

# *MEDIA RELEASE*

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*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

**Neenah, WI**-Students, faculty and staff of St. Mary Catholic High School gathered virtually on Wednesday, May 13, 2020 for the annual Leadership Day awards where three alumni were recognized for their contributions to society.

The **Outstanding Catholic Christian Service Award** was given to **Mary (Rohe) Krueger**, a member of the SMCHS Class of 1969. After graduation Mary attended UW -Whitewater where she graduated with a B.A. in political science and a minor in public administration. In 2002, Mary completed the Green Bay Diocese Commissioned Ministry and in 2008 earned a Masters Degree in Theology from Ave Maria University.

Mary has stayed active with St. Patrick’s, Menasha and SMCHS ministry as:

Pastoral leader, finance council member, parish council member, mass greeter, leader of stations of the cross, liturgy & care ministry committee member and liturgical role trainer at St. Patrick’s as well as SMCS Board of Trustee member and SMCS Corporate Board member.

The **Distinguished Service Award** was presented to **Lori (Ropella) Vegso**, a 1980 graduate. After high school Lori continued her education at Marquette University receiving an Accounting degree in 1984. She then moved to California with Kimberly-Clark and met her husband Tom. During their time in California they had two daughters who are also SMCHS graduates, Christine ’07 and Amanda ‘10.

In 2019, Lori was elected to the SMCS Board of Trustees and has demonstrated strong leadership, character, and integrity in all aspects of responsibilities. Lori led the board strategic plan refresh, the strategic task force initiatives and serves as chair of several board committees. She was also a great help in writing a DOJ School Safety grant SMCS received in 2018 to update the safety of our schools. Since 2016, Lori has also served as a mentor with Best Friends of Neenah/Menasha.

The **SMCHS Alumni Achievement Award** was presented to **John Hale,** a 1975 graduate of SMCHS. John continued his education at Georgetown University and graduated in 1979. From 1976-1978, John was an aide to the Honorable William A. Steiger, U.S. House of Representatives. He then received his law degree in 1982 from UW Law School. Currently, John works and is partner at Cooley LLP in Palo Alto, California. In 2019 John was named the University of Wisconsin Bay Area Alumni Association Badger of the Year.

John was planning on representing TEAM USA this year in the Americas Master Track & Field Championships before the pandemic. He is also an assistant coach for the cross country and track & field teams at Menlo-Atherton High School where he has been voted nicest coach multiple times by the student runners.

**St. Mary Catholic High School** (SMCHS) a regional high school located in the Village of Fox Crossing, Wisconsin, is part of  
 [St. Mary Catholic Schools (SMCS)](http://www.smcatholicschools.org/). The system also includes St. Mary Catholic Elementary Schools (St. Margaret Mary and St. Gabriel in Neenah, and St. Mary in Menasha), as well as St. Mary Catholic Middle School in the Village of Fox Crossing. SMCHS is dedicated to preparing and inspiring students to lead meaningful lives, rooted in the teachings of Christ in our Catholic tradition.