

LEGACY AWARD

LEGACY defined... *“The long lasting impact of events or actions that took place in the past, or of a person’s life.”*

It was in the early 1940’s in the city of Nassau, New Providence, The Bahamas, when Cleveland LeRoy Mitchell was the benefactor of the strict yet spiritual and well-rounded teaching of the Benedictine monks from St. Johns Abbey of Collegeville, Minnesota. These determined priests were instrumental in building the 1st Catholic secondary school - St Augustine’s School on the northwest corner of the church grounds of St. Francis Xavier Church, on West and West Hill Streets. The school was housed in the two storey building called “The Niche”. LeRoy was a part of the inaugural class of St. Augustine’s. He also displayed his athletic prowess as captain of several basketball teams on the historic basketball court on the Priory. The beautiful, talented, and demure Paula Louise Albury was the Captain of the Setons Club female basketball team, which also practiced and played on the same court. At first Mom was enrolled in “The Government High School”, but was persuaded by Fr. Brendan Forsythe, OSB to transfer to Xaviers College for a Catholic education -- where subsequently she graduated. Xaviers College was an all-girls school under the management and tutelage of the Sisters of Charity from New York.

This historic spot of The Priory, was the hub where many sporting, social and liturgical activities took place. Fr. Brendan, became match-maker in the courtship of “Mitchelli” (as he was known) and the young Paula. After three years of courtship, on August 27, 1951 this handsome and respected couple were married in St. Francis Xavier Church by their match-maker. In true Catholic form, eight children were born of that union: Therese(deceased), Paulette, Peter, Michael (deceased), Elizabeth, Marie, Myra and Michelle. This began **THE MITCHELL LEGACY**.

Regular church attendance and participation became an integral part of our lives, abased by the stellar examples set by our parents. LeRoy, the focused and dedicated liturgical churchman, served as the Official Diocesan Master of Ceremonies assisting the bishop(s) and priests whenever called upon. Mom was a trailblazer in her own right, having served the (Arch)Diocese of Nassau for over 45 years of uninterrupted service in the Chancery Office before retiring in 2001. She held the titles of Archivist, Notary and Judge Delegate – Marriage Tribunal, and Vice Chancellor – with the distinction of being the first female and lay person in each role. In 1998, she was awarded the title “Dame” of the Order of St. Gregory by Pope (St.) John Paul II for her exemplary dedicated service. Both parents were heavily involved in numerous parish and diocesan groups, clubs and committees such as, the Parish Council, Diocesan Pastoral Council, Christian Family Movement (CFM), To Encounter Christ (TEC) and Cursillo, to name a few.

As the Benedictine Monks formed their lives, our parents also formed each of our lives with Catholicism as the base. Discipline and education, sprinkled with lots of love and fun was the hallmark. Each member of the family received their sacraments in St. Francis Xavier Cathedral Parish. The children continue to be involved in the building up of the church in various areas: as Director of the Catholic Archdiocesan Annual Appeal (CAAA) and in ministries such as: Lector/ Commentator, Catechist for CCD and RCIA (children and adult Catholic formation), as CAAA committee member and/or donors, Choir, altar server, Eucharistic ministry, Altar Guild, visiting the sick/shut-ins, New Cathedral Building Fund Committee, TEC, and Koinonia.

Each of LeRoy and Paula’s children attended primary school at St. Francis and/or Xaviers College (Lower School), followed by Daddy’s beloved St. Augustine’s College for secondary education. Both of Marie’s children (3rd generation) Elizabeth and Jeffrey Rodgers Jr. also followed in these footsteps. At SAC, LeRoy for many years served as PTA President and as Inaugural President of SACA. It was also a given that we each would continue to complete a minimum Bachelor’s degree despite the cost and sacrificial undertaking for our parents.

While matriculating at SAC, each of the second and third generations also followed the path of the school’s and our parents endeavour, to be wel rounded citizens of service with “Christ as our Light”. Each of us became involved in extracurricular activities at school and out of school. On campus, each of us was involved in two or more of the following: varsity sports including – basketball, volleyball, softball, track and field, netball, swimming; served on the Student Council, The Augustine (newspaper), The Beacon (yearbook), Anchor Club, Interpretive Dance, The Spinnerettes (baton majorettes), Junior Achievement, and/or the Ecology Club. Elizabeth (Mitchell-Daxon) also returned to SAC as an Accounting Teacher for 13 years. Our clubs outside of school included ballet / dance, basketball, photography, track and field, soccer, orinthology, neighborhood watch, tennis and piano. Moreover, in the wider community of The Bahamas

and in Florida, the Mitchell's are involved in giving service, uplifting the marginalized, mentoring, involved in social action, counselling and countless clean up campaigns. Like the Patriarch and Matriarch, we have also held local, regional and international leadership positions in our fraternal organizations – Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., as well as The Bahamas Primary School Student of The Year Foundation, Toastmasters, Junior Achievement, not to mention the various leadership positions in the church and workplace.

C. LeRoy(dec.)- Certified Architect)/Dame Paula(dec.)-MBA: Rearing God-fearing, loving, spiritual and educated off-spring who make a positive impact in the community they serve ... and pay it forward.

Therese “Terri” (dec.) Retired educator) - MBA, BA: Amalgamation of SAC all boys school with Xaviers College All-girls school in 1970. Lifelong friendships in the Young Christian Students (YCS) Club;

Paulette (Retired Administrative Assistant/Money-Marketing Specialist) – BA: Playing on championship Basketball/Volleyball varsity teams; Travelling with Terri and other enthusiastic SAC scholars to Bangor, Wales during an AIFS (American Institute of Students) trip;

Peter (Estate/Trust & Estate Planning/Institutional Advancement, (Retired banker)) – MBA, BA: Playing on 1971 SAC Sr. Boys championship basketball team. He is proud of designing and painting the 1st building mural on SAC campus (bookstore);

Elizabeth (Educator, Accountant and Law Graduate) – MBA, BA; Taught Accounting at SAC for 13 years; Proud when former students (CPAs/Accountants) seek her out to let her know of their success; As Student Council rep. – led fundraising drive to stop yearbook from becoming extinct due to budgetary constraints;

Marie (Catholic Board of Education – Education Administrator) - MBA, BA; Part of the 1st transitional class from British form (1-5) system to American grade (7-12) system; “Wear your St. Augustine’s uniform with dignity and pride wherever you go!”;

Myra (Retired PMO Manager/Project Management Professional) – MBA, BA, ICPM, CM Dazzling and illuminating talent show audiences with fire batons, hoop and flag baton routines; Lifelong friendships and the genuine love of the Class of 1979 family; SAC Pride - All Day ... Everyday!

Michelle (Director-Roman Catholic Archdiocese Annual Appeal Ministry) BA- witnessing the school and local church embrace change throughout the years while maintaining a high spiritual standard. Recalls the many trophies the Jr. & Sr. Spinnerettes teams won in competition at St. Leo College, FL. – SAC won 1st place in both categories.

Elizabeth (Rodgers) Longley (Sr. Human Resources Professional) – MSc Tourism Mgmt, BA, SPHRi. – Be intentional about fostering SAC Pride by rallying behind fellow students – celebrated every student for every accomplishment (Pep rally/ student assembly/in-class celebration). Sense of belonging to a ‘family’ that cares about your accomplishments.

Jeffrey C. Rodgers Jr. (Entrepreneur/Proprietor)- BA Proudly recalls representing the Big Red Machine on the 2005 BAICS championship Sr. Boys Basketball Team; as well as winning the BAISS Triple Jump, Long Jump, Hurdles and the 400meters at the BAISS Track/Field Meet. SAC has taught (him) the importance of winning – which translates into winning in Life!”

Q. What one thing can be said that stands out most about your Family. -- That genetically, we all have a Servant Leadership trait, infused with love and creativity.

Our genetic Heritage – LEGACY – of LOVE, propels us to be God-Fearing, Loving, Community-Minded Servant Leaders.

