

Holy Child Awards Dinner Honorees

Brief bios that demonstrate why the nominees were selected.

2019 Honorees (PA)

Binney Wietlisbach (*Faith in Action Award*) – Binney is the President, Director, and Member of Executive Committee at Haverford Trust Company. Binney is dedicated to helping other women with financial literacy programs. She has served on many non-profit boards in the Philadelphia area, such Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, the regional Board of F.O.C.U.S., the Board of Directors of the Caroline A. Buck Foundation, and the board of Councilors of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. She also served as a member of the Society’s investment committee for many years. (Binney attended Holy Child Academy, Drexel Hill and both of her children graduated from Holy Child School at Rosemont.)

Meghan McCormick (*Holy Child Spirit Award*) – Meghan has been involved with helping youth in West Africa. She spent two years as a Peace Corps volunteer in Guinea working with the Guinean Association for the Development of Private Enterprise where she focused on social impact innovation and social entrepreneurship in the town of Kindia. After returning to the US, she founded Dare to Innovate, a non-profit that empowers young West Africans to fight pressing social problems with market based solutions using creativity and innovation. Meghan then founded Ozé, a for-profit company that serves as a small-business incubator in New Guinea to help combat the high youth unemployment in New Guinea. (Meghan is a graduate of Holy Child School at Rosemont.)

2018 Honorees (CA)

James Sarni (*Faith in Action Award*) – James Sarni is a managing principal at Payden & Rygel and a member of the Executive Committee of the board of directors. Jim is very generous with his time and expertise as he has been involved with many non-profit organizations. In addition to being a member of the Society’s Mission Advancement Advisory Board, Jim has served as a board member for the Center for Investment Studies at University of Southern California’s Marshall School of Business, the Pasadena City College Foundation, Descanso Gardens and Mayfield Junior School, and Mayfield Senior School. (His two daughters are graduates of both Mayfield Schools.)

Brittany Reeser (*Holy Child Spirit Award*) – Brittany is dedicated mathematics education for all. She has worked as an educator at charter schools in low-income neighborhoods, and won national recognition as a teacher for her talents through various teacher awards. Brittany commits her life to making a difference in her students’ lives and making them believe in themselves and all that they can achieve. She attributes her drive to teach and serve others from her Holy Child foundation and feels strongly about teaching in an environment where she can help those who often get overlooked. (Brittany is a graduate of both Mayfield schools.)

2017 Honorees (PA)

Stephanie “Sam” Fleetman (*Faith in Action Award*) – Sam is founder and owner of Mustang Expediting, a trucking business. She is active in and was recently appointed the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the PA Motor Truck Association. She is also past President of the Philadelphia region's chapter. She is heavily involved with the Sharon Alumnae Association and a supporter of Providence Center. Sam supports Holy Child Academy through the Pennsylvania OSTC program. She is also Chair of the Board of the Delaware County Historical Society. (Sam is a graduate of Holy Child Academy, Sharon Hill.)

William Martin (*Holy Child Spirit Award*) – After college, Will spent five years teaching abroad—one in Uganda, one in South Korea, and three in Somaliland at Abaarso School of Science and Technology. The Abaarso School focuses on helping students from ages 11-21, many of the students are orphans who begin school with few English skills, with many going on to prestigious western universities. Will eventually was promoted to the School Management Team and then promoted to Assistant Headmaster by his third year, at the young age of 25. He went on to graduate school at Harvard, and began working at a charter school in Brooklyn, NY. (Will is a graduate of Holy Child School at Rosemont.)

2016 Honorees (NY)

Margaret and Tom Healey (*Faith in Action Award*) – Meg and Tom Healey both have helped many organizations that serve the greater good in their community. Tom has served as trustee of the Rockefeller Foundation Investment Committee, the Morristown Memorial Health Foundation, and the Maryknoll Missionaries. Through the Maryknoll Missionaries, he helped guide fundraising for the St. Mary's Mission Hospital in Nairobi, Kenya. Meg Healey has worked on boards for some of the Society's ministries, including serving as a trustee for Rosemont College (her alma mater) and Cristo Rey of New York.

Alexandra Hellmuth (*Holy Child Spirit Award*) – Alex's desire to help the world began in college where she volunteered for the Kroc Institute of Peace Studies Annual Peace Conference, the Congo Campaign Student and Youth Coordinator, and the Conflict-free Campus Initiative. She also has aided African causes, working as the Assistant Campaign Manager for the Raise Hope for Congo Campaign, The Enough Project, and traveled extensively to the Democratic Republic of the Congo where she helped identify natural resource extraction and trade in the region. She was a Princeton in Africa Fellow and Sustainability Manager in Ghana for Olam International. (Alex is a graduate of Oak Knoll School)

2015 Honorees (PA)

Madeline Sherry, Esq. (*Faith in Action Award*) – Madeline's charitable works have extended into many area of need, serving as a youth mentor and Board Member for Philadelphia Futures, working with the Homeless Advocacy Project, and Co-Chair of the Gibbons Women Initiative, an organization dedicated to women's career advancement. (Madeline is a graduate of Holy Child School at Rosemont and Rosemont Senior School, her two sons are graduates of Holy Child School at Rosemont.)

Annie O'Brien (*Holy Child Spirit Award*) – Annie has a passion for social justice. After learning about the HIV/AIDS epidemic in southern Africa, Annie knew she wanted a career in global health. She volunteered at an HIV children's orphanage in Dodma, Tanzania. Annie works for the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) which partners with Ministries of Health around the world to help them develop sustainable health systems. (Annie is a graduate of Holy Child Academy, Drexel Hill.)

2014 Honorees (CA)

Sandra N. Bane (*Faith in Action Award*) – Sandy has led a successful career and philanthropic life that embodies Cornelia Connelly's philosophy of courage, love, and generosity. She shares her professional talents to advance educational and spiritual programs. Sandy has served on various not for profit boards including First United Methodist Church of Pasadena and the Pasadena Methodist Foundation, Mayfield Junior and Mayfield Senior School, and was board chair of Claremont School of Theology. (Sandy's daughters graduated from both Mayfield schools.)

Theresa Gartland (*Holy Child Spirit Award*) – Theresa's passion for educating and serving underprivileged youth has guided her professional and personal life. She has worked in Watts, CA to combat poverty, crime, and gang violence by offering alternative life styles rooted in hope and opportunity. Currently she is the Executive Director of Operation Progress, Los Angeles. A facility dedicated to motivating students from K through College and to give back to the community. (Theresa is a graduate of Connelly School of the Holy Child in Potomac.)

2013 Honorees (PA)

Marianne Grace (*Faith in Action Award*) – With a gentle spirit and a generous heart, Marianne willingly assumes leadership roles in organizations that strengthen the fabric of communities. Marianne served in key positions in Delaware County's Department of Human Services in Pennsylvania and currently the County's Executive Director. Marianne spent more than a decade developing comprehensive programs for drug and alcohol treatment and prevention and for mental health. She has served on the board of Holy Child Academy, Drexel Hill, as well as being integral to many organizations including Merion Mercy Academy for Girls, Community YMCA Foundation, Mercy Catholic Medical Center, Upper Darby Arts and Education Foundation, and Saint Andrew the Apostle Pastoral Council. (Her children are graduates of Holy Child Academy, Drexel Hill and she is a former Holy Child Board Member)

Christopher McNabb (*Holy Child Spirit Award*) – His service-directed life began when he was a sixth grade student at Holy Child School at Rosemont. He organized drives to help the homeless. He later traveled to poverty-stricken areas across the world including the Philippines and Guatemala to help residents combat poverty. His commitment to social justice is at the foundation of his efforts. He passionately believes that all should serve their communities. He has worked with immigrant HIV/AIDS patients and female prisoners; and served as a youth minister. (Chris is a graduate of Holy Child School at Rosemont.)

2012 Honorees (NY)

John Feerick, Esq. (*Holy Child Spirit Award*) – Dean Feerick is the founder and director of the Feerick Center for Social Justice at Fordham University, which he established in 2006 to develop solutions to the problems that result from urban poverty. The Feerick Center develops academic courses related to social justice and poverty reform, and aims to train law students and fellows to work for social justice. The Center has initiated several programs, including volunteer programs that offer legal advice to homeless individuals, those at risk of becoming homeless, and those who are unrepresented in consumer debt cases. (Two of his daughters are graduates of School of the Holy Child in Rye, NY and he served on the school's board)

Kathleen DiChiara (*Faith in Action Award*) – In 1975, after hearing the pastor of her church talk about the hidden hunger in her hometown of Summit, NJ, Mrs. DiChiara began an emergency food program out of the back of her car. Requiring a more permanent solution, she collaborated with the Archdiocese of Newark to establish a network of emergency food pantries. By 1982, she had incorporated her food program as a nonprofit. Kathleen has received numerous awards, including those from three Presidents, the Pope, and three New Jersey governors. (Her two children are graduates of Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child.)

2011 Honorees (PA)

Anne Ayella (*Holy Child Spirit Award*) – For more than 30 years, Anne has worked for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in the office of Nutritional Development Services (NDS), which provides meals and snacks to the hungry. As the Assistant Director of NDS, Anne does community relations and outreach. She travels throughout the archdiocese of Philadelphia advocating for the needy in parishes and schools. Anne is also the Diocesan Director for Catholic Relief Services and is involved in the Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger. She often lobbies in Harrisburg for the needs of the hungry. (Alum of Holy Child Academy, Sharon Hill; serves on the Society's Major and Planned Gift subcommittee)

Robert Pollock (*Faith in Action Award*)- After a successful 20-year career on Wall Street, Robert retired at the age of 45, but making himself happy has not been his focus. For the past two decades, he has spent his time helping others by volunteering with organizations such as the American Red Cross, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. (Robert's daughters attended Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child in Summit, N.J. and he served on the School's Board of Directors and chaired the board for four years.)

2010 Honorees (CA)

Marie Poulsen, Ph.D. (*Holy Child Spirit Award*) – Compassionately uses her talents and abilities to care for infants prenatally exposed to crack, alcohol and other drugs and the parenting challenges of these children born with special needs. Marie developed the Baby and Me program for mothers whose babies were taken away at birth due to a positive drug test, so they will know each other upon reunification. (Children and grandchildren attended Mayfield Jr. School and Mayfield Sr.; Mayfield Senior School Board Member and SHCJ Associate)

John Alcorn, Esq. (*Faith in Action Award – John is deceased*) – John took a one-year sabbatical from the law practice he had founded to travel to the Tamale Institute of Cross Cultural Studies (TICCS) in Ghana, West Africa to give a year of unpaid service. TICCS is a teaching and research center of the Catholic Church that offers courses in language-learning, culture-learning, and learning for appropriate ministry and development. The mission of Alcorn’s law practice is to help people solve U.S. immigration problems by providing effective, competent, professional, and caring legal representation. Alcorn also provides pro bono immigrant legalization services for SVD priests and personally pays the legal fees for many indigent immigrants who are served by his firm. (Taught by the Sisters of the Holy Child at St. Anastasia’s School)

2009 Honorees (PA) – *Three honorees (Bicentennial Celebration and Inaugural Awards Dinner)*

J. Gordon Cooney, Esq. (*Faith in Action Award*) – For over ten years extended pro-bono legal counsel to man wrongfully accused and on death row. (Gordon is a Holy Child School at Rosemont graduate and former Board Chair)

Mary Evelyn Tucker, Ph.D. (*Faith in Action Award*) – International leader in education on religion and its relation to ecological issues. Co-founder of the Forum on religion and Ecology. In that role she organizes educational conferences at the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard Divinity School. She is also co-editor of several books.
(Mary Evelyn is a Suffern Alum)

John Connolly (*Holy Child Spirit Award*) – Founded and serves as President and CEO of InspiriTec an organization that creates meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities. He incorporates his faith into the work he does every day. (John is a SHCJ Associate)