



Maryland, 1995

IT'S MAGIC MONDAY: MARCH 7, 2022!

This month, we honor a Woman of Mercy who says, "Acting with integrity, having conviction in what I do, and being appreciative of what life has afforded me are principles which guide me every day. Paying it forward is also important and something I strive to do." Meet **Rachel Libonati '91**.

Name: Rachel Libonati '91

Post Mercy Education:

- B.A., Economics, Sociology and Anthropology, St. Mary's College of

Personal and Professional Achievements:

I am a Senior Vice President at PJT Partners. Throughout my career I have been open to opportunities which challenge me but also provide personal growth and education. The financial industry has provided me with these opportunities in addition to giving me the occasion to move to New York City and work with many talented individuals. Along my career path, I found my place within Compliance where I help educate and guide young professionals, serve as an advisor to the business, and manage and mitigate risk. It has also allowed me to learn and develop as the business and regulatory environment evolves.

My love of pets has helped shape my personal life. It was through my beloved shepherd, Izzy, that I met my husband. Together, we have committed, in partnership with a rescue, to helping dogs at risk by first fostering them and then working to find their forever home. We have made our home in Rockaway Beach, New York City and have had a menagerie of wonderful dogs, and even a few cats, and their adopters who have come into our lives.

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

Even though I graduated more years ago than I like to acknowledge, the Mercy community had been a constant in my life and that of my sisters, **Genevieve '88** and **Stephanie '92**, as well as my late father who was a former Board of Trustees member. **Sr. Mary Anne Smith, RSM** has provided her support and guidance throughout all these years. Recently, **Mary Beth Lennon '85** has kept us connected to the Mercy community. It has been exciting to see the evolution of the school!

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

Art class with **Mr. Gerardo Gomez** stands out to me due to his understanding, dedication, and guidance. I was not a particularly talented artist, but I aspired to be, and **Mr. Gomez** understood that. Together we found what my skills were, and he inspired me to learn, encouraging me to seek classes outside of school to develop my skills. **Mr. Gomez's** guidance helped me to find what made me happy and to become a better artist. It was with great pride that many years later, I was able to tell him of my first show of sculptures at a gallery in Brooklyn, New York.

What is your favorite Mercy memory?

My favorite Mercy memory involves the college admission process. Once my family and I visited St. Mary's College, I was certain that was the school for me. I applied early decision and was completely devastated that I was not admitted. At that time, it was particularly difficult to get accepted and I believed my only chance was early decision. My adviser, **Sr. Mary Anne**, shared my despair. I am not completely certain what happened next, but I believe there might have been a meeting and some phone calls may or may not have been made to an admissions office. Before I knew it, an acceptance letter was in the mail. The conviction that the faculty and staff had in me and their willingness to extend themselves on my behalf still resonates with me.