

Mount Mercy Academy holds Career Day

Mount Mercy Academy's guidance department and Alumnae Association recently sponsored a career day for the students. The event featured a panel discussion with eight successful alumnae from a variety of fields. The event was titled "Girls Can Do Anything."

The panelists included Peggy Klavoon Cannan '06, Claire Kelley '07, Mary Reidy '07, Peggy Shea Sherber '04, Susan Dzierzewski Steblein '01, Jessica Turner '02, Susan Anderson Was '99 and Dr. Megan Wierchowski '06.

The alumnae provided a brief synopsis of their educational backgrounds and their career paths and then answered questions for junior student moderator, Olivia Larson.

Cannan, a physical therapist for Kaleida Health, spoke of how her athletic background led her to athletic training and then her interests expanded to include a spectrum of possibilities when she added physical therapy. She told the students to make the best of their opportunities at Mount Mercy to learn to express themselves and to gain confidence in an all-female environment.

Kelley, an assistant controller at Lawley Insurance, told the students that it was important to realize that their education will never stop, even after attaining a college degree. Kelley was inspired to follow her mother's career path.

Riedy, a clinical staff pharmacist at Oishei Children's Hospital, knew from an early age she wanted a career in the medical field, but did not have

an interest in hands on care. She followed her interests into attaining board certification in pediatric pharmacotherapy. She informed students that her position is a career, not a job, as she takes the experiences of work home with her, particularly the emotional aspects.

Sherber brought a different perspective to the panel, as she is the chief of staff for Buffalo Common Council Member Chris Scanlon. She has varied responsibilities in her job, a job that she told students she had not aspired to and initially had turned down. She counseled the students that it was perfectly acceptable not to know what they wanted to do right away and not to feel stressed out if they were uncertain. "Take every opportunity that is given to you to do your best. Always try to make a favorable impression, because you never know when that will open up an opportunity for you in the future," Sherber said.

Steblein, a certified public accountant with Freed Maxick CPAs, PC and a senior tax manager chose accounting after she was unable to find a job in her college major. She went back to school for accounting because of the plethora of jobs available and she has never regretted that decision. She encouraged students to take advantage of volunteer opportunities and shadow someone in the fields they are interested in.

Turner, a manager in business development at New Era Cap World Headquarters, found her career path through her interest in athletics. A standout basketball player in both high school and college, Turner told

the students to find something that they are passionate about and to pursue it. She advised the audience that it is perfectly acceptable not to know what they want to do right away. "Be sure to know your worth and to go into all your experiences with confidence. You don't belong in a box and you should never be satisfied just to be the only woman in a room," Turner said. She also counseled the students to turn negative experiences and struggles to push harder to achieve success.

As the director of Human Services at Curbell Inc., Was, also went back to school after graduating from college. She was able to advise the students on how to succeed in interviews and body language. "The only thing that you can control in life or a job situation is how you represent yourself," Was said.

Wierchowski, a family practice physician at Primary Care of Western New York chose medicine after helping her uncle through his cancer struggles while she was in high school. She stressed the importance of working hard in college to achieve career goals. She also advised students to take advantage of volunteer and shadowing opportunities.

Junior Natalie Redmond of Buffalo appreciated the opportunity to listen to the panel. "It was very enlightening and it definitely helped me as I prepare for my future," Redmond said.

"It was inspiring listening to so many empowered, independent and successful women," senior Alana Szumla said. "It was awesome to see how they have done so well in a male-dominated society."



COURTESY OF MOUNT MERCY ACADEMY

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