

# PASSING THE TORCH



## Lay Leaders Embrace SND's Mission and Charism

When the Sisters of Notre Dame left Prussia in 1874 to escape religious persecution, they were invited to teach the children of German immigrants in parish schools in Ohio and Kentucky. Soon the sisters began to found their own schools in each of their geographic areas, and in the 1960s initiated their own healthcare ministries. Within these institutions owned and operated by SND, the teachers, staff members, administrators and governing board were all sisters. It was a thriving family business model that reached its height in the mid-twentieth century.



From 1962-65 the Catholic Church held the Second Vatican Council, often described as the most important religious event of the twentieth century. The Council affirmed the universal call to holiness, that all members of the Church—clergy, religious and laity—are called to the fullness of the Christian life and service.

This theological shift had far-reaching consequences for Catholic life and ministry in the United States. In the years after the Council, the number of sisters in the United States declined steadily, influenced by complex social and economic changes in family life and the role of women. At the same time, large numbers of people educated in the Catholic school system reached maturity. An educated Catholic laity

***“We enthusiastically carry on the vision and mission of the SNDs that come from their charism.”***

*Laura Koehl, Ed.D., Executive Director,  
SND National Sponsorship & Network Office (NSNO)*

began to enter ministries in schools, hospitals and parishes that had previously been open only to sisters and priests.

SND institutions followed the same trend. Blessed with increasing numbers of dedicated lay colleagues, the sisters developed formation programs and promoted lay leadership. Today, lay persons serve as presidents, principals, health care administrators, and in other leadership roles. Early in the 21st century the sisters established governing boards for their institutions and invited lay board members to assume fiduciary responsibility for the SND family business. When the four U.S. provinces of Sisters of Notre Dame united in 2020 to form SND USA, the sisters also created a model for the sustainability of the congregation’s ministries.

“Sustaining our sponsored institutions is one of the top three mission priorities of the new national province,” states Sister Margaret Gorman, provincial of SND USA. “We want to expand our mission beyond ourselves into the future, and institutions can give that longevity.” To accomplish that goal, the sisters are engaging their lay partners. “Lay people do not simply fill in because sisters are not available. Our lay partners strengthen our institutions,” Sister Margaret continues. “Their professional skills and ways of living out their values enrich the mission beyond what sisters could do alone. If we focus only on the declining number of sisters, we miss the other half of the story. The whole point of the Council’s theology of the laity is that the Church needs the gifts of all its members. Partnership is a fuller reflection of the Body of Christ.”

One such lay partner is Laura Koehl, Ed.D., first lay principal and president of Notre Dame Academy in Kentucky, who now serves as Executive Director of the newly named SND National Sponsorship & Network Office (NSNO).

*“Don Lloyd, CEO of St. Claire HealthCare, and Nichole Smith, CEO of St. Charles Community, two healthcare ministries sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame, embody the charism and spirit of the Sisters of Notre Dame, sometimes more than we do ourselves. They are true ministers of the Gospel who embody the love of our good and provident God.”*

*Sister Marla Monahan, Chair, Board of Directors, St. Claire HealthCare, Morehead, KY*

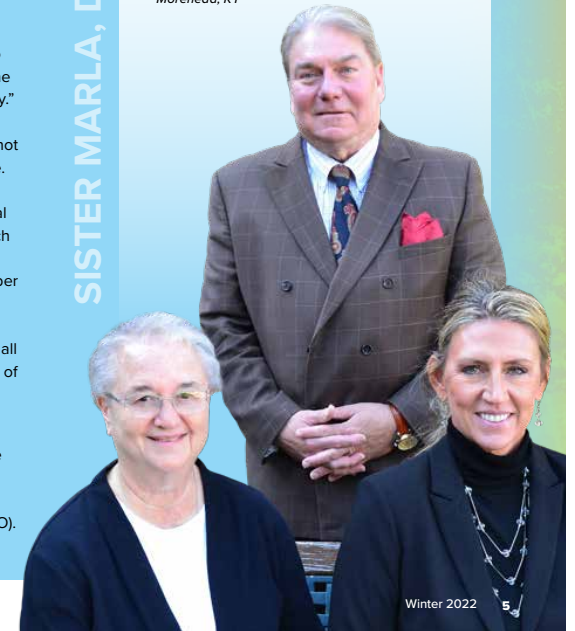
*“With every encounter I have with the Sisters of Notre Dame, I feel immensely blessed and grateful for the trust they have placed upon me to lead St. Claire.”*

*Donald H. Lloyd, II, President/CEO, St. Claire HealthCare, Morehead, KY*

*“Knowing that from the very beginning the Sisters of Notre Dame were called to serve the aged and infirm, fills me with a deep responsibility to ensure that each person associated with St. Charles knows he or she is called to a place of meaning, purpose and participation in the lived expression of the SND mission and charism.”*

*Nichole Smith, LNHA, CEO/St. Charles Community, Morehead, KY*

SISTER MARLA, DONALD, NICHOLE





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NSNO is charged with the task of ensuring all SND-sponsored ministries across the United States sustain and further the legacy and charism of the Sisters of Notre Dame. Dr. Koehl is joined by Lisa Fredrickson, Programs and Services Manager, in the National Sponsorship & Network Office.

### SND Charism

In religious congregations, charism is the distinct spirit that directs and guides all members. The charism of the Sisters of Notre Dame is a deep experience of God's goodness and provident care.

"Our charism is being shared with lay people daily. This is not a gift that we keep to ourselves. Rather, the value of this gift is in the sharing. You don't need to be a sister to experience the charism," explains Sister Lisa Novak, Director of Mission Effectiveness for the Sisters of Notre Dame. She continues, "SND charism is the shared vision of God's goodness and provident care throughout our congregation. The SND mission represents different ways the congregation expresses this vision or charism to others."



Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin School is one of many SND-sponsored ministries.

### Sponsorship

Each sponsored ministry has its own unique mission, which is an expression of the SND charism in a particular setting. Sponsorship is a dynamic relationship between the SND ministries and the Sisters of Notre Dame. The Catholic identity of each ministry flows from the Catholic identity of SND as a Roman Catholic congregation of women religious.

Formally, sponsorship is a connection between canon law and civil law. The civil law structures of the sponsored ministries reflect the canonical governance structures. SND USA as the sponsor holds a few reserved powers related to each of the sponsored ministries. These reserved powers fall under the categories of purpose (mission), people (CEOs/board members), and property. Reserved powers are set forth in each sponsored ministry's code of regulations, articles of incorporation, or by-laws.

Sponsorship is most effective when it is also a deep commitment and mutual relationship on the personal level. "We enthusiastically carry on the vision and mission of the SNDs that come from their charism. It is at the core of who we are. We want to carry on the legacy and work of our founders and sponsors. Sponsorship honors the past, lives in the present, and prepares for the future," simplifies Dr. Koehl.

*"I was blessed to work closely with Sister Agnesmarie LoPorto for a transition year as I moved into my role as President/CEO of Julie Billiart Schools. In that time and after, she became more than a mentor – she was my friend, cheerleader, prayer partner and confidant."*

*Lannie Davis-Frecker, President/CEO, Julie Billiart Schools, Lyndhurst, Westlake, Akron, OH*

*"Lannie began teaching at JB and served as Assistant Principal, Director of Special Education, and Vice President. During all these years, she learned and lived the mission and charism of the Sisters of Notre Dame. I am very confident that the mission and charism will live on."*

*Sister Agnesmarie LoPorto, Former President/CEO, Julie Billiart Schools, Lyndhurst, OH*

LANNIE, SISTER AGNESMARIE





## SND National Ministry Corporation

When the sisters established SND USA, they formed the SND National Ministry Corporation (NMC) which in turn established the National Sponsorship and Network Office (NSNO). The NMC serves two purposes:

1. To ensure that SND ministries operate in accordance with the Church's canon law and applicable codes of civil law.

2. To ensure that the sponsored ministries remain sustainable well into the future and true to their missions beyond the time when the sisters can actively participate in them.

According to Bruce Jarosz, NMC Board Chair, "We do this primarily by serving as the Member of the sponsored ministry corporations, and exercising the reserved powers concerning changes to their mission, key people relationships, and certain property transactions."



NMC Board (from left to right) Nancy Coonis, Laura Koehl (ex officio), Sr. Carol Gregory, Jane Meier, Sr. Mary Frances Taymans, Bruce Jarosz, Sr. Patricia Garrahan, Sr. Mary Ethel Parrott

Bruce continues, "We are all standing on the shoulders of the giants who came before us. In this instance, it may be more appropriate to say that we are all standing on the shoulders of the saints who came before us. We are blessed with a window of time, perhaps the next 10 years or so, where many of these saints are walking with us in these ministries. We are challenged to intentionally identify the strategies, actions, and disciplines that will ingrain and cement the spirit and charism of the Sisters of Notre Dame in each ministry as we transition to lay leadership. We do this by encouraging the ministries to adopt best practices concerning sustainability. I was very encouraged this week to see Sr. Joanne Keppler's presentation on Mission Assessment (read later within this article). In my opinion it is an excellent resource document that covers the sustainability and charism horizons."

The goals of the NMC are implemented through working with the SND National Sponsorship and Network Office which provides support and services to SND-sponsored ministries, especially in these areas:

- General board formation and governance training for ministry leaders and boards
- Support to the NMC's Board of Directors as the primary point of contact between NMC and SND-sponsored ministries

Jarosz says NMC operates as a volunteer board appointed by the congregation. The NMC Board consists of between five and nine members, with the majority of voting members being from the congregation.



***"We are challenged to intentionally identify the strategies, actions, and disciplines that will ingrain and cement the spirit and charism of the Sisters of Notre Dame in each ministry as we transition to lay leadership."***

*Bruce Jarosz, NMC Board Chair*



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"The Corporation ensures accountability for the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and for fidelity to the charism, spirit, mission, and educational vision and principles of the SND congregation," Jarosz emphatically states. "The National Sponsorship and Network Office was formed to create programs and services that ensure the fidelity of sponsored and affiliated ministries to the SND mission and Catholic identity."

"I am amazed and thrilled with the level of skill and professionalism of the lay leaders employed within our SND-sponsored ministries, particularly on the NMC Board of Directors," Sister Patricia Garrahan, Provincial Councilor and NMC Board Member, states enthusiastically. "They are really dedicated to our mission and share our charism!"



(l-r) Sr. Lisa Novak and Sr. Mary Ethel Parrott at NSNO training.

## National Sponsorship and Network Office

The SND National Sponsorship & Network Office (NSNO) serves all the SND-sponsored ministries founded by each of the four former provinces. The office also offers services to 33 affiliated schools in six states plus Washington, DC. "NSNO provides strategic leadership for the integration of the SND charism, vision, and mission in the sponsored ministries of the SND USA network," Dr. Koehl states. "This includes support and services to the sponsored ministries related specifically to mission and Catholic identity, especially in its work with ministry leaders and governing boards. It is important to note that the SNDs have had a National Education Office for more than 20 years. This new office, in many ways, evolved from that as part of the transition to SND USA."

Sister Mary Lisa Megaffin concurs. "The Sisters of Notre Dame started the Notre Dame Education Association (NDEA) in the 1980s as a means to foster collaboration between and among their educational ministries. Sr. Marthe Reinhard would often comment that initiatives such as NDEA were 'new structures for new realities.' NSNO is a further development of this evolution and progress."

"I am proud to follow in the footsteps of former SND network directors who include Sister Patricia Garrahan, Sister Donna Paluf, and Sister Mary Frances Taymans. It was Sister Mary Frances who shepherded the evolution of the SND National Education Office into what is now the expanded National Sponsorship and Network Office. She diligently worked with the SND leadership as they established the SND USA National Ministry Corporation and its board," Dr. Koehl says.

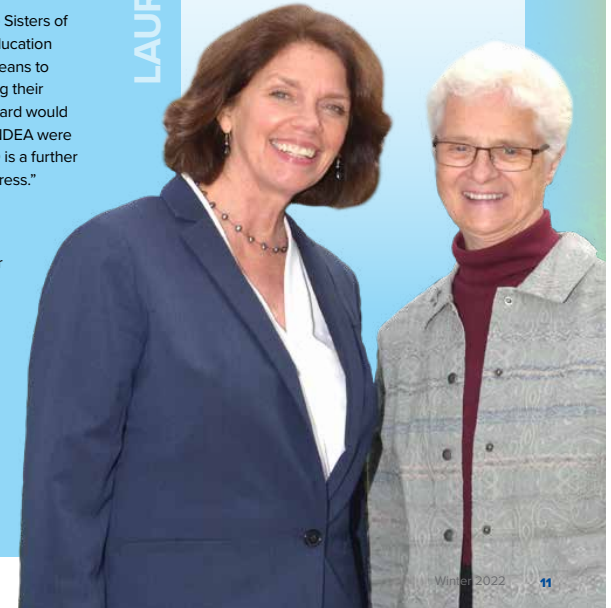
*"What I love about Laura Koehl is how well she articulates the SND spirit and mission. Some would say better than most sisters. There's some truth to that. We, the sisters, have lived the spirit and mission in all that we say and do. However, the SND leaders of today have had to put that lived experience into words passing it on from one generation to the next."*

*Sister Shauna Bankemper, Assistant Provincial SND USA, Covington, KY*

*"I have always appreciated Sr. Shauna's good will, optimism, and joy – so characteristic of her dealings and service to others. She never shies away from sharing the mission and inviting others to join in that with her. You can't help but say – Yes!"*

*Laura Koehl, Executive Director, NSNO*

LAURA, SISTER SHAUNA





About her successor, Sr. Mary Frances observes, "Laura brings scope across the challenges and possibilities currently before Catholic ministries, coupled with depth of understanding of SND mission in ministry. I am grateful and proud to pass the torch to her."

Under the NSNO umbrella are 16 SND-sponsored ministries, which include 13 SND-sponsored schools, a hospital, and two senior-living facilities.

In addition to the mission, SND-sponsored ministries are guided by four educational principles which are stated below:

- the centrality of God
- the human dignity of each person as an image of God
- the educator as a Gospel witness
- education for transformation

"These principles guide the strategic planning and day-to-day operations of our sponsored ministries in many ways," explains Dr. Koehl. "They are foundational to expectations for boards, administrators, students, faculty, staff, and health care providers. They inspire activities related to professional development, faith formation, spiritual guidance, bereavement support, and mental health counseling. They call us to provide inclusive caring environments that offer experiences of God's goodness and provident care."

"Our health and senior-care facilities serve people at the margins – financially, socially, and physically," Dr. Koehl says. "We treat people with dignity and respect, sharing Gospel values and honoring the legacy of our SND founders."

The impact of SND-sponsored ministries is far and wide. SND schools have graduated tens of thousands of students who live in every state in the U.S. and numerous countries around the world. SND USA healthcare and senior-living facilities provide valuable services to thousands of patients and residents and their families every year.

NSNO also works with SND-affiliated ministries in supporting the legacy of the SNDs. Affiliated ministries are those in which sisters have worked as leaders, administrators, teachers, and staff. In many cases, their ministry was essential to establishing and sustaining the parish or diocesan school. While these ministries are not sponsored by SND, many embrace the legacy of the Sisters of Notre Dame, recognizing the role they played in promoting Catholic education in communities across the United States.

"All of our institutions have a legacy of people who benefited from being in an SND institution – whether sponsored or affiliated," Dr. Koehl says. "The challenge is to partner with the sisters in handing over their work and legacy to lay persons in a way that respects the SND tradition and upholds their charism."

Sister Rebekah Kennedy, SND USA Provincial Councilor, states, "I am excited to welcome more lay people in leadership positions, in our SND-sponsored schools especially. During my years as a leader in a number of schools, my staff was a majority of lay men and women who supported me in a million different ways. When I transitioned back into a staff position, my aim was to pay that forward in recognizing the lay leadership through support, dialogue, and collaboration."

Sister Agnesmarie Loporto concurs, "I am pleased and excited that dedicated lay people want to live and spread our precious SND charism. This is the only way our ministries can prosper in the future."

Sister Jacquelyn Gusdane, former President of Notre Dame Schools in Chardon, Ohio, adds "Our priority, especially through the SND National Sponsorship and Network Office, is to increase and extend opportunities for present and future lay leaders to serve and lead in our sponsored and affiliated ministries. The Sisters of Notre Dame are committed to this endeavor. Even more, the Church calls us to seek out men and women of faith and talent to live this vocation of service. Moving forward, I trust deeply in God's provident care!"

***"We treat people with dignity and respect, sharing Gospel values and honoring the legacy of our SND founders."***

*Laura Koehl, Ed.D., Executive Director, SND National Sponsorship & Network Office (NSNO)*

***"Sr. Rebekah Kennedy's support, experience, counsel, and guidance has had a profound impact on me."***

*Anthony Guevara, President, La Reina, Thousand Oaks, CA*

***"I am confident that the charism and mission of the SNDs will live on in these ministries because we have already laid the groundwork in providing personnel, sponsorship materials and partnerships that continue to shape the future of our ministries. AND I believe in the power of the breath of the Holy Spirit!!!"***

*Sr. Rebekah Kennedy, SND, Provincial Councilor, Thousand Oaks, CA*

ANTHONY, SISTER REBEKAH





## NSNO Support and Services

NSNO provides support and services related to mission, Catholic identity and institutional viability. The office works with the National Ministry Corporation to help ensure the sustainability of the SND mission through the ministries they founded. This includes the following:

- leadership support and succession planning
- board formation and governance training
- operational best practices
- NMC Board of Directors operations and support
- primary point of contact between NMC Board and the ministries

- mission integration and assessment
- networking opportunities for the sponsored ministries
- resources related to governance, succession planning, SND heritage, and mission

Mission formation and assessment is at the core of the work with the SND-sponsored ministries. Sister Joanne Keppler recently developed an Assessment for Sponsored Ministries to be used in evaluating an organization's alignment with their Catholic identity and the SND heritage and mission.

"This is a formal tool for schools, healthcare ministries, and other educational/social services sponsored by SND to use for conversation, reflection and accountability.

## SND-Sponsored Schools and Ministries



- **Julie Billiard Schools**, Lyndhurst, OH (PreK-8)
- **Julie Learning Center**, Covington, KY (PreK)
- **La Reina High School & Middle School**, Thousand Oaks, CA (6-12)
- **Lial Catholic School**, Whitehouse, OH (PreK-8)
- **Maria Early Learning Center**, Toledo, OH (Infant-PreK)
- **Notre Dame Academy**, Park Hills, KY (9-12)
- **Notre Dame Academy**, Toledo, OH (7-12)
- **Notre Dame Academy Schools**, Los Angeles, CA (PreK-12)
- **Notre Dame - Cathedral Latin School**, Chardon, OH (9-12)
- **Notre Dame College**, South Euclid, OH (Post HS)
- **Notre Dame Elementary School**, Chardon, OH (PreK-8)
- **Notre Dame Learning Center Preschool**, Thousand Oaks, CA (PreK)
- **Notre Dame Urban Education Center**, Covington, KY (K-12)
- **Notre Dame Village**, Chardon, OH
- **St. Claire HealthCare**, Morehead, KY
- **St. Charles Community**, Fort Wright, KY

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## Parish Schools / Affiliated Schools

The SNDs have been involved in many schools across the country as educators. In some cases, they helped found the school, but they are not considered the founders or sponsors. Most are parish schools/affiliated schools across the United States. They include the following:

- **Cardinal Gibbons High School**, Raleigh, NC (9-12)
- **Cardinal Mooney High School**, Sarasota, FL (9-12)
- **Clearwater Central Catholic High School**, Clearwater, FL (9-12)
- **Cleveland Central Catholic High School**, Cleveland, OH (9-12)
- **Guardian Catholic School**, Jacksonville, FL (PreK-8)
- **Julie Billiard School, Akron Campus**, Akron, OH (PreK-8)
- **Metro Catholic School**, Cleveland, OH (PreK-8)
- **Our Lady of the Assumption School**, Ventura, CA (PreK-8)
- **Our Lady of Victory School**, Washington, DC (PreK-8)
- **Prince of Peace School**, Covington, KY (PreK-8)
- **Queen of Apostles School**, Toledo, OH (PreK-8)
- **St. Agnes Catholic School**, Arlington, VA (PreK-8)
- **St. Agnes School**, Ft. Wright, KY (PreK-8)
- **St. Augustine School**, Covington, KY (PreK-8)
- **St. Columban School**, Loveland, OH (PreK-8)
- **St. Francis Elementary School**, Cleveland, OH (PreK-8)
- **St. Helen School**, Newbury, OH (PreK-8)
- **St. Helen School**, South Gate, CA (PreK-8)
- **St. John's School**, Delphos, OH (K-12)
- **St. John School**, Ashtabula, OH (PreK-12)
- **St. Joseph School**, Cold Spring, KY (PreK-8)
- **St. Jude the Apostle School**, Westlake Village, CA (PreK-8)
- **St. Leo School**, Versailles, KY (PreK-8)
- **St. Martin of Tours School**, Cincinnati, OH (PreK-8)
- **St. Mary's Catholic School**, Leipsic, OH (PreK-8)
- **St. Mary Magdalen School**, Camarillo, CA (TK-8)
- **St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception School**, Avon, OH (PreK-8)
- **St. Peter School**, North Ridgeville, OH (PreK-8)
- **St. Peter School**, Lorain, OH (PreK-8)
- **St. Peter School**, Canton, OH (K-5)
- **St. Pius X - St. Matthias Academy**, Downey, CA (9-12)
- **St. Richard Catholic School**, Swanton, OH (PreK-8)
- **St. Thomas Aquinas School**, Cleveland, OH (K-8)

*"Kim demonstrates in her own life the importance of prayer and reflection and ensures that the Catholic mission of Notre Dame Academy in Toledo, Ohio is strong and central to the school's mission. These are all hallmarks of education in the tradition of the Sisters of Notre Dame."*

Sister Mary Ann Culpert, Assistant General, Suore di Nostra Signora, Rome, Italy

*"I consider Sister Mary Ann to be a dear friend and mentor. Although she is many miles away in Rome, I know she is there when I need her to be a mentor or just listen. I recognize I am always walking with the Sisters of Notre Dame to advance the mission of Notre Dame Academy and promote the SND mission."*

Kim Grilliot, President, Notre Dame Academy, Toledo, OH





Certain expectations are clearly spelled out. However, the real impact is not in a rating but in providing a template to evaluate the strength of a sponsored ministry," explains Sister Joanne.

The Assessment for Sponsored Ministries reviews five domains or characteristics necessary for Catholic identity and mission effectiveness within a ministry sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame. These domains are Charism in Action, Mission and Vision, Leadership and Collaboration, Transformative Education and Care, and Stewardship and Sustainability.

The assessment process enables a sponsored ministry to quantify, with evidence, its alignment with the intended goals. Through the conversations and reflection that occur during the assessment process, a ministry will affirm and confirm its practices as well as surface areas of potential growth or improvement. The results are used for reports presented to the SND National Ministry Corporation Board.

"It is a catalyst for collaboration, and a motivator to continue each ministry's mission with goals and practices. Catholic identity and our SND charism are not static. They evolve over time. Values, traditions, and circumstances of culture and life remain true but adapt within the realities of today," says Sister Joanne.

"It is important to look to the future and promote succession planning in our ministries. The NSNO seeks to assist with identifying and engaging future leaders for our ministries and boards. This includes assisting with leadership searches within each SND-sponsored ministry. Additionally, it is important to develop a pool of potential leaders for the future," Sister Joanne encourages.



***"Catholic identity and our SND charism are not static. They evolve over time. Values, traditions, and circumstances of culture and life remain true but adapt within the realities of today."***

Sister Joanne Kepler

## NSNO Initiatives

The NSNO staff will be launching some special initiatives in the coming year. The Emerging Leadership Program is designed to identify and support lay people in discerning and preparing for leadership roles within SND ministries. "The Emerging Leadership Program components include the heritage of the SNDs, leadership skills, and the importance of being a mission-driven institution," explains Dr. Koehl. "The goal of the Emerging Leadership Program is to cultivate identified individuals to become the next generation of leaders within SND ministries."

NSNO staff will also assist with new board member recruitment. "The individual ministry boards identify potential board members, who are then presented to the NMC board for appointment," notes NSNO Programs and Services Manager Lisa Fredrickson. "We will assist boards in this process as needed."

Another initiative NSNO is excited about is the Rural Healthcare Student Experience (RHSE). RHSE involves a partnership with SND USA-sponsored secondary schools and St. Claire HealthCare in Morehead, KY, and is set to launch in the summer of 2022.

The Healthcare Student Experience connects students from SND-sponsored high schools with St. Claire HealthCare for a week of supervised activities in the hospital, at surrounding clinics, and in patient residences.

"This is a perfect opportunity for students who are considering a career in health care," states Fredrickson. "The program encourages participants to consider this work as more than a career, but also as a mission to serve the poor and marginalized in rural America."

SISTER JACQUELYN, JOHN

***"Our working relationship – the best! Full of joy, synergy, visioning, and humor!"***

Sister Jacquelyn GUSDANE, Former President, Notre Dame Schools, Chardon, OH Board Relations

***"We know the SND educational vision, mission and charism are worth preserving because we have seen their effects; namely, the importance of God in our students' lives."***

John Venturella, President, Clearwater Central Catholic High School, FL







*"We look forward to bringing our leaders and boards together in different ways that celebrate our shared journey in this SND mission."*

Laura Koehl, Ed.D., Executive Director,  
SND National Sponsorship & Network  
Office (NSNO)

Because NSNO works with a network of sponsored ministries, there are many opportunities for collaboration and shared best practices. "We use the term 'network' as both a noun and a verb," describes Dr. Koehl enthusiastically. "We look forward to bringing our leaders and boards together in different ways that celebrate our shared journey in this SND mission. While NSNO's newsletters and Zoom meetings helped connect leaders during Covid, we look forward to hosting in-person meetings and trainings as restrictions lessen. However, given the national distribution of our constituents, online connections will continue to be vital."

## SND Mission: Today and Tomorrow

As the sisters responded to the needs of the people when they first arrived in the United States, they have evolved to meet the needs of the 21st century. By entrusting lay collaborators with roles of leadership, SNDs are able to respond to other societal needs.

"The sisters are indeed trailblazers," Koehl says. "And as they invite lay persons to partner with them in mission, we are challenged to continue to blaze that trail. Today, Sisters of Notre Dame are still present to us as they continue to minister to God's people. At the same time, as partners, we are being asked to faithfully carry on their mission."

"I think the Church and the world are blessed whenever those of us in religious life partner with our lay brothers and sisters," exclaims Sister Marla Monahan, Chair, Board of Directors, St. Claire HealthCare in Kentucky. "Early in the development of the education, health care, and social service systems in our country, women religious had the personnel, formation, and resources to establish schools, hospitals, and social service agencies. Now, there are more-than-competent lay people to assume positions of leadership."

Donald H. Lloyd, III, President/CEO, St. Claire HealthCare, responds, "To serve St. Claire and lead this ministry is a sacred obligation for a lay leader. The charisma and mission of the Sisters of Notre Dame have served the people of Eastern Kentucky through the best and worst of circumstances for nearly 60 years. This legacy of service above self, especially to the most vulnerable and marginalized in our region, is the hallmark of the sisters' ministry at St. Claire. As the Sisters of Notre Dame have answered the call to serve the people through this ministry, we must always remember that our duty as lay leaders is to answer the sisters' call to serve, and assure this ministry lives in perpetuity."

Sister Shauna Bankemper, SND USA Assistant Provincial, adds, "I am thrilled to see the gifted and dedicated lay women and men being invited to fill leadership positions throughout SND-sponsored and -affiliated ministries. The SND spirit and mission lived out in the lives and service of these men and women fill us all with hope for the future."

*"I am in awe of the SND's vision, passion, and talent. The dedication to their ministry and to each other is nothing short of inspirational."*

Lynn Cherry, President, Lial School,  
Whitehouse, OH

*"Lynn Cherry definitely has what it takes to carry on our charism and mission. She is a strong, passionate, educational leader grounded in her faith. From the Board, to parents, to teachers and the children, Lynn is the right leader for this time. The torch has been passed and is shining brightly."*

Sister Pat McClain, Former President,  
Lial School

LYNN, SISTER PAT





**PASSING  
THE TORCH**



Sister Mary Ann Culpert, Assistant General, Rome, Italy, agrees. “As Sisters of Notre Dame, we are so blessed and fortunate to have so many lay persons who share our charism and spirituality. Some of our colleagues have been with us many years – they were educated in our institutions and have returned to teach, administer, and serve with us in many capacities. The charism and spirituality of the SND is not for sisters alone. It is a gift to be shared with others and lived out in the lives of all who resonate with our spirituality and mission.”

As the Sisters of Notre Dame continue to pass the torch – bringing lay persons into more

and more leadership positions within SND-sponsored ministries – the sisters remain an integral part of these ministries, serving as board members, administrators, mission directors, mentors, advisors, teachers, retreat directors, and support staff. Their presence today ensures these vital ministries always reflect the congregation’s charism and mission today and well into the future.

“Through SND USA, the sisters have created a structure to ensure their legacy of bringing God’s goodness to the world,” summarizes Dr. Koehl. “We have much to learn from their stories of living their charism, and these

lessons will be central to how well we carry on the SND mission. Their mission to serve the needs of God’s people lives on in each one of us – and this is truly a gift of God’s goodness. With the SND USA governance model in place – the National Ministry Corporation, the National Sponsorship and Network Office and the ongoing dedication of our many ministry leaders – the charism of the SND is alive and well for generations to come.”

LILLIAM, SISTER MARY FRANCES

*“My office is in one of the bedrooms in the old convent. Every morning, I think of the sisters as I enter their former home and settle into my office. This morning routine is a daily reminder of all of the sisters that raised me and the mission I have been entrusted with.”*

*Lilliam Paetzold, Head of School, President, Notre Dame Academy Schools of Los Angeles*

*“Lilliam literally grew up immersed in and now moves forward the NDA/SND mission. As President and Head of School, Lilliam is moving the NDA community, broadly defined, forward with the energy of Mission LIVE vision.”*

*Sister Mary Frances Taymans, Board Member, NMC, Former Executive Director, SND National Education Office*

