



2024-25

# ANNUAL REPORT



[info@mlc-na.org](mailto:info@mlc-na.org)



[www.mlcna.org](http://www.mlcna.org)



## OUR MISSION

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The purpose of the Marianist Lay Communities is to inspire people of faith to join in alliance with Mary's mission of bringing Christ to the world through the animation of inclusive, life-giving communities in the Church and world.



When I look at this past year, I see landmark strides in the development of the lay branch of the Marianist Family. For decades we have believed in the strength of our charism, and this year the Fiat Initiative has empowered that vision to become reality.

We are forming new Lay Marianists, animating new communities, and building the structures that will sustain them into the future. What gives me the most hope is that all of this is powered by the generosity of our people: the time, talent, and treasure offered by members, sponsors, guides, and donors who believe in this mission.

We also have greater clarity than ever about who we are. We are Lay Marianists with deep and abiding vocations in service of the church and world. As a community of communities, we are not just loosely connected groups — we are one Marianist Family with a shared charism and mission. That shared clarity is fueling the growth and vitality we now see emerging everywhere.



Rob Brodrick  
National Director



# Fiat Initiative

## We are all missionaries

The Fiat Initiative is more than a program — it is the framework through which MLC-NA is growing into the community we are called to be. Three years ago, over 300 Lay Marianists joined a shared discernment about our challenges and hopes. That listening led to a bold but simple clarity: four goals that together ensure the health and future of the lay branch.

This year, we have begun to live into those goals in real and visible ways. We are animating mission-driven communities, welcoming new Lay Marianists with clear pathways of accompaniment and formation, animating communities at Marianist institutions, and strengthening our capacity to support ministries for the long haul. Each goal is not an isolated project but part of a single story — one in which MLC-NA becomes strong enough to carry the Marianist mission for generations.

Already, the fruit is visible. With the support of our team of new volunteers, professional staff, and amazing donors, a renewed energy is shaping a more vibrant Marianist Family for today and the many years to come.



Learn more at:  
[mlcna.org/fiat](https://mlcna.org/fiat)





# LAY MARIANIST FORMATION



Our new formation program took root this year: forming new Lay Marianists while preparing seven moderators to lead groups both virtually and locally, expanding capacity to nurture faith, community, and mission throughout North America.

## FORMATION MODERATORS

This year MLC-NA trained 7 new formation moderators in our Lay Marianaist Formation Program



Marg van Herk-Paradis  
Canada



Carol LaMont  
Florida



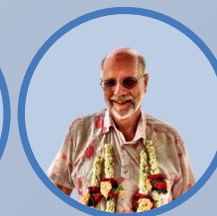
Joesph Nugent  
Texas



Sandy Bellizzi  
Hawaii



Gabby Bibeau  
New York



Bro. Dennis Schmitz  
Hawaii



Roxann Rowe  
New York

# Accompaniment Guides

Jama Badinghaus

Margy Lisjak

Linda Flores-Tober

Joanne McCracken

Eric Rodriguez

Bro. Chicago Schuller

Katy Schunter



This year, we trained seven new accompaniment guides, expanding our capacity to walk with those discerning a vocation within the Marianist Family. Working in cohort with Sarah-Marie Chan of The Accompaniment Project, they gained tools to listen deeply, nurture formation, and strengthen community life—ensuring that every discerner receives personal support in exploring mission, spirituality, and Marianist belonging.



“ —

Discerning a vocation as a Lay Marianist can be an overwhelming experience – there is so much good taking place! An accompaniment guide helps navigate this discernment in an intentional way through conversation, prayer, and listening to the Holy Spirit to discover if the Marianist Family is where they can best live their faith. - Margy Lisjak

— ”

“ —

The Accompaniment Guide training and working group has opened up my eyes to the key principles of walking with people. I have been able to see fresh perspectives of how I accompany them along with the Blessed Virgin Mary at St. John Vianney High School. - Bro. Chicago Schuller

— ”



# Lay Marianist Sponsors

This year, 21 Lay Marianists accompanied new members as sponsors—an experience that proved transformative, enriching the discernment process and renewing the sponsors' own commitment to Marianist life.



“My relation with my sponsor formed a critical role in my decision to continue my development in the MLC. She has become a valued spiritual director in my quest to be closer to Jesus and, especially, to Mary.

- Chris McGinn



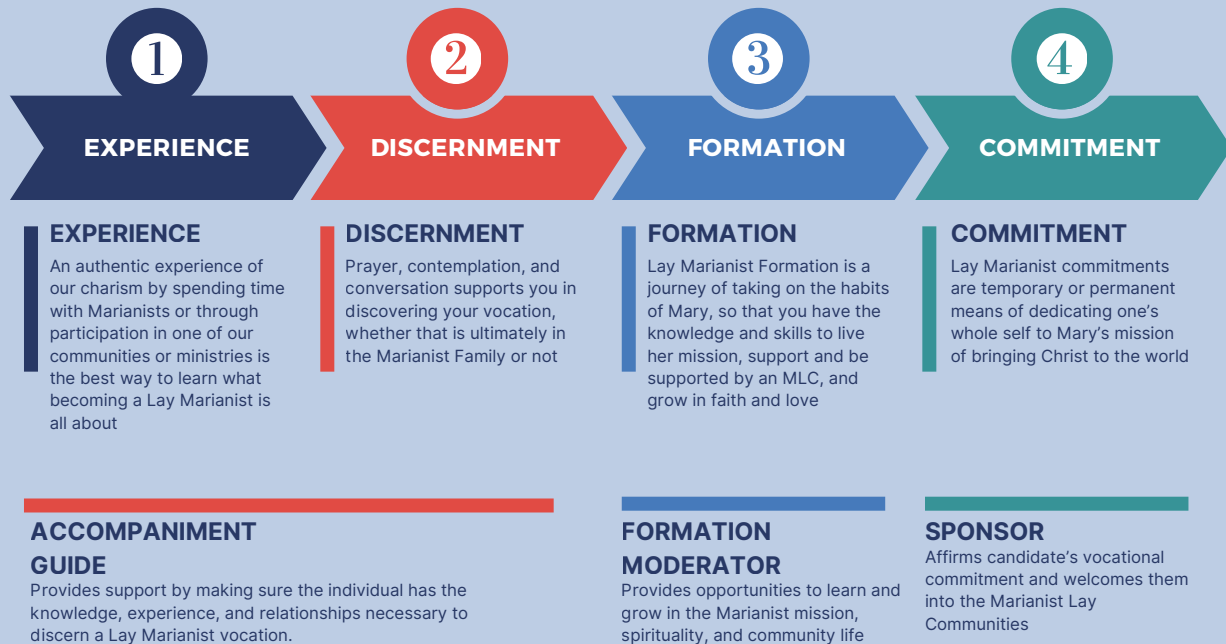
“I truly enjoyed sponsoring Mari and I know she had a lot to offer the Marianist Family. I can't wait to see how her spirituality grows as we walk this faith journey together.”

- Barb Belle





## Becoming a Lay Marianist



## Putting it all together...

Before MLC-NA started the work of the Fiat Initiative, there was no consistent pathway to becoming a Lay Marianist. Many of our current members were fortunate enough to encounter a member of the Marianist Family who invited them in and help them find their way. But unfortunately, many people were left to figure it out by themselves - or worse, simply got left out. Now, thanks to the Fiat Initiative, no one has to go it alone anymore.

Today, when someone starts their journey gaining experience and discerning a Lay Marianist vocation, they are paired with an Accompaniment Guide. Accompaniment Guides meet people where they're at, offering a listening ear and walking with them as they discern how the Marianist charism might fit into their life. Next, if they choose to begin formation, a Formation Moderator takes on the role of teacher and facilitator — guiding the group through prayer, study, and conversation as they prepare for commitment. Finally, each Lay Marianist candidate chooses a Sponsor, who personally welcomes them and officially

recognizes their new commitment to life as a Lay Marianist.

This new system is flexible, allowing us to adapt to each of the different ways in which people enter into our family. It is scalable, allowing our team to support new Lay Marianists in every part of the country. And it is well coordinated, with MLC-NA staff working behind the scenes with each member of the team to make sure they have the training and resources to support our newest members in the warmest and most hospitable way possible.

These formal roles are far from the only way people are supported in their journey. Indeed, our entire Marianist Family plays a large role through our many forms of community, friendship, prayer, discussion, and working together on our common mission. It takes all of us - and together, we are building a future where every new Lay Marianist is welcomed, formed, and sent forth to bring about Mary's mission in the Church and world.



# New Opportunity

## With Mary, We Pray

This October begins "With Mary, We Pray" - a monthly prayer service led by MLC-NA's Care and Prayer Team centered on praying for the intentions of the Marianist Family. All members of the Marianist Family are welcome to submit prayers and attend.

## Pray With Us

To submit prayer intentions or find information to join the service, please visit [mlcna.org/with-mary-we-pray](https://mlcna.org/with-mary-we-pray).





# Membership

33

7

7

New Lay Marianists  
Formed

Formation Moderators  
Trained

Accompaniment  
Guides Trained

During the 2024–25 fiscal year, 33 new Lay Marianists were formed across the MLC-NA. Many of these members joined existing communities, while others helped give rise to new ones. Two new Marianist Lay Communities were created at St. Mary's University—Mis Pequenitos and Servi Domini—while a cohort of four Lay Marianists was formed at the University of Dayton. In Dayton, existing members also gathered to form The Table Flippers, a community for young parents seeking to grow together in faith.

Another new community, Spiritus, emerged from the closure of the Queen of Apostles parish, as members discerned how to carry forward their bonds of faith and commitment to Marianist mission. Spiritus has become a vibrant community in its own right, embodying both continuity and innovation within the Marianist Family. These new communities reflect the vitality of our charism and the ongoing call to form inclusive, life-giving communities of faith.



[Check out this NCR article on the Spiritus Community!](#)

## Active Lay Marianists

There are 803 active Lay Marianists in the US and Canada (15 Canada, 1 Ireland, 787 United States)

## Marianist Lay Communities

There are 64 active MLCs in the United States and Canada. Four MLCs (unlisted) are currently in formation.

### California

- Bay Area Affiliates
- Chaminade Adult Lay Marianists
- Wrightwood Sodality

### Central

- Cana Companions
- Chaminade College Prep MLC
- Growing with Mary at St. Mary's HS
- Harvest Prayer
- Harvest Women
- Magnificat
- Marianist Affiliates Omaha
- Pueblo Marianist Affiliates

### French Canada

- Québec
- Ste-Claire
- St-Henri
- Venez et Voyez

### Hawaii

- Faith of the Heart
- Ohana Kaminaka
- Ohana 'O Malia
- Palolo

### Midwest

- Ahava
- Anawim
- Atomic Marianist Lay Community
- Cleveland MLC
- Embrace
- L'Esperance

### Marynook Lay Marianist Affiliates

- Micah 6:8
- Micah Theotokos
- Misericorde
- Queen of Apostles MLC
- Roots
- Shekan Community
- Spiritus
- Table Flippers
- Well Community

### Northeast

- Hands of Mary
- Hearts On Fire
- Maranatha
- Maria Auxiliadora
- Mary's Yes
- Metro Marianists
- NJ-NYC Metro Community

### Southeast

- Chaminade-Madonna
- El Pilar

### Texas

- Hope Denton
- Magnificat
- Memorare
- Mis Pequenitos
- Nova Bella
- Pillar of Faith
- Servi Domini
- Stella Maris
- Sub Tuum
- The Mantle

### Virtual

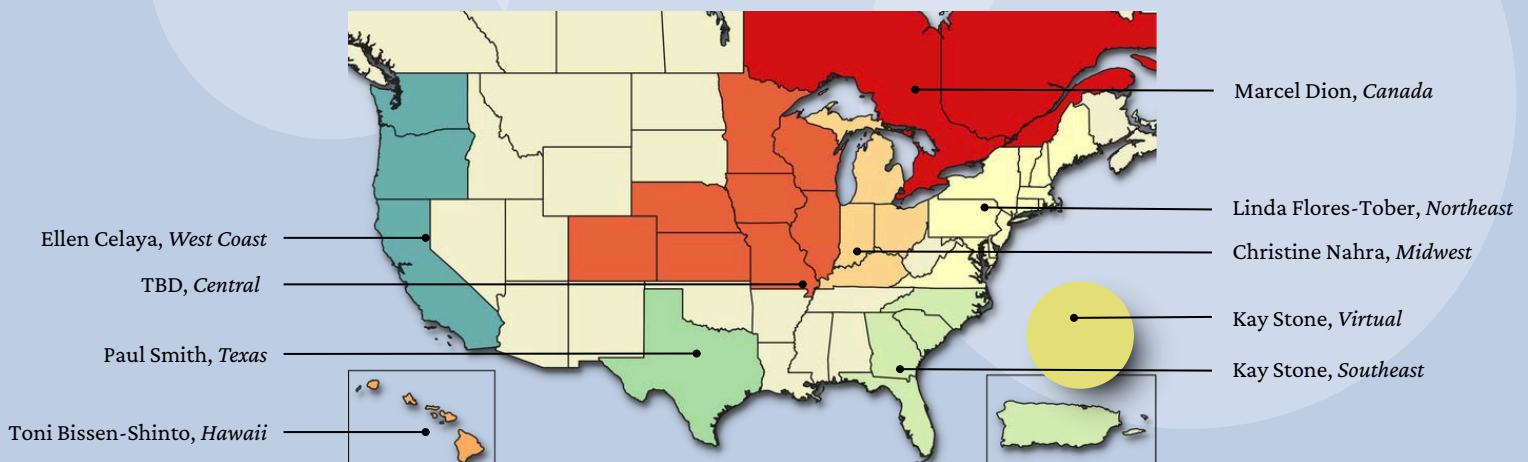
- Embers
- Eudokeo
- Ho'ololi Community
- Morning Star
- Our Lady of the Round Table
- Pillars Community
- Singletons of Saragossa
- Sodality of Our Lady of the Pillar
- Vessels
- Visitation Marianist State Community



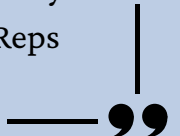
# Area Reps

This year, the role of Area Representatives took an important step forward. Our Leadership Council invited them to join quarterly council meetings, ensuring that the voice of each region is present in the decisions shaping MLC-NA. With this expanded role comes a renewed focus on relationships. Area Reps are now connecting more intentionally with local communities, including annual check-ins to listen, share resources, and accompany MLCs in their mission.

We encourage every Marianist Lay Community to connect with their Area Rep if they have not already. These relationships strengthen our network as a whole and help us continue to grow as a true community of communities.



“Our Area Reps are really looking forward to connecting more closely with Marianist communities in their areas. We want to encourage, affirm, and support our Lay Marianists—you’re an essential part of this Family. As we keep growing together in faith and mission, we’re excited to walk with you, learn from you, and build strong relationships rooted in our shared Marianist spirit. Let’s keep saying “Yes” like Mary and keep our Family strong.” - Ellen Celaya, Leadership Council Responsible for Area Reps



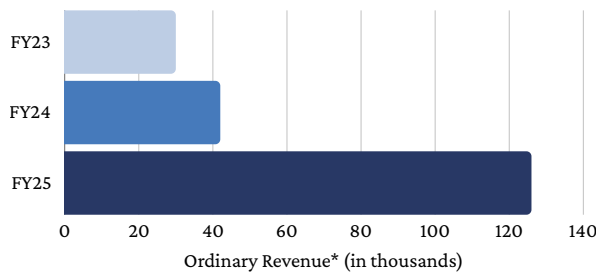
## FINANCIALS

MLC-NA reports finances on a fiscal year from July-June. This report is for Fiscal Year 2024-25 (FY 25).

### IN FY 2025, WE CULTIVATED

**\$126k** in annual revenue

**24** new leadership donors



### A BREAKTHROUGH YEAR

This year marked a breakthrough in our financial growth. With the launch of our Leadership Donors program, more than \$307,000 has already been pledged to the Fiat Initiative. These gifts reflect both confidence in our mission and the shared commitment of Marianists across the country.

The impactful gifts of our Leadership Donors are helping us build a strong foundation for growth, ensuring that MLC-NA has the resources to animate inclusive, life-giving communities for years to come.

## Leadership Donors

### Individuals and Families:

Margaret Cavanaugh  
Ellen and Tom Celaya  
Brent and Michelle Devitt  
Matthew Dunn  
Susan and Dick Ferguson  
Beth and Tony Garascia  
Jacqueline Griswold  
Ann and Bill Hirt  
Ernest Kawamoto  
Kate and Mike Lehner  
Mallory and Dan Lewis  
José Matos-Auffant  
LeeAnn and Brandon Meyer  
Matt and Meghann Naveau

Ashley and Brian Overeem  
Al and Eileen Prendergast  
Kristine Ranciglio  
Jessica and Paul Uhlig  
Jim and Susan Vogt  
Mike Wasno  
Rob Brodrick and Hannah Williamson  
Chip and Jen Williamson  
Nancy and John Woeste

### Supporting Partners and MLCs:

Marianist Family Retreat Center, Cape May  
Society of Mary, Province of the US  
Spiritus MLC  
Visitation Marianist State Community

\*Ordinary Revenue includes all revenue except a generous, one-time capacity building grant by the Society of Mary



## EXPENSES & ASSETS

### IN FY 2025, WE INVESTED

**\$21k** in development consulting, yielding over \$307k in Fiat Initiative pledges

**\$9.6k** in MSJC and the International Organization (including support for African and Asian MLCs)

### SUPPORTED ENTITIES

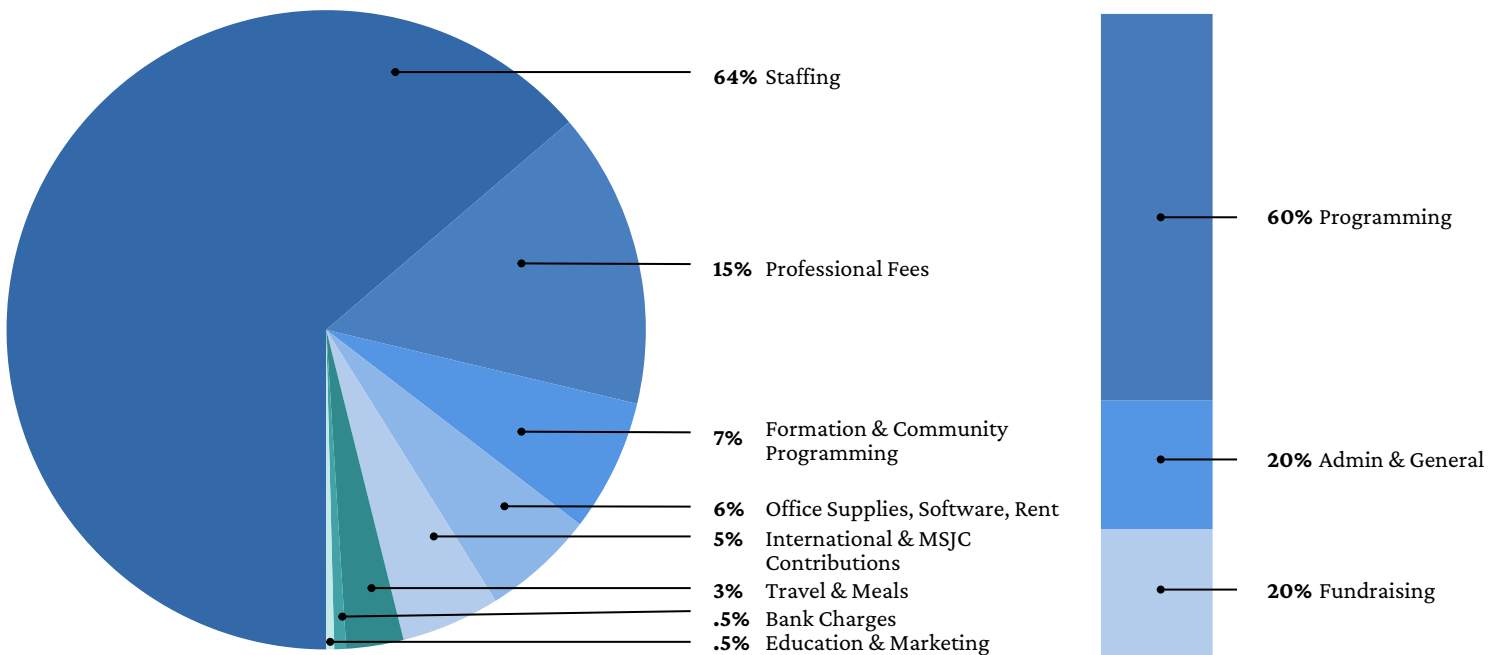
*Supported entities operate under MLC-NA's legal and financial umbrella. Their assets, revenue, and expenses are not included in this report.*

Dayton Marianist Family Council  
Hawaii Marianist Family Council  
IO-MLCs: North America, Ireland, Australia  
Visitation Marianist State Community

### ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH

The generosity of our Leadership Donors is already bearing fruit. Because of their pledges, MLC-NA has been able to expand to two full-time staff and significantly grow our programs. Every dollar entrusted to us is helping strengthen accompaniment, formation, and community support.

These investments are not just expenses—they are the seeds of growth, ensuring that Lay Marianists can thrive and our mission can reach further than ever before.



*Your legacy can sustain the Marianist Family. Consider including MLC-NA in your will or estate plan. If you have already included MLC-NA in your will or estate plan, please let us know so we can properly recognize your commitment.*

# New Hire

Allie Brizzi brings a wealth of experience in both education and leadership. She has built community in and out of the classroom at Purcell Marian High School, and has worked served as the assistant director at Mary Magdalen House, a shower and day center for the homeless in Cincinnati, OH. These experiences now animate her work with MLC-NA.

Already, Allie has helped launch teams of accompaniment guides and formation moderators, and she personally assisted nearly 70 individuals discerning life as Lay Marianists through our spring formation program. Inspired by the Marianist call to animate the grace that already flows in and through people, she especially enjoys connecting with Marianist cultures across the country—a highlight of her work so far.

## ALLIE BRIZZI

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT  
COORDINATOR





FAITH  
MISSION  
MARY  
COMMUNITY  
INCLUSIVITY

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

JOSÉ JULIAN  
MATOS-AUFFANT

With great joy and hope we share with you key developments on the “Fiat Initiative” advancing a clear and cohesive idea: we are lay faithful called to be missionaries of Mary in our immediate surroundings and beyond. Committed to support and animate each community and individuals to live out our mission to the fullest extent possible, the MLCNA Leadership Council adopted the tagline directly from Blessed Chaminade: “We are all missionaries!”

The new accompaniment and formation initiative is already yielding fruits to assist more people to grow in their own calling as lay faithful, sensitive to the movements of the Spirit in their lives. Additional components will be added as we grown. And as with any new stage of growth, continued conversations and discernment among MLCNA members will enhance our collective efforts to live out the spirit of Mary in our midst, within the Marianist Family, and beyond. I truly appreciate your prayers, generosity and encouragement as we continue to walk together in mission: ¡Gracias! Merçi! Thank you!

## LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

José Julian Matos-Auffant, *Chair*  
Susan Ferguson, *Head of Spirituality*  
Paul Combest, *Head of Temporalities*  
Marcela Yerena, *Head of Education*  
Ellen Celaya, *At-Large*  
Stephen Pfau, *At-Large*  
Ashley Overeem, *Secretary*  
Luke Horner, *Treasurer*



# Make a Gift

## By Mail

MLC-NA  
PO Box 19444  
Cincinnati, OH 45219

## Online

Scan code  
or visit  
[mlcna.org](http://mlcna.org)



## Charitable Distribution

Distributions from a retirement or advised fund may be directed using our tax ID

Marianist Lay Community of North America  
EIN: 74-2662040

