



2013 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNA

The true measure of the Academy's greatness can be found in the achievements and wellbeing of its alumni. A vast number of whom have gained unique distinction through success in their professions, contribution to their communities and service to the Academy.

For this reason, Lacordaire Academy has established the Distinguished Alumna/us of the Year Award in recognition of outstanding graduates to celebrate their achievements and honor their legacy of excellence.

JANE EDWARDS SKILLIN '33

This year's Distinguished Alumna Award goes to Lower School graduate Jane Edwards Skillin, from the Class of 1933, for her lifelong commitment to community service in Montclair. She attended the Lower and Upper Divisions, Grades 1 through 9, from 1925-34. While the Great Depression caused her to move on from Lacordaire after 9th grade, her heart and deeply formed friendships remain with the Academy to this day. Jane still keeps in touch with classmates Joan Heydt and Betty Wolke Rotchstein, both of whom graduated the Lower and Upper Schools. Jane passed her legacy of love for Lacordaire on to her granddaughter, Elizabeth Thuvanuti, who was Valedictorian of the Upper School Class of 2000, and to her foster child MaryBeth DiGiacomo, who sent her two boys, James '07 and Charles '01, to the Academy.

Jane graduated Montclair State University with a BA in Biology and later earned a Teacher Librarian Certificate there. After raising five children, John, Paul, Susan, Elizabeth and Mary Jane, and three foster children, Jane worked as a librarian at the Bellevue Avenue Branch in Montclair from 1970-2000. Edward, her husband of 55 years, was the Editor and Publisher of *Commonweal*, the oldest independent lay Catholic journal of opinion in the United States.

During and after her retirement, Jane fostered two Vietnamese refugee youth and volunteered for the Montclair Public Library, Meals on Wheels, Montclair Senior Care and Mother Teresa's Soup Kitchen. At 92 years young, Jane's lifelong commitment to caring for young people and seniors and to providing community service in Montclair and Essex County is still going strong. She has inspired this same commitment in her children and grandchildren and continues to be a positive influence on everyone she meets.