

Susan Dunn, O.P., Ed.D., Class of 1972
2022 Founders Award Honoree

This “nun on the run” is a dynamic and capable leader and a person of great integrity and wisdom. She utilized her skills as a professional, an educator and minister to contribute to advancement of student life for nearly 30 years.

Sr. Susan began her career in education in 1989 as Assistant Director of the Higher Education Opportunity Program at St. Thomas Aquinas College. She was responsible for intake assessment for academically unprepared students and the coordination and implementation of summer orientation programs for new students. In 1998, Sr. Susan moved into the position of Assistant Dean of Student Affairs at St. Thomas Aquinas College where she was responsible for all areas of residence life including judicial incidents, coordination and training of resident assistants, and supervision of Health Services and housing professionals. She also served as director of communications for her religious community and as assistant to the director of a drug rehabilitation agency while at the same time teaching in the religious studies department at St. Thomas Aquinas College.

It was in August of 2001 when Sister Susan took a big leap to South Bend, IN to become Rector of Lyons Hall at the University of Notre Dame where she served in a religious leadership position as pastoral leader of the hall community focusing on holistic student development including mind, body and spiritual student needs.

In 2006, she became Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of Notre Dame. Sister Susan spent 11 years at Notre Dame serving the students with compassion and standing steadfast in times of joy as well as great need. She was awarded the Reverend John Francis Farley, C.S.C., Award for her distinguished service to student life at Notre Dame.

In 2012, Sr. Susan came “back East” to take on the role of Assistant Vice President for Student Life at Siena College in Loudonville, New York. She served as counsel for the Vice President for Student Life regarding the Mission of the College and its relations to all aspects of student life.

In 2016, she took on the role of staff member at Dowling Gardens in Sparkill where she serves senior residents through a ministry of presence, coordinates the weekly activities, supervises the maintenance staff, and collaborates with the Executive Director.

Sister Susan holds a Doctorate in Education from Seton Hall University and advanced degrees in counseling and education from Long Island University and Fordham University, respectively. She earned her bachelor’s degree from St. Thomas Aquinas College in 1972 and has been a member of the Dominican Sisters of Sparkill since 1971.

Sister Susan has served on the St. Thomas Aquinas College Board of Trustees since 2019. She is a member of the Campus Planning Committee and Committee on Trustees.