

# *Women's Leadership Luncheon*

March 22, 2022

Brookhaven Country Club  
Farmers Branch, Texas

*courageous  
compassionate  
confident*



School Sisters of Notre Dame  
Central Pacific Province



*“True and sincere love of our neighbor is at the same time the infallible criterion of our love of God.”*

*~Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger  
Letter #4307, 1868*

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our 2022 Women’s Leadership Luncheon. Thank you for sharing your time with us today.

Through our annual Women’s Leadership Luncheon, the School Sisters of Notre Dame recognize women leaders who make a positive difference in our community. We have been blessed to hear from speakers who are physicians, presidents, CEOs, daughters, wives, mothers and friends.

Guided by the School Sisters of Notre Dame’s commitment to transform the world through education, our speakers not only share their leadership journey, but also how their spiritual and professional lives intersect to create a better world.

This year’s theme reflects how women met the challenges of the pandemic with courage, compassion and confidence.

As we gather today, we celebrate all women - no matter what they do or what labels may be associated with them. We celebrate YOU!

We hope today’s event gives you respite, inspiration and motivation.

With peace, blessings and gratitude,

*Sister Debra Sciano, SSND*

Sister Debra Marie Sciano, SSND  
Provincial Leader

## Speaker



**Mayra J. Thompson, M.D. FACOG**  
*Obstetrics and Gynecology*  
*Private Practice*

Mayra J. Thompson, M.D. FACOG, is a professor of obstetrics and gynecology. She specializes in general gynecology, minimally invasive and robotic surgery, urogynecology and pelvic reconstructive surgery. Dr. Thompson is trained and certified in advanced laparoscopic and minimally invasive procedures. She has lectured and taught locally and nationally on the minimally invasive techniques.

Dr. Thompson obtained her bachelor of arts in economics from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, a doctorate in medicine from the University of Illinois School of Medicine, Chicago and completed her internship and residency in Obstetrics & Gynecology at the University of Illinois Hospital at University of Illinois Medical Center in Chicago.

She is board certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology and the International Society for Clinical Densitometry. She began her private practice in 1984. She was recruited to serve as professor of obstetrics and gynecology at University of Texas Southwestern, where she practiced at the university affiliated hospitals and institutions, seeing private patients at the Lowe Foundation Center for Women's Preventative Health Care from 2004-2021.

Dr. Thompson's interest in the health and welfare of women has prompted her to seek promotion of the benefits of preventative care in women of all ages. She is also an advocate of the special needs adults and children since she and her husband are parents of a son with special needs. She has been a featured speaker for women's groups. Dr. Thompson speaks fluent Spanish and has a special interest in the health care needs of the Hispanic community.

## Program

**Welcome and Prayer** Sister Helen Jane Jaeb, SSND  
 Provincial Councilor

**Ministry Presentation** Sister Gloria Cain, SSND  
 Ministry Commission and Sister Donor Representative

**Remarks** Mel Bangs  
 Kris Kramer

**Speaker Introduction** Megan Martinez

**Keynote Speaker** Mayra J. Thompson, M.D., FACOG  
 Obstetrics and Gynecology  
 Private Practice  
 "Graced Leadership: Women's Unique Response to Urgent Needs"

## Q&A

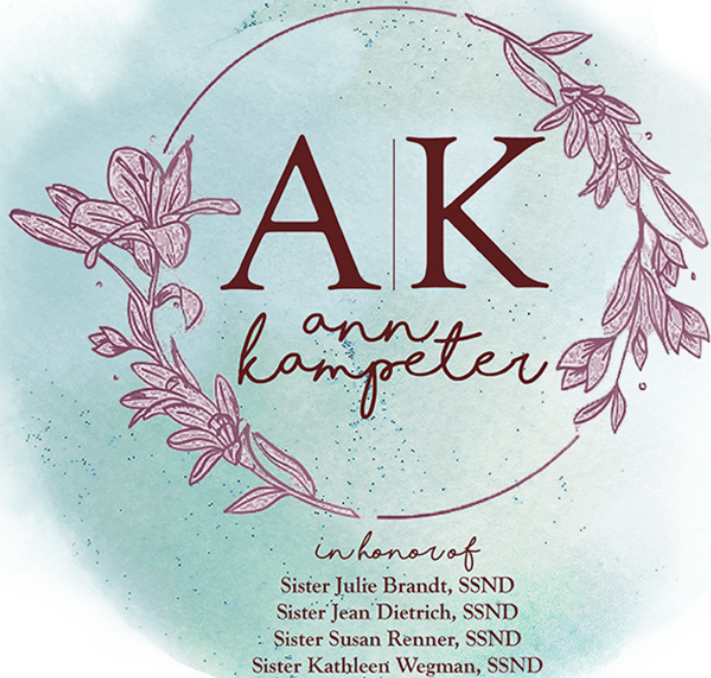
**Closing Remarks** Mary Kay Murray  
 Resource Development Director

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



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## About the Artist



### *Sister Barbara Paleczny, SSND*

Her artwork, displayed in full to the right, is used for the 2022 Women's Leadership Luncheon publications design.

### *Biography*

A Canadian School Sister of Notre Dame, Barbara Paleczny, Ph.D., STh.D., lived in South Sudan for many years as a member of Solidarity with South Sudan. Solidarity with South Sudan was founded by religious communities who send sisters, brothers and priests from around the world to live and work together there. Her ministry included teaching at Solidarity Teachers' Colleges and teaching others to give workshops in healing from trauma and providing psychosocial support.

Sister Barbara enjoys painting and paints mostly from her prayer and dreams as a way to stay healthy. Expressing these, to her surprise, has opened up dialogue and healing for others as well. Currently, Sister Barbara is on sabbatical and lives in Canada.



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ST. PHILIP & ST. AUGUSTINE  
CATHOLIC ACADEMY  
IS GRATEFUL TO SSND FOR  
THE MANY YEARS OF SERVICE AND  
PARTNERSHIP WITH OUR COMMUNITY.



### *Description of the painting by Sister Barbara*

Painting is one of the great surprises in my life, since I grew up convinced I could not draw. At first, I painted to express my dreams and prayers. Gradually, this expanded as I lived in San Antonio, Texas, teaching at the university there and serving as the Shalom/JPIC Coordinator for the Dallas unit. Living there was a great blessing in my life, as I joined in sisters' wholehearted laughter and tears. Certainly, the beauty of people and nature, the pain of trafficked slaves, touched me deeply and showed up often in my paintings. With Sue Menshek, SSND, and others, we started the South Texas Coalition Against Human Trafficking. Anne Semel, SSND, fostered making our home into an art gallery. The painting, "Flowing Surprises," was a quick response in prayer. This year, another great surprise is my learning to sing. We are never too old to learn, are we?

Blessings!  
Barbara, SSND



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## Woman Honoree



**Julia Dodd**

Vice President

Lockton Dunning Benefits Associates

With more than 20 years of leadership experience in law, healthcare, risk management, and business development, Julia Dodd is known for her intelligence and partnership within the Dallas community and beyond. Ms. Dodd currently serves as Vice President for Lockton Dunning Benefits.

Prior to her role at Lockton, Ms. Dodd was a former healthcare law section head and partner at a major Dallas law firm, headed Dodd and Associates, and served on the team for the Coalition for Affordable and Reliable Healthcare. There, she led the grassroots effort for both state and federal tort reform, including passing tort reform that resulted in a 90% decrease in medical malpractice litigation in Texas.

Rooted in the humble values she learned growing up in a small country community, Ms. Dodd leads by example, from small town to big city. She is the co-founder of Women in the Know, a C-suite women's networking group dedicated to bringing awareness and action for local Dallas community charities and needs. Ms. Dodd also previously served on the board of AVANCE, a national organization working to serve families in need. Advocacy for those in need is the cornerstone of her professional and personal goals.

*Thank you, Sister Gloria Cain, Sister Mary  
Anne Owens, Sister Dana Heffner and all  
School Sisters of Notre Dame for your many,  
many years of service to our community!*

*Sincerely,*

**Shelly and Tom  
Codd**





**School Sisters  
of Notre Dame  
Associates**

*Join us as a SSND associate!*



We are women and men called to live Gospel values within our own vocation in the spirit and vision of Blessed Theresa.



[www.ssndcp.org/get-involved/become-an-associate](http://www.ssndcp.org/get-involved/become-an-associate)

## *Past Speakers*

- 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”
- 2015 ***Sheila Madigan Levantino***  
Marriage and Family Therapist and Spiritual Director
- 2014 ***Jennifer Staubach Gates***  
Councilmember for the City of Dallas
- 2013 ***Dr. Susan Hansen***  
Associate Professor of History at the University of Dallas

## *Acknowledgements*

*We wish to thank our advisory committee members  
for their support and friendship:*

*Mel Bangs*

*Kasey Hollon*

*Mary Emma Karam*

*Kris Kramer*

*Jane Schaffler*

*Rosemary Tarangioli*

*Thank you for attending our 2022 Women's Leadership Luncheon.  
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lives to creating positive, systemic change throughout the world.  
If you would like to make a gift, you can donate by credit card at the  
registration desk or make your check payable to  
**School Sisters of Notre Dame.***

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expresses sincere  
gratitude to the **School  
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their decades of service to  
the people of the Diocese  
of Dallas through the  
generous gift of their  
religious vocations.



### **SAVE THE DATE**

*2023 Women's  
Leadership Luncheon*

*March 21, 2023*

*We look forward to  
seeing you again  
next year!*

**[www.ssndcp.org](http://www.ssndcp.org)**



School Sisters of Notre Dame  
*Central Pacific Province*

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