



GENEROSITY'S TRUE COLORS

**PPG'S MICHAEL MCGARRY '76
INVESTS IN THE SUCCESS OF OTHERS**

Jesuit alumnus **Michael McGarry '76** thinks about the *Minds & Hearts Enlightened* capital campaign in the same way he thinks about his \$15+ billion global paints, coatings and special materials company, PPG.

"You always have to improve. You always need to be a little better than you were the year before. That's what I expect of myself, that's what I expect of PPG, and that's what I expect of Jesuit."

Since taking over as chairman and CEO of PPG in 2015, McGarry has kept his sights on the future. To him, PPG is about a lot more than just making paint. Innovation drives his company's success, whether in lowering heat retention on coatings for commercial aircraft or improving radar detection on the coatings of self-driving automobiles. McGarry's mission at PPG is to help big companies shape the future, and that type of vision is exactly what drives *Minds & Hearts Enlightened*.

"Jesuit has been around for more than 100 years, and if you want it to be around for another 100 years, you have to invest. You have to make sure you have great facilities, you have great teachers, you have a vision, and you have all the tools you need to be successful. And you cannot do that on a shoe string."

Michael and his wife, Wanda, are all in on *Minds & Hearts Enlightened*. Residing in Pittsburgh, the hometown of Jesuit president Fr. Christopher Fronk, S.J., the two leaders have had much to talk about during Fr. Fronk's home visits. McGarry signed up early to assist with the campaign because he saw an opportunity to lend his support, not only financially, which the McGarrys have done with a generous gift in the President's Division, but with ideas and strategy.

He joined Jesuit's National Advisory Board, and as the early stages of the campaign strategy were being developed, McGarry knew that he was one of many Blue Jays outside

New Orleans who would ensure the campaign's success. He had one major recommendation: "Go big!" Fr. Fronk took the advice to heart. The \$30+ million campaign is the most ambitious project in Jesuit's history, and it is people like the McGarrys who are bringing the vision to reality.

"If Jesuit's mission is to educate men for others, we need to *BE* men for others," McGarry said. "This capital campaign gives us a chance to work for others. I'm not going to benefit from this, but somebody else will. Somebody before me made sure I had an opportunity to be successful. So that's what this is all about."

McGarry's father, a lead geophysicist working for Amoco in the early 1970s, believed that life's success starts with education. He was highly motivated to make sure his children received the best education in New Orleans, so the decision to attend Jesuit was an easy one for Michael and his older brother, Bill.

Michael was the only student matriculating from St. Andrew the Apostle School on the Westbank, and the city bus brought him across the river each day. He remembers playing pinball one block from school at Dagwood's po-boy shop until 90 seconds before the bell rang, then sprinting into homeroom to land in his seat just in time.

In the classroom, **Fr. Roy Schilling '45, S.J.**, made Latin come alive for Michael: "He was always upbeat and always trying to get you to look around the corner." For Fr. Schilling, Latin was about more than just learning how to translate. It was about storytelling and finding the real message. Students like Michael

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discovered what people were thinking, where they were going, and what was happening in the ancient world.

The lessons he learned came both in and out of the classroom. He wanted to maximize opportunities to engage his growth, so he became a wrestler, joined the bowling team, and participated in MCJROTC and the band. Wrestling coach **Sam Harnsongkram** instilled in him a sense of tenacity, being prepared, setting goals, having high expectations, and showing respect, values which stick with him today.

"Jesuit is a place that allowed me to learn, taught me how to grow, and set me in a position on a pathway to success. For me, it's hard to imagine where I'd be without my Jesuit education and the values I learned there. My fellow alumni should never forget their roots. This is the place that helped us become the people we are. It's up to us to make sure that other kids are going to be successful."

Understanding how fortunate he has been to receive such an education compels McGarry to do more for others. This capital campaign is not the only way he makes a difference at Jesuit. He continues to support the Alumni Giving Drive, a program he has supported annually since 1983.

"Every year there's inflation, every year there's something to be fixed, every year there's an opportunity to improve the campus. If you want to be a supporter, you have to be in there all the time."

He also established two Full Education Funds so that others, coming from financially challenged backgrounds, can receive the formation as men of faith and men for



others that prepares them for success and to be leaders for the world.

“Everybody can’t afford to go to Jesuit, so you have to set this up so that everybody has the opportunity. It doesn’t matter where you were born, it doesn’t matter what neighborhood you grew up in.” Growing Jesuit’s endowment so more students can be prepared for success is a major priority for McGarry’s support of *Minds & Hearts Enlightened*. His own scholarship efforts have supported a goal dear to Fr. Fronk’s heart – increasing diversity at Jesuit.

“When I was going to Jesuit, everyone looked virtually the same. You do not get the best education when you do not have a diverse population. You do not get the best ideas if everybody thinks the same way.” Jesuit believes very strongly that diversity is vital to the educational experience, attracting students from more than 50 zip codes in the New Orleans metro area and allocating more than \$1 million this year in financial aid to needy families.

McGarry sees this in business. “If you’re a hammer, everything looks like a nail. So if 50 percent of the world’s population is female and if you think you’re getting the best talent by selecting all males, you’re out of your mind. Half of the best talent happens to be female, and diversity of thought

and diversity of experience fuels innovation and growth.”

This passion for working together is a hallmark of the McGarry household. “My wife and I sit down every year and decide whom we want to support and what kinds of missions we want to sustain. Jesuit has always been the foundation of my success, and I want to make sure other kids have that same opportunity.”

Wanda saw just how important Jesuit was to Michael when the two were married by **Fr. Harry Tompson, S.J.**, in the Chapel of the North American Martyrs on campus. When deciding to continue to support Jesuit together, their motto is clear: “If it’s important to me, it’s important to her. Just like for those causes that she wants to support – if it’s important to her, it’s important to me. We’ve been a team for 38 years, and we set annual giving targets. Just like I set goals for PPG, I set goals for donations, and every year we’re looking to do more and more.”

Working for the same global company for nearly four decades, Michael and Wanda have had the opportunity to live throughout the world, from Lake Charles to Switzerland, Charlotte to Thailand. As an executive, Michael has been able to travel the world, visiting more than 70 countries. Now Pittsburgh is

home, but the ability to experience a variety of cultures up close and personal has given the family a unique viewpoint. They have instilled in their two children, Matthew and Christine, who have each lived in international cities as adults, the notion that the world is a great big place. “There are a lot of needs out there in the world. Go out and find them and help people.” Seeing real poverty in so many areas of the world inspires Michael to make life better for others.

It is from this vantage point that support for Jesuit’s *Minds & Hearts Enlightened* capital campaign comes into focus. It is not supporting a cause that will come back to the giver. It is seeing the value in a program of formation that changes lives. It is recognizing that others have paved the way for a youngster from the Westbank to become CEO of one of the world’s largest coatings companies. It is knowing that with the goal of making a difference in the world, investing in Jesuit High School will allow the next generation of leaders to have the character, innovation, and compassion necessary to shape the world’s future.

Every gift makes a difference. The McGarrys are all in. Who else will take up the mantle? ■