taught me the most about perseverance. My mother never liked change, and my dad was always changing because he was determined to make things work. He didn't always know how things would work out, but he knew they would. I use that thought process a great deal in my own life.

### **Were you in leadership roles as a kid?**

I am from a very small town in central Ohio and that community taught me about leadership. Everyone worked, and so I learned about different leadership styles from those environments.

I was a cheerleader for six years and then decided during my junior year not to cheer. I was a leader in this role and liked it. However, I felt empowered after making the decision to stop cheering. I wanted to do something different and found the courage to do something about it.

### **Did you have an idea of what you wanted to do when you were in college?**

I looked at several different options when I first started college. I just couldn't decide what I truly was passionate about at first. And then I found teaching. I knew this career would enable me to be a lifelong learner and it has!

### **What kind of advice do you give new college grads?**

Follow your dreams. That sounds cliché but I continue by saying you might not always know what your dreams are, but keep searching for them. Keep evolving and trying new things - even if it scares you. Learn from those around you, and be persistent and dedicated in your quest to be the best you can be.

## From Floss to Boss

Pamela Zarkowski, JD, MPH

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs



1. What was your journey going from a registered dental hygienist to Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs?

I am a First Gen. My mother's dream was that I earn a Bachelor's degree. I wanted to be a history teacher, but in the early 1970's, so did a lot of Baby Boomer's. It was suggested I think about becoming a dental hygienist. It offered a Bachelor's degree at the University of Michigan, so I applied. I had never met a dental hygienist nor been treated by one! Following graduation, I quickly recognized that I wanted to do more than work in a private dental office. I earned a Master of Public Health in dental public health so I could impact oral health outside the dental operatory. That degree led to getting a position at a School of Dentistry as an assistant professor teaching a wide range of courses. And thus the journey began. I then chose to earn a law degree to provide me with a "niche" expertise in dental and dental hygiene education. Coupled with the MPH and dental background, it gave me the "standing" I needed at the School of Dentistry. I never had a specific mentor, but I did have deans and other administrators, that recognized my potential and provided me with leadership opportunities and as the saying goes, gave me "increasing responsibilities. I have held numerous positions ranging from department chair to executive associate dean at the School of Dentistry. I am in my eighth year as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of Detroit Mercy. In short, the path was a combination of opportunities presented and a willingness on my part to take on more responsibilities. More importantly, each step on the journey has provided me with additional knowledge, experiences and enriched my understanding of the culture of higher education. I have also been blessed with support from various leaders and colleagues, which made the journey both satisfying and rewarding.

2. As you reflect on your career, what or who influenced you?

As noted earlier, I did not have many mentors in my career. My mother was the major influence. Her wish became my sole motivation. Secondly, I attended an all women high school, entered a primarily female profession and my first position was in an all women department. I observed



and learned from the many wonderful women I interacted with, beginning in high school and throughout my professional career. In my experiences, I have met some outstanding women and men leaders. However, it is primarily women that served as role models. I have observed their actions and reactions, modeled leadership and followership and gained from their wins and losses. Innovative, passionate outspoken, hardworking, ready and willing to help, fearless, loyal, supportive and dedicated. Just a few of the many adjectives that inspired me and contributed to my formation as an educator, mentor, leader and colleague.

3. What are some of the lessons you have learned and lesions you have experienced?

Many lessons and lesions in a long career, so I will share a few. As a female leader in a dental school, with more men than women in leadership roles, a couple of lesions occurred. Although I had an excellent record of leadership, some attributed my success to other factors not based on my talent, but friendships with male colleagues. In addition, although I was given the power and authority I needed, if colleagues didn't like my decisions or directions, they often would ignore me and seek out the male dean, questioning my abilities or expertise. Fortunately, all dental deans I worked with supported me and redirected the person back to me! In my role as Provost/VPAA, I learned quickly that one has to be careful and one can get unexpectedly burned. Without going into details, if it's not in writing, you are not protected. Also, appearances can be deceiving, so although someone may appear to be making decisions in your best interests or the interests of the institution, that is not always necessarily true.

As far as lessons, there are many, so I will highlight a few. Saying thank you and acknowledging those who contributed or helped you on a project, program, report or task, goes a long way and pays off in dividends throughout your career. Saying thank you to everyone that contributes to the life and rhythm of the university including (but not limited to) housekeeping, public safety, faculty and staff, food service, in other words, everyone that is part of the fabric of the institution. Another lesson, often repeated, you have to pick and choose your battles, some are worth the bloodshed, others are not. To get respect you have to earn it, by showing you are not afraid of hard work, starting over, seeking help and acknowledging reality. Finally, your colleagues, support staff and most members in the University community are valuable resources for you. Don't be afraid to ask for input, advice, frank feedback and just some common sense.

4. What are you looking for when you are seeking to fill a position?

Sincerity, an ability to be honest about the candidate's strengths and weaknesses. An individual that understands their individual role and responsibilities, but is also willing to contribute as part of a team. An individual that understands the mission of the University and is willing and ready to contribute to that mission in small and significant ways. An individual that is frank and honest with me and others. An individual with a sense of humor.