



Mercy Education  
Educación de la Misericordia

Courageous Action. Selfless Spirit.™  
Acción valiente. Espíritu altruista.™

# Conference of Mercy Student Leaders

Monday, June 28 - Tuesday, June 29, 2021  
*Virtual Event*



# Program Schedule

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## DAY 01

### **The Mission and Charism of Catherine McAuley**

*Sr. Mary Kay Dobrovolny, RSM*

Monday,  
June 28

### **Personality Inventory and Leadership Development**

*Mr. Ed Curtin, President of Mercyhurst Preparatory School and Mrs. Eleasha Tarplin, Dean of Students, Mercy High School - Farmington Hills, MI*

12:00 -  
4:30 pm ET

### **Take Action! How YOU Can Raise Your Voice to Bring About Societal Change!**

*Marianne Comfort, Justice Coordinator, Institute Justice Office*

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## DAY 02

### **Environmental Justice as a Work of Mercy**

*Colleen Swain, Mercy Global Action*

Tuesday,  
June 29

### **Meet Mercy Volunteer Corps**

*Andrea Haller, Community Coordinator for Mercy Volunteer Corps*

12:00 -  
4:15 pm ET

### **Advocacy Project Planning**

### **Closing Prayer and Commissioning**

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*The event will be held virtually via Zoom. If possible, student groups are encouraged to gather in-person - observing all necessary safety protocols - to attend the virtual event and facilitate their group work on advocacy planning. Don't forget a brown bag lunch!*

# About the Conference

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## Program Goals

Participants will grow in their understanding of the mission of Mercy and Catherine McAuley.

Participants will engage in Mercy Critical Concerns by planning advocacy projects for their school communities.

Participants will enhance individual leadership skills and goals through various exercises and activities.

**Registration opens April 15**  
**Deadline: June 1**

**Website:**  
[bit.ly/mercy-student-leaders](https://bit.ly/mercy-student-leaders)

Questions? Contact Kimberly Baxter,  
[kbaxter@sistersofmercy.org](mailto:kbaxter@sistersofmercy.org)

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## Connect with Mercy

Mercy Education



Sisters of Mercy of the Americas



# Meet the Presenters

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Marianne Comfort is justice coordinator for Earth, anti-racism and women for the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. She serves on the steering committee of the Catholic Climate Covenant and the boards of the Global Catholic Climate Movement and the National Religious Partnership for the Environment. She also is a member of the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C.'s Care for Creation Committee.



Ed Curtin, president of Mercyhurst Preparatory School, has over 25 years of teaching experience in the Theology Department. He has spent almost his entire career at MPS. Mr. Curtin received a Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies/ Religious Education from Gannon University. Ed served MPS as assistant principal from June 2011 until his appointment as president in July 2015. He was named a Golden Apple teacher in 2008. In addition, Ed served as MPS Athletic Director. He was an adjunct instructor in the Religious Studies Department at Mercyhurst College, and served as the Youth Minister / Confirmation Director at St.

Julia's parish in the Diocese of Erie.



Mary Kay Dobrovolny, RSM, is a member of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. Her love of Catherine McAuley and the early women of Mercy was deepened through the opportunity to live and minister in Dublin, Ireland, at the original foundation house for the Sisters of Mercy. These nearly eight years on the leadership team for Mercy International Association were enriching and helped her form a global perspective. Today, Mary Kay lives on the U.S./Mexico border in Southern California where she seeks to be "Mercy presence" among migrant peoples while serving as a vocation minister for her community. Mary

Kay's professional degrees are in scripture (Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN, and in spiritual direction certificate from St Patrick's College in Maynooth, Ireland).

# Meet the Presenters

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Andrea Haller is a Community Coordinator with Mercy Volunteer Corps. She supports Mercy Volunteers serving in Detroit, MI, and Guyana, South America. Additionally, she supports potential volunteers in the discernment process. After graduating from Ohio Dominican University in 2016, Andrea served as a Mercy Volunteer and special education teacher in Guyana, South America. She continued teaching for a few years until she joined the MVC staff in March of 2020. Andrea is passionate about interfaith dialogue and care for Earth.



Colleen Swain is the Leadership Development and Advocacy Associate with Mercy International Association, Mercy Global Action (MIA-MGA). During her time with MIA-MGA, Colleen has engaged in global policy at the United Nations and numerous Mercy justice advocacy responses in relation to the MIA key thematic areas of Displacement of Persons and Degradation of Earth at both the local and global level. Most recently, Colleen has been the program manager of the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship. Colleen graduated from Salve Regina University in Newport, Rhode Island, where she earned her Master's Degree in International Relations and Bachelor degrees in Global Studies with a concentration in international development and Spanish.



Eleasha Tarplin spent over eight years as a financial analyst prior to her role as an educator. She returned to Mercy High School in Farmington Hills, Michigan, her alma mater, in August 2007, to student-teach in the Math Department and immediately after was hired as a full-time math teacher. She taught various levels of Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II and business classes. In July 2014, Mrs. Tarplin became the Dean of Student Affairs at Mercy. In this role, one of Mrs. Tarplin's major responsibilities is moderating Student Government. Mrs. Tarplin has a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio; a Secondary Teaching Certification in Mathematics and Business; and a Master of Arts in Teaching Mathematics from the University of Detroit Mercy in Detroit, Michigan. She currently lives in Oak Park, Michigan, with her husband, and has a daughter and two sons.