

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Contact Information:

Notre Dame High School  
Brigitte Heiser, Director of Marketing & Communications  
(408) 294-1113 ext 2133  
(408) 710-5467 (cell)  
bheiser@ndsj.org

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## NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL APPOINTS NEW HEAD OF SCHOOL

*Ashley Rae Mathis Succeeds Mary Beth Riley, Who Retires After 37 Years*

**[SAN JOSE, CA, February 22, 2023]** — Notre Dame High School in San Jose, Silicon Valley's oldest and most diverse Catholic school for girls, has named Ashley Rae Mathis as its head of school beginning in July 2023. Her appointment culminates a national search to identify a successor to Mary Beth Riley, who is retiring after 37 years at Notre Dame, including 11 years in the school's top leadership role.

Ashley Rae will join Notre Dame from Ursuline Academy in Dallas, Texas, where she has spent the past four years as a senior administrator and director of admissions and enrollment management at the Catholic, college-preparatory school.

"It's an easy decision to come to Notre Dame," Ashley Rae said. "There's nothing like it. I wanted to make sure, first and foremost, that I could serve them and serve them well. I'm so comfortable thinking that we are mission-aligned."

Said Mary Beth: "When she came to campus, Ashley Rae's warmth and connection to students, faculty and staff were immediate. I felt inspired as she spoke about our students and envisioned the future for them. I know that she will be a passionate, dedicated next leader for our school, and I could not be happier."

A daughter of educators, Ashley Rae identified early in her career a goal of leading a faith-based school community. She was a kindergarten teacher in her hometown of Las Vegas, then served roles in recruiting and enrollment at the University of Nevada-Reno (her alma mater), USC, and the Milken Community School in Los Angeles. Her varied background also includes three years as a recruiting coordinator for international consulting firm Bain & Company.

In addition to her work in enrollment, Ashley Rae has participated in all areas of school administration with an emphasis on faculty hiring, budget management and curriculum design. In 2019, she led the development and launch of the Inclusion and Equity course for 9th- and 11th-graders at Ursuline.

"Ashley Rae brings to the head of school role an impressive array of skills and strengths from both her academic and corporate experience that will enhance Notre Dame's position as the center for women's leadership in Silicon Valley," said Mark Fernandes, chair of Notre Dame High School's Board of Directors. "Her passionate and prayerful style of leadership impressed everyone and is well-suited to our school's needs as we look toward the future."

As part of the interview process, Ashley Rae met with the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, the order that founded the school in 1851. In endorsing Ashley Rae, the Sisters lauded her "ability and willingness to work with a well-established school leadership team that participates in the decision-making processes at the school. She seems to have a clear vision of the educational needs for the 21st century, especially for young women."

For more information, contact: Brigitte Heiser, Director of Marketing & Communications, bheiser@ndsj.org, 408-710-5467 (cell)

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### About Notre Dame High School

Founded in 1851 by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Notre Dame High School San Jose is the oldest private secondary school for young women in the western United States. Located in the heart of downtown, Notre Dame builds on a strong legacy of women's education, providing young women with an exemplary Catholic, college-preparatory education that develops life-long learners, spiritual seekers, justice advocates and community leaders. A Notre Dame education extends well beyond the footprint of our downtown San Jose campus, out into the tenth largest city in the United States and the thriving center of Silicon Valley. Learn more about us at [www.ndsj.org](http://www.ndsj.org)

Notre Dame High School | 596 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street | San Jose, CA 95112