

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP LUNCHEON 2024

MARCH 19, 2024

Brookhaven Country Club

Farmers Branch, Texas

WOMEN



as

PEACEMAKERS



School Sisters of Notre Dame
Central Pacific Province



“Love is the bond that unites us with one another and with God.”

*~Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger
Letter #949, December 8, 1850*

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As I welcome you to the 2024 Women’s Leadership Luncheon, I am forever grateful for your friendship and ongoing support of our sisters. Your continued prayers, generous financial support and the many ways you serve our sister communities fills me with abundant joy, and I share with you today the blessings of our sisters in the Central Pacific Province and around the world who are impacted by your gifts. We have just celebrated 190 years since our founding and so much has changed, but the ideals we are rooted in remain the same. We can continue to serve our communities because of you.

These luncheons are our opportunity to recognize the unique impact and contributions that women make to our community and the broader world. Our Province celebrates strong and empowering women leaders in Dallas, Milwaukee, St. Louis and St. Paul, Minnesota, and we are thrilled to welcome so many of you here today.

As you embrace the fellowship of those around you, we ask that you also keep this year’s theme *Women as Peacemakers in a Fractured World of Violence* in mind as you visit with one another. Now more than ever before, our world is an ever-changing place where communities and entire nations are facing challenges, strife and discord. Let us do our part and help make our communities more peaceful, one smile, one small gesture, one act of kindness at a time.

I want to give special thanks to our individual and corporate sponsors who made today’s free event possible while also supporting the ongoing urgent needs of the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

With peace, blessings and gratitude,


Sister Debra Sciano, SSND

Sister Debra Marie Sciano, SSND
Provincial Leader

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Program

Welcome **Sister Debra Marie Sciano, SSND**
Provincial Leader

Prayer **Natalie Chavarria '26**
Cristo Rey College Preparatory School

Introduction of Speaker **Kris Kramer**
Women's Leadership Luncheon
Committee Co-Chair

Keynote Speaker **Allenna Bangs**
Deputy Criminal Division Chief
Tarrant County District
Attorney's Office

Q&A

Closing Remarks **Mary Kay Murray**
Resource Development Director



Why china plates and silverware instead of disposables?
Why water pitchers and glasses instead of plastic water bottles?
Why a more plant-based than meat-based meal?

Because the School Sisters of Notre Dame commitment to peace and nonviolence calls us to live simply, responsibly, and sustainably with all of God's creation.

Learn more at www.ssndcp.org



Does the mission of Christ tug at your heart?

We invite women and men to become SSND associates and deepen their commitment to Christ's mission.



School Sisters
of Notre Dame
Associates



To learn about the associate program visit
www.ssndcentralpacific.org/get-involved/become-an-associate.



Speaker



Allenna Bangs

Deputy Criminal Division Chief
Tarrant County District Attorney's Office

Assistant Criminal District Attorney Allenna Bangs is a Deputy Criminal Division Chief with the Tarrant County Criminal District Attorney's Office (TCCDA). She is the former Chief of the Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) team where she served for four years. She has been an Assistant Criminal District Attorney with Tarrant County since 2008. Allenna received her bachelor's degree from Southern Methodist University and her Juris Doctor from Texas Wesleyan School of Law (now Texas A&M School of Law).

She has prosecuted cases from misdemeanors to aggravated sexual assaults and capital murders. She was a member of the Gang Unit and successfully prosecuted multiple members of the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas and the Bandidos Outlaw Motorcycle Gang. She has successfully prosecuted two separate murders in Tarrant County where the bodies were never located. Since 2016, she has been active in various ways in the avid prosecution of offenders of Crimes Against Women. She was previously the Chief Prosecutor of Criminal District Court Four before returning to IPV in 2018. She has been the recipient of the SafeHaven Woman of Legacy Award and the International Outlaw Motorcycle Gang Investigators Prosecution Team of the Year Award.

She was previously the facilitator of the Tarrant County Fatality Review and a frequent speaker on behalf of the TCCDA's office and

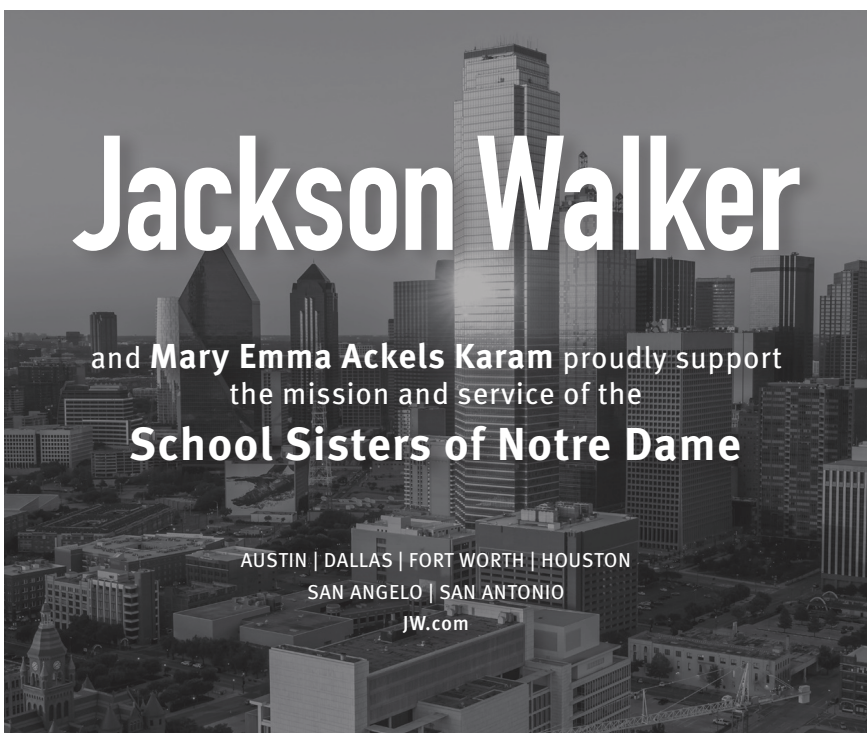
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Texas District and County Attorney's Association. She has been published in the Texas Prosecutor Journal three times for her work as an Assistant Criminal District Attorney.

In 2020, she assisted in the development and implementation of an intake program for Family Violence cases which has been recognized by Texas Association of Counties for the Best Practices Award and the National Association of Counties 2021 Achievement Award for Criminal Justice and Public Safety.

In 2022, Mrs. Bangs was the lead prosecutor in *The State of Texas v. Reginald Kimbro* where the defendant, a serial rapist and murderer, was sentenced to life without parole in two homicides, life for an aggravated sexual assault, and the maximum sentence for three additional sexual assault cases in a negotiation that involved four counties and multiple cities across the state of Texas.

Mrs. Bangs is married and the mother of four children.



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In honor of Sister Georgiann Wildhaber, SSND



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**Thank you to all of our anonymous donors who
helped to make this event possible.**



Women Honoree



Mrs. Lydia Torrez
President of St. Cecilia
School, Dallas



Lydia Torrez is the mother of three sons and seven grandchildren. She has been a force in Catholic Education in Dallas, a Cub scout master for ten years, an advocate for Justice issues in the Dallas area, and many other activities. Lydia has also been a founding member and now advisor for CHI for over twenty years. Her commitment to the Church and the community is broad in scope and deep in leadership.

Lydia has over 40 years of experience as an educator working for DISD and the Dallas Diocesan Catholic Schools. As Principal of St. Cecilia and now President, she has raised the profile of the school, advocating for students to reach their full potential and become the individuals God intended them to be.

During the past two years, Lydia has organized and participated in two pilgrimages to Spain to walk the Camino. As Development Director at Bishop Dunne for 18 years, she accompanied summer mission trips for students to Honduras and successfully managed many campaigns for the academic improvement and physical plant updates of the school.

She is the recipient of various awards: Cub Master of the Year for St. Cecilia Parish, Alumni of the Year for St. Cecilia Catholic School, Educator of the Year for the Oak Cliff Chamber of Commerce, Educator of the Year for Dallas Pro-Life, Person of the Year for the Notre Dame Club of Dallas, and the recipient of the Voyager Award from Bishop Dunne Catholic School for her contribution to education.

Lydia is a woman leader who has impacted her Church, school and the broader community with her talents and commitment to community building. We are pleased to honor her today!



Past Speakers

- 2023** ***Rosemarie Nassif, SSND, Ph.D.***
Executive Director, Center for Catholic Education
Loyola Marymount University School of Education in Los Angeles
“Trust Your Cape”
- 2022** ***Mayra J. Thompson, M.D. FACOG***
Obstetrics and Gynecology, Private Practice
“Graced Leadership: Women’s Unique Response to Urgent Needs”
- 2021** ***Janette Monear***
President/CEO of the Texas Trees Foundation
“The Symbiotic Relationship of Trees and People”
- 2020** ***Mary Elizabeth Cedillo-Pereira***
Executive Director of Arizona State University’s International
Development Office
“Embracing Diversity in our Struggle for Unity”
- 2019** ***Anne Simmons-Benton***
Executive Director of Arizona State University’s International
Development Office
“The Hidden Crime of Human Trafficking: How to Become a Leader
in Your Community”
- 2018** ***Theresa Francis***
Principal at Notre Dame School of Dallas and SSND Associate
“My Spiritual Formation – Led and Formed by the Charism of the
School Sisters of Notre Dame”
- 2017** ***Mary Emma Ackels Karam, J.D.***
Partner at Jackson Walter, L.L.P.
“How to Have a Successful Career and Live a Faithful Life”
- 2016** ***Kris Kramer***
Executive Director, Catholic Pro-Life Committee of North Texas
“There’s Just Something About Mary”

Past Speakers *continued*



2015 ***Sheila Madigan Levantino***

Marriage and Family Therapist and Spiritual Director

2014 ***Jennifer Staubach Gates***

Councilmember for the City of Dallas

2013 ***Dr. Susan Hanssen***

Associate Professor of History at the University of Dallas

Thank You!

We wish to thank the advisory committee members
for their support and friendship:
Mary Lynn Bangs, Co-Chair and Kris Kramer, Co-Chair.

We would like to thank our student volunteers from
Cristo Rey for serving as greeters today:

José Armijo

Ruby Lara

Melanie Celedón

Jesus López

Natalie Chavarria

Yanamarie Molina

Andres Díaz

Emily Perez

Diana Díaz

Brandon Puente

Thank you for attending our 2024 Women's Leadership Luncheon.
All proceeds benefit the ministries of the sisters who devote their lives to
creating positive, systemic change throughout the world. If you would like
to make a gift, you can scan the QR code on page 7.

Let peace begin with you!



Save
the
Date

2025 Women's Leadership Luncheon

Women as Educators

March 2025



School Sisters of Notre Dame
Central Pacific Province

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