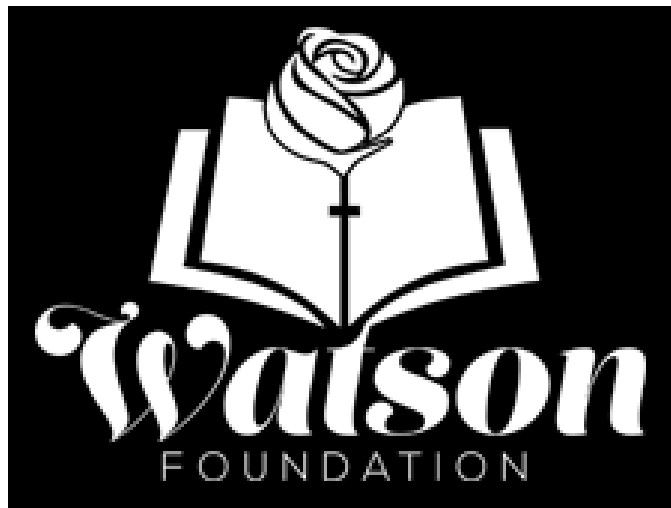


John and Rose Watson Foundation

NEWSLETTER

January 2023

Friendship, Spirituality, and Service



by Amy Dwyer, President

I feel humbled to be part of the Watson Family with you all. I think of this membership in a very similar way that I think of being a Vincentian (a member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul). The essential elements of being a Vincentian are friendship, spirituality, and service. It is different from just being a volunteer. No matter how good the cause, and how important it is to volunteer *anywhere*, these two roles for me go much deeper. There is a shared way of life through our christian vocation of service, as we embrace the need to grow in holiness using our God-given gifts to share with others.

Our Watson board strives for friendship and camaraderie, getting to know each other better through a few special gatherings throughout the year. We send Christmas cards to first-year Watson scholars to remind them that they are indeed in our thoughts and prayers. We enjoy interviewing our scholars that go on to graduate school, as it helps us to know them. Of course, the annual banquet is a wonderful time to build our friendship with you all!

Rose Watson and our recently deceased friend and fellow board member, Jean Seman, were truly our Spiritual Advisors. Rose always gave God credit for all she had and did. Jean was always ready and willing to lead us in prayer and spiritual reflections. Praying together makes us not only better friends, but better people, and I am deeply grateful for the lives of these two ladies, who have been models to emulate.

Service may be the most visible of the three elements. Giving out the checks at the Watson banquet sure does bring a smile to my face, as does giving out food or finding emergency housing for someone at St. Vincent's! But this would not be as satisfying without the first two elements: friendship and spirituality.

In short, my message to you is this: Give and serve. Do it in the name of God. Build friendships!

May God bless you in doing what you are called to do.

If you would like to volunteer, please *contact us* on our website (jrwatsonfoundation.org).

Watson Board: Amy Dwyer—Board President, Anne Hamilton—Vice President, Ruth Sawyers—Secretary/Treasurer, Debbie Bucksteigel—Trustee, Richard Espinoza—Trustee, Carol Kemerer—Trustee, Bill Ruger—Trustee, Beth Polzin—Trustee, Paul Schmidt—Trustee, Don Popielarz emeritus



Jean Seman: A Legacy of Service

Excerpt from Obituary:

Jean Seman (1939-2022) was a loving wife, mother, grandmother, sister, and friend. Jean retired from the Diocese of Saginaw. She was a member of St. Dominic Parish, where she served as Eucharistic Minister, lector, presiding minister for funeral liturgies and prayer services, helped in the *Catechesis of the Good Shepherd* program, and served as president of the altar society. She was a member of the League of Catholic Women, and served on the board of the AAI/PASC (Pregnancy Assistance). Jean was a member of the John W. and Rose Watson Foundation Board from 1982 to 2016. Jean was an active member and past president of the Serra Club and was chairperson of the Emmaus House Board.

For full obituary, see

<https://memorials.snowfuneralhome.net/emma-jean-seman/5030979/index.php>

Remembering Jean by Bill Ruger, Trustee and beloved brother of Jean:

Jean Seman was supportive, prayerful, and a loyal friend to all. She gave from her heart, even when she had little monetary wealth. She donated her time, sacrificed so her children would have a Catholic education, and fell in love with the works of the Catholic church. She was a great friend of Rose Watson, serving as secretary and board member of the Watson Foundation and president of the Emmaus House of Saginaw. She was very worthily elected to the Saginaw Catholic School Hall of Fame.

Jean always said to do unto others and you will reap the rewards. She is now reaping those wonderful rewards. Thank you, Jean, for all of your dedication and spirituality that you brought to the Watson Foundation.

A Banquet to Celebrate

by Beth Polzin, Trustee



After a short hiatus due to COVID restrictions, it was great to get together again in person for this year's scholarship banquet. We heard about how important family and education were to John and Rose. It was a special evening spent with the "Watson Kids." We also had the honor of hosting Bishop Gruss. Bishop Gruss shared about his life journey to becoming a priest and his summer experience of leading a pilgrimage. He was also kind enough to provide the blessing before dinner, and appreciated learning more about the Watson Foundation and the many lives it has impacted over the years.

This year's speaker was Maggie Dwan, a 2017 graduate of Nouvel Catholic Central and former Watson scholarship recipient. Maggie has since completed both undergraduate and graduate degrees, and currently works for the Bay Area Community Foundation. She gave a heartfelt speech about the importance of "standing in the gap." Her message of being present to offer kindness and generosity to make life easier for others reflected core values of John and Rose Watson.

Following tradition, this year's scholarship recipients shared life updates during roll call. As always, it was fun to hear about the adventures the students have had this summer. Their experiences ranged from trips out of state, to concerts, to skydiving, and most popularly, spending time with their families. Many of the recipients have also been working hard with summer classes and jobs. The career fields are diverse and exciting including biomedical engineering, entrepreneurship, manufacturing, and broadcasting. Listening to the "Watson Kids" share was one of Rose's favorite parts of these dinners, and this year's roll call did not disappoint.

The scholarship banquet was a rewarding experience, not only for the recipients, but also for the board and committee members who review the applications.

Graduate Corner by Ruth Sawyers, Secretary/Treasurer

Graduate interviews every June allow the Board a glimpse into the incredibly challenging world of our Watson undergrad graduates. As a part of the process to receive a graduate school award, scholars share their accomplishments and future goals in an in-person interview. Getting advice from scholars already committed to grad school might motivate others of you considering continuing your coursework beyond your BA/BS to apply. Their posts below demonstrate their passion, commitment, inquisitiveness and research based experiences motivating them to continue their education and take on the challenges their chosen fields entail. Some reflections:

"Most things worth doing are difficult. This common saying can be applied to the majority of academic situations. To many, this saying may be cliché or even intimidating. I imagine most students are burned out from education after completion of an undergraduate degree, I know I was. However, a shift in perspective can completely change the outlook on academia. Education is often thought of as a chore, hoops that must be jumped through to obtain that ever important piece of paper. Key to changing this attitude is first to find something you are thoroughly passionate about. Our lives are too short to spend precious time on things you are not passionate about. When passion is present, work that goes into the pursuit of knowledge, a pursuit of excellence, becomes less work and more of a privilege. When the hours spent reading are no longer thought of as studying but simply time spent gathering understanding on endeavors you wish to pursue for the rest of your life, the things that originally seemed difficult become much easier."

~Robi Stuart



"Continually learning and growing academically has been the most significant positive trend in my life. I have truly enjoyed my eclectic research journey but pursuing graduate school is not only something that comes from nourishing the brain, but something that comes from nourishing heart and soul too."

Take care of all aspects of yourself as you embark on this journey of learning. Discovering novel questions and pursuing new ideas can be a great high but can also be incredibly frustrating. Your passion, tenacity, and resilience can carry you through the roller coaster of higher education; remember why you started this journey. Your mental health will be tested; take that walk and recenter. Mistakes or dead-end lines of inquiry are bound to happen; accept that this is okay and go talk to a mentor or friend. And finally, remember that graduate school is about finding what we don't know and seeing if there are small answers. We don't know everything and that is why there are so many of us doing research." ~Logan Brissette

"...If I were to offer any advice to anyone who may be contemplating going to graduate school, I would suggest searching various programs across various schools. Do not be afraid to explore avenues that are not the same as the path you pursued in your undergraduate. As someone who has an undergraduate degree in psychology and criminal justice, I have chosen to pursue a graduate degree in social work. While my undergraduate and graduate degrees differ in subject, I chose a graduate program that I believe will offer the greatest knowledge and experience pertaining to my career goals. Furthermore, different schools have different kinds of programs, and some may speak more to a student than another. Every school offers their own unique set of concepts and focuses within their programs. It is important to know all the different options you have available to you so that you can make the best decision for you!" ~Delaney Reid

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"...I have taught at the elementary level for four years now and have thoroughly enjoyed building relationships with my students and watching them grow. Through this graduate degree...I can move into an administrative role and impact a greater number of students than just those in my classroom.

My words of wisdom to others would be to go after what you're passionate about today, not tomorrow. Life is about making the most out of the opportunities that you are given. Put yourself out there and try new things. Within the past year, I have moved away from home, accepted a new job, bought my first house, and started my Master's.

Now, I am not recommending that you need to do all of that within the same timeframe! But what I am saying is I didn't put limitations on what I could accomplish because I knew all these tasks were things I was passionate about and I trusted in God to lead me in the right direction. Our life journey is something that we can not predict and it can be frustrating not knowing what tomorrow is going to bring. So take that first step today to figure out what you are most passionate about and continue to make steps towards that ultimate goal every single day. Your ultimate goal may change and that is okay. But as long as you put yourself out there and try your best, the journey that God has planned for you will present itself." ~Justin Neyer

If you decide to pursue a graduate degree after receiving the Watson Scholarship for your undergrad degree, and need financial assistance, refer to the Watson website to find the application which is due May 31. Send us your letter of acceptance to the grad program along with requesting the registrar to send your undergrad transcript showing your undergrad degree completion. If you qualify, interviews are scheduled for the third Monday in June. You may decide to continue to attend grad school right after graduation or after spending some time working in your field. There is no limit on the time frame for you to apply.

The graduate committee looks forward to hearing from you!

Application Renewal Process by Anne Hamilton, Vice President

Reminders of the renewal process:

1. You are eligible to receive a total of 4 years of undergraduate studies if you meet the requirements of 24 credits passed per year and a 2.0 GPA.
2. From the menu, choose the *Applicant Sign-In*, then *Re-Application*. You will notice that there have been changes made to the reapplication this year. You will need to carefully check and update your profile (including address, phone and email). This allows us to have your most current contact information if we need to reach you for any questions or problems.
3. The password for this year is **Reapp2023**.
4. The **Reapp must be completed by May 31st** each year, with no exceptions. The website automatically will be closed at midnight on that date.
5. Transcripts for the undergrads **must be sent by mail, (NOT registered, as no one is there to sign for it)** to our office as directed in the instructions. We only accept transcripts mailed directly from your university. Transcripts should be sent after you have completed your final semester of the year. They do not have to arrive by May 31st. You *do not* need to contact us to see if they have arrived, as we will not begin to process them until we have received most of them.
6. If you have any other questions, please *contact us* through the website (jrwatsonfoundation.org).

