



FORDHAM
THE JESUIT UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK



THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL

MAGIS

Making *Magis* a Living Ideal

The Latin word *magis*, meaning “more, to a greater extent,” is one of the core principles of a Jesuit education. But it is much more than an abstract concept. It is a lifelong call to strive for excellence, to make the most of our God-given talents and use them to serve others.

The spirit of *magis* animates the Fordham University President's Council, a group of successful professionals and philanthropists who are committed to mentoring Fordham's future leaders, funding key initiatives, and raising the University's profile.

Since the President's Council was established in 2004, accomplished alumni, parents, and friends have been sharing their time, creativity, and financial resources with Fordham, and the council's impact on the lives of students and young alumni grows each year.

The President's Council has nearly 100 members, drawn from across the professional world, contributing their time and expertise for the benefit of future Fordham generations.

MAGIS



A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

When I visited Fordham as a high schooler, it immediately felt like home. My parents were from the Bronx, and my paternal grandparents still lived on Bedford Park Boulevard and the Grand Concourse, but the connection I felt was not purely geographic. And while I was struck by the beauty of the Rose Hill campus, it was more than that, too. Fordham felt like home to me because I could sense goodness and kindness in the people I met there.

Today, my feelings about Fordham have never been stronger. I'm a 1986 graduate of the Gabelli School of Business. My wife, Tracy O'Neill, is a 1987 Fordham graduate and a member of the Fordham College at Rose Hill advisory board. Our son Ryan earned a bachelor's degree from the University in 2015. And I could not be prouder to serve as chair of the President's Council.

Tracy and I came from middle-class backgrounds, and Fordham helped us launch our careers. We have been blessed to be able to return the favor with an endowed scholarship that helps students—many from the Bronx—afford the remarkable Jesuit education that Fordham offers and use it to launch fulfilling careers of their own. Along with financial giving, we both find it immensely rewarding to network with alumni and share our time and knowledge with students and University leadership.

When I mentor students—through my involvement with the President's Council and in my role as CEO of corporate banking at PNC Financial Services Group—I like to encourage them to lead with integrity, to never sacrifice their moral values. It's a principle that is at the heart of a Fordham education, and it is one I am honored to try to uphold as I work with President Tania Tetlow and my fellow council members to help Fordham continue to educate leaders with integrity and people for others.



Terry Begley, GABELLI '86
Chair, Fordham University President's Council

Macto

v: to magnify, glorify, honor

As a New Jersey native, Marcella Barry knew she wanted to stay in the tri-state area for college, but it was Fordham's strong Jesuit tradition, its New York City location, and its expansive network that really pulled her in. It's a decision she's never regretted making. To this day, she thanks the University for teaching her how to think—how to be discerning, challenge norms, and lead.

In her role as chief people officer at Phoenix Tower International, a wireless infrastructure company, Barry is responsible for “the whole people aspect regarding strategy, leadership, talent acquisition, retention, benefits, and payroll.” She is grateful to Fordham for the education she gained and the connections she forged—an underlying connectivity she taps into daily to help her thrive professionally (her last three bosses attended Jesuit schools) and personally (her husband, Tom, is Jesuit educated, too).

This gratitude is why she works to uplift current students. By supporting the Fordham Founder's Undergraduate Scholarship Fund and serving on the President's Council, she's also able to rekindle the excitement she felt as a student at Rose Hill, when she became the first person in her family to earn a college degree.



Marcella Barry, FCRH '92, GSE '96
Vice Chair

“When I'm working with the people on the council, I still feel like I'm a student: eager and motivated. And that same eagerness and adrenaline that I had every day I walked on campus, and I was so excited to be there, I'm feeling that now.”

MAGIS



Adjungo

v: to join, connect

Anne Williams-Isom's life reflects the story and values of Fordham. A daughter of immigrants from Trinidad and Tobago, she first learned about the struggles of vulnerable children and families and the importance of social justice while growing up in Queens, where she attended Catholic schools. And her post-Fordham career has led her to a key role in New York City government.

As the deputy mayor for health and human services, she oversees the city's health and social services agencies, addressing the needs of seniors, children, victims of domestic and gender-based violence, and people struggling with hunger and homelessness.

Prior to her city government role, Williams-Isom was the CEO of the Harlem Children's Zone, a nonprofit anti-poverty organization. She also brings her expertise to Fordham as the James R. Dumpson Chair in Child Welfare Studies at the Graduate School of Social Service—and as a President's Council member, she has helped mentor students from underrepresented backgrounds. The spiritual strength Fordham helped her develop is evident in stirring remarks she has delivered at University events, including the 2018 Graduate School of Social Service diploma ceremony and the annual Fordham Women's Summit later that year.

In striving to advance the University or other causes, “be joyful warriors,” she said at the summit. “That joy is a vital ingredient. It is the spark that can light the way for you and for others around you.”

“As far as I’m concerned, philanthropy is a part of having a full life. All of us need to walk in our purpose and to connect to that light that is inside of us.”



Anne Williams-Isom,
FCLC '86

MAGIS

Genero

v: to beget, engender, produce, create



Growing up in Baltimore, Jason Caldwell had what he calls the stereotypical “African American in an inner city” experience: single-parent home, food stamps, drug dealers as the most successful people around—until his athletic prowess earned him a football scholarship and a chance at a different life. Today, he’s a three-time Fordham graduate and vice president of private wealth management at Goldman Sachs.

“I stand on the shoulders of hundreds of people who saw something in me and who gave me an opportunity to be successful,” he said. “It was up to me to continue to push forward, but there were hundreds of people who actually pried the door open or at least gave me a glimpse of what success looked like.”

Caldwell’s philanthropic motivation is simple: He feels indebted to Fordham for the blessings and opportunities it’s bestowed upon him. He met his wife, Katheryn Pereyra-Caldwell, FCRH ’08, on campus, and the alumni network has played a major role in helping him advance professionally. He generously supports Fordham Athletics and the Fordham Founder’s Undergraduate Scholarship Fund. And by serving on the President’s Council, he believes he’s in the best position to help pry open doors for Fordham students from backgrounds similar to his own, students who just need a chance to thrive.



Jason Caldwell
GABELLI ’10, ’17, GSAS ’11

“It’s okay to fall short or to start over. I didn’t feel that way early on, but I wish I would’ve taken more risks—when it came to my career, when it came to traveling. It’s okay to fail. It’s not about how many times you get knocked down; what’s more important is how many times you get back up.”

MAGIS



Incito

v: to excite, spur, inspire, increase



Peggy Smyth's motivation for serving on the President's Council is simple: "Everything good I have in my life," she said, "I owe to Fordham."

The chief financial officer for the U.S. at National Grid met her husband, Bernard Smyth, FCRH '85, when she was studying economics at Fordham College at Rose Hill on a presidential scholarship. Joseph A. O'Hare, S.J., who served as the 32nd president of Fordham, baptized the couple's two sons at the University Church. And Smyth is still best friends with her Fordham roommate.

Smyth achieved remarkable success in the business world at an early age: In 2002, *Crain's New York Business* named her to its "40 Under 40" list. She went on to become a global business executive in some of the world's biggest companies, including technology and energy firms.

After receiving a Fordham education, learning the "tech side" of her business was a challenge for which Smyth was prepared. "At Fordham, you learn how to learn," she said. "The world is constantly changing, so you always need to be studying to stay up to date. And Fordham teaches you that. That's why I am a really big advocate of a liberal arts education."



Margaret (Peggy) Smyth,
FCRH '85

*"Most Fordham students are
pretty hungry to succeed, and
that's what I like to see.
Attitude is everything."*

MAGIS



Suscipio

v: to raise up, maintain, support

A Southern California native, Cindy Vojtech came to Fordham for the Catholic education and the Wall Street proximity. She was active in Campus Ministry, competed on the varsity volleyball and crew teams, and interned at Lehman Brothers. She went on to earn a doctorate in economics and is currently a principal economist for the Federal Reserve Board in Washington, D.C.

Fordham was a critical waypoint on her journey. As a student, she was challenged “not just academically but athletically and spiritually, too,” said Vojtech, who graduated as valedictorian.

Her Fordham experiences have informed the ways in which she gives back as a President’s Council member. As an undergraduate, she was the first recipient of a scholarship created by Joan and John E. Toffolon Jr., GABELLI ’73, ’77, for talented female students at the Gabelli School of Business. In addition to mentoring students and cheering on the volleyball team when they are in D.C., Vojtech has given in support of scholarships, as well as the volleyball and crew programs.

She developed a friendship with the Toffolons, whose generosity helped inspire her to join the council, and she strives to help students benefit from the kinds of experiences that shaped her at Fordham. “All these experiences,” she said, “develop a person who is prepared to face any kind of challenge.”

“At Fordham, I found mentors in my coaches, professors, and teammates. Their support prepared me to thrive and grow in a team-based work environment.”



Cindy Vojtech,
GABELLI '00

MAGIS



Making *Magis* a Living Ideal

Tania Tetlow, president of Fordham, invites each member of the President's Council to engage in the University's life and mission in distinct and meaningful ways. Specifically, President's Council members:

- provide philanthropic support to the University at the highest levels, sharing both the inspiration and leadership necessary to help Fordham realize its greatest dreams as an institution dedicated to wisdom and learning in the service of others;
- reach out to and engage the University's latest admitted class, sharing with them the Fordham story and its lifelong impact;
- mentor current students and young alumni, promoting their academic success and career development;
- leverage corporate relationships to create enhanced opportunities for students and alumni;
- participate in the Executive in Residence program, guest-teaching classes and leading seminars in their areas of expertise;
- lend the volunteer leadership and support necessary to ensure the annual outstanding success of the Fordham Founder's Dinner and Founder's Scholarship Fund.

For more information about the President's Council, please visit fordham.edu/prescouncil.

