



IT'S MAGIC MONDAY: OCTOBER 4, 2021!

This month we honor a Woman of Mercy who is committed to spiritual growth, service to others, and justice in the world. Meet **Jackie Loya-Torres '84**, who says, “My adult life and career have largely been focused on service and social justice issues. I remain a work in progress toward spiritual growth and evolution in my faith as a Catholic woman. I am grateful to my Mercy education for nurturing these traits in me. While my own daughters didn't get the chance to attend Mercy due to living in Kansas City, I feel like I raised them to be Mercy Girls in spirit, with all the Mercy values in mind.”

Name: Jackie Loya-Torres'84

Post Mercy Education:

- B.A., Sociology and Spanish, Rockhurst University, 1988

Personal and Professional Achievements:

I have been married to Patrick Torres for 28 years and we have three amazing daughters, María (23), Sofia (21) and Gabriela (18). We recently became empty nesters, as Gabi left home for her freshman year of college. I have been living in Kansas City since I graduated from college and, these days, only get to Baltimore occasionally. My career has largely been spent in the non-profit administration and philanthropy world; however, almost 7 years ago, it took a very different turn into corporate social responsibility and Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) compliance work for a large financial institution. I enjoy this work a great deal. As a volunteer, I serve on the Board of Directors of Harvesters Community Food Network (our local food bank) and Community Housing of Wyandotte County (an affordable housing organization) and recently finished my tenure on the Board of Trustees at Cristo Rey Kansas City High School, which I loved.

Were there any Mercy faculty members who especially impacted your life? Why?

Yes, **Ms. Amy Gibson**, my adviser and English teacher, was a champion of mine early on. From her, I learned to love poetry and prose. **Ms. Rose Clugh** and **Ms. Joanne Simmons** both had the patience of Job working with me since neither math nor science were ever my strong subjects. Both saw that I had the potential to do well in their classes but that I needed some extra encouragement and attention. I really appreciated that.

Were there any classes you took at Mercy that stand out to you? Why?

The class that most resonated with me then and now was the *Christian Citizenship* class taught by **Ms. Jeanne Blakeslee**. The class was challenging and thought-provoking and I'm pretty sure it was what ignited my interest in non-profit work and on issues of social justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

What is your favorite Mercy memory?

There are so many! Playing basketball was a highlight of my time at Mercy and the friendships I made on the court are cherished, even today. Other great memories include my Ring Day (I still wear my ring every day), Field Days, and mostly, just what seemed to be simpler times, surrounded by friends, in an environment where I felt challenged, encouraged, and loved.