Mount Aloysius College  
2014 Walker Award Presentation  
Remarks of Tom Foley, President  
April 22, 2014

Good evening and thank you for inviting Michele and me to this dinner. We are grateful for the presence of four members of our Board of Trustees—Board Chair Dan Rullo and his wife Jean; Executive Committee member Ann Benzel; long-time trustee Judge David Klementik and new trustee Jim Lyons.

I am happy to be joined up here tonight by Sisters Helen Marie Burns and Eric Marie Setlock, who accepted last year’s Walker Award on behalf of our fans, our mentors, and our founders from the Sisters of Mercy. Ray Walker was especially happy with that choice, as he has many fond memories of his interactions with Sisters, not just of Mercy, over the years. It was such an appropriate award, and far more than symbolic. All of our student-athletes can tell you about the support they receive from the Sisters, whether it is

• shouted encouragement from the stands (that would be Sister Helen Marie, who I should tell the basketball players is a big fan of defense!!)
• steady encouragement from Sister Eric Marie (about whom one student-athlete recently wrote so eloquently in the school paper) or
• quiet encouragement from ex-athlete sisters themselves like basketball/volleyball/badminton player (all here at the Mount) Sister BJ and former softball all-star Sister Charlene.

The Walker Award is named in honor of Ray and Louise Walker who made a $100K donation so that Mount Aloysius could build its first athletic fields, and who have been friends to the College ever since. The Walkers were truly the very first benefactors of athletics at the Mount.

Ray celebrated his 102nd birthday this year, and I can tell you from recent conversation that he is very annoyed that the PA Department of Transportation is insisting that he take an eye test before re-issuing his driver’s license. Ray is the first three-digit-age holder of a license by the way—the system can’t even compute his age-so technically he is actually 02 years old on his current driver’s license, the same age as his great grandson.

The award named for the Walkers goes tonight to a person who may be the most honored athlete ever to serve on the College’s Board of Trustees—Board Chairman and 10-year trustee Dan Rullo. Dan is in the Pitt Hall of Fame for his college football exploits, having been recruited out of Conemaugh Township High School by just about every major football program in the country. He was a three-sport star in his day, a real throwback from these days—when kids are pressured to pick one sport as young as ten. Dan remains the modest and reserved champion that most truly-excellent retired athletes become. But that is not why we honor Dan tonight.

First, Dan is a real sports fan. Dan has been to a lot of games up here, and he is especially happy to come to the new ACWC, to the baseball, softball and soccer fields (that now actually have rest rooms and stands to sit on—all of that acquired during Dan’s term as Chairman of the Board). We appreciate Dan’s support of sports and student-athletes here, we appreciate that he makes the effort every season to see some games, we appreciate that he is on a first-name basis with those with the most responsibility for athletics here—Ryan and Jane, Kevin and Brianna and with some of our coaches as well. So, Dan is a real Mount Aloysius sports fan.
But far more importantly, Dan is a **real Mount Aloysius fan**. Dan never gets bored when I recite not just your athletic accomplishments, but your GPA’s and your service experiences to him. He really wants to know

- that Jalissa has a 3.94 GPA,
- that Lindsy is a real slacker with a 3.7
- that J.J. in bowling and Joel in tennis have perfect 4.0s
- that the golf team had the highest GPA of all golf teams in the conference
- that volleyball has the highest GPA of our Mount Aloysius NCAA 13 teams,
- that the basketball teams both had 3.14 GPAs this year, and
- that baseball and softball both have 3.2 classroom averages to go along with their eight players currently batting over .300.

Dan loves the Aaron Patrick story—the one where Aaron stands down there in Jerry Jones’ Dallas coliseum next to guys from Ohio State, and Utah and Notre Dame and Penn. Dan is genuinely interested when I tell him that Dylan Link has perfected both his swing and his GPA—and still finds time to coach high school basketball on the side. And he doesn’t even tell me to shut up when I tell him that our men’s and women’s soccer coach has gotten a grand total of two B’s in (so far) 6 years of higher education—a lifetime GPA somewhere north of 3.95. That’s if he can hold on to his 4.0 average through his last class for his Mount Aloysius MBA.

Bottom line is that Dan Rullo loves the Mount Aloysius way—because that was, and is, the Dan Rullo way. Because Dan isn’t just in the sports Hall of Fame down at Pitt, he was an academic all-star too, graduating from Duquesne with his law degree and practicing as one of the top lawyers not just in Somerset or the region but in the entire state—as voted on by his peers.

At the Mount, we are as competitive as the next school—our student athletes want to win on the field of play. But, at Mount Aloysius we also want to achieve in the classroom, the athletic-field-of-life so to speak, and we want our student athletes to be community boosters—good citizens—too. And they are—we practically swept the first-ever community service honors for the conference last year, and our student athletes have never finished lower than third in the Dean’s Cup academic competition.

Dan, we thank you for your example of the kind of student athlete which we aspire to produce at Mount Aloysius. We thank you for your leadership of our Board, which has helped usher in the next generation at Mount Aloysius athletics. And we thank you for your personal interest in the welfare of not just our student-athletes, but of all our students.

So, on behalf of our Athletic Department and all the young men and women who represent us on the field of play, it is my honor to present the 2014 Walker Award to Daniel R. Rullo.