

What it Means to be a First-Generation Student

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ALL MASK-FREE GROUP PHOTOS WERE
TAKEN PRIOR TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.



Photo by John Raiola

MESSAGE FROM President Timothy L. Hall

At Mercy College, we aim to forge new pathways for our students, taking into careful consideration that they are trailblazing paths for themselves and, for many of them, their families.

And we position our services to cater to the needs of these students – and those of our first-generation students as they navigate all that the college experience throws at them. Those who are first in their families to make a giant leap toward college bring with them entrenched motivation and hopefulness – qualities I admire in Mercy students and in my wife, Lee, who is also a first-generation college graduate.

So, what does it mean to be a first-generation college student? In this edition of Mercy's Maverick Magazine, we hear from a diverse group of students, alumni and faculty who identify as first-generation and who greatly enrich our campus culture.

For example, we hear from Patricia Anderson '05, M.S. '09, a first-generation student who recalls, "We were all taught to not put limits on our lives." As Victor Petenkemani, assistant professor and associate dean for the School of Business, reflects, being a first-generation college student made him learn to be responsible for his own destiny.

Student athlete Juan Casas Campillo '25, whose parents and grandparents never had the opportunity to go to college, says "For me to be able to go to college and pursue a degree – it's big." For David Wang, M.S. '11, associate professor and chair of Mercy's Department of Mathematics and Computer Sciences and a first-generation student, earning an advanced degree at Mercy was a triumph. Now he pays it forward in his classroom by opening doors for Mercy students who would not otherwise have the chance.

With pride we share these stories, as well as the stories of our entire trailblazing community, to spotlight our values at Mercy, which include leaning into our students' strengths, providing access to a high-quality education, and following through on student success from college to career.

Sincerely,

Tim Hall
President

MAVERICK

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