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TWO LOCAL ALUMNI RECEIVE GUERIN PREP'S HIGHEST ALUMNI HONORS DURING BACCALAUREATE MASS

Kathy Halvax '67 of River Grove and Michael Miller '81 of Elmwood Park received Guerin College Preparatory High School's highest alumni honor at the end of this year's Baccalaureate Mass held Thursday, May 20 at the high school.

The awards recognize their outstanding contribution to their communities, parishes, families and careers and are named for the initial principals of Guerin Prep's foundation schools: Brother Walter Davenport of Holy Cross and Sister Frances Alma McManus of Mother Theodore Guerin.

Both recipients are being recognized for living the high ideals instilled by these founding principals and both are currently taking an active role in the life of Guerin Prep. Halvax serves as the secretary of the newly founded Alumni Council; Miller is a member of Guerin Prep's Board of Directors.

Kathy Halvax – the McManus Award

Kathy Halvax has worked for St. Cyprian church since her days at Mother Guerin, first as a volunteer then full time for the last 31 years. As a volunteer and staff member at St. Cyprian, Kathy has run Bingo, served as an officer for the Catholic Women's Club and helped with many fund raisers and religious education.

She has been an active participant in her community ever since her days at Mother Guerin High School where she received perfect attendance for all four years of high school. "I didn't like missing school!"

Both Kathy's brothers attended Holy Cross. "My parents made a big sacrifice for all three of us to attend Catholic high schools. To this day I know they did the right thing."

Kathy says that her participation in Cursillo, a four day "Walk with Christ" in 1980 was a turning point in her life. "I've met many new people at Cursillo weekends who have become friends to join me in my walk of life." "God has blessed me in so many ways," says Kathy.

In addressing the Guerin Prep graduates, she said, “I have never wanted to let my handicap, that is being short, get in my way. I didn’t want to be singled out and favored. I always felt I was like everyone else. There are times when I have started feeling sorry for myself, but it doesn’t last long because I remember the problems of others. I have told friends there is a reason for what happens to us. I feel I have been put here to show that even though I am handicapped I can set an example for others.”

Mike Miller – the Davenport Award

Following Miller’s graduation from Holy Cross in 1981, he attended DePaul University and majored in both Spanish and business. He then became a CPA and plied his talents into a career in international business. He has provided analyses to international leadership teams that aid in making decisions regarding new markets and lines of business. His business acumen has taken him to work in countries in Europe, Africa, Asia, and South America. While achieving this success in his career, Miller returned to DePaul and earned his Masters of Business Administration with Distinction.

He generously uses his talents and experiences from the corporate world by serving on the finance committee of both Guerin Prep and his local parish St. Celestine. Additionally, he has been a teacher in the Junior Achievement’s Project Business program for junior high students.

A person who very strongly believes in giving back to the community, Miller has been active in the St. Vincent DePaul Society, helping raise funds, collect and deliver food baskets. Using his fluency in Spanish, he has helped the St. Vincent DePaul Society identify non-English speaking families in need in the changing areas of Northwest Chicago. He also lends his bilingual skills St. Pius in Pilsen, translating and assisting in their annual Christmas store.

Among his other volunteer activities, Miller has been an active fundraiser for St. William's parish and an early member of Clowning at the Corners, one of the parish’s largest fund raising events. There his efforts ranged from playing ‘Toto’ in “The Wizard of Oz” to being chairperson of the entire event, and almost every role in between over the years.

His sister Cyndi, an MTG graduate of 1993, and now vice president of Guerin Prep’s Alumni council presented the award to Miller. In her remarks, she quoted Miller’s best friend. “Basically, Mike Miller just makes us all want to be better people and we could use a lot more people like him in the world.”

When Miller joined the Guerin Prep Board in 2008, he spoke of his desire to help further the mission of the school. “My concern is not that there be a boy or girl school, but that all children have the opportunity for a great Catholic education at 80th and Belmont.”

He challenged Guerin Prep graduates to make the most of their Catholic education and to take seriously the responsibility to do good even if no one rewards you.

The Alumni Council administers the McManus and Davenport awards and reaches out to the entire alumni community of Guerin Prep’s foundation schools—Holy Cross and Mother Theodore Guerin high schools—for nominations.

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