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# Public Policy Scholarship

HONORING A LEGACY TO EMPOWER YOUNG WOMEN.



▲ *Lauren Dedinsky Maddox, DSHA '82, presented Hannah Jochman, DSHA '24, with the 2022-23 Public Policy Scholarship at the 2022 Underclasswomen Honors Night.*

**L**auren Dedinsky Maddox, DSHA '82, currently serves as the Senior Policy Advisor at Holland & Knight LLP in Washington, D.C. The firm focuses on public policy, government relations, contracts, municipal law, real estate, finance, and environmental law. Professionally and personally, she exhibits a strong awareness for human concerns and demonstrates leadership in her community and career field.

In 2012, Maddox returned to DSHA to accept the honor of being named the DSHA Alumna of the Year, a distinction given to alumnae whose daily life reflects the Christian values and ideals nurtured at DSHA, while also acting as an inspiration for other women. Prior to arriving, she asked permission to spend the day on campus. She sat in on classes, talked with students, and brainstormed the next edition of *The Word Magazine*. She was so taken with her experience, that by the time she landed back home in Washington, D.C., she knew she wanted to create a scholarship for DSHA students. The Mary Mross Public Policy Scholarship was created just days after her visit.

Currently, the scholarship is awarded to a rising junior or senior who best articulates her position on a designated public policy issue facing her generation. The essays are reviewed blindly by a committee of alumnae and selected on their merit.

## Q & A WITH LAUREN DEDINSKY MADDOX, DSHA '82, FOUNDER OF THE MARY MROSS SCHOLARSHIP

**Q:** Why did you want to start the Mary Mross Scholarship?

**A:** To honor the legacy of a great teacher (Former Social Studies Faculty Mary Mross<sup>†</sup>) who exposed me to the foundations of democracy and American politics. I also wanted to share my passion for public service.

**Q:** The scholarship benefits a rising junior or senior who can articulate her position on a designated public policy issue facing her generation. Why do you believe it is important for students to be able to write and speak cohesively about current issues?

**A:** The ability to write is a powerful skill, regardless of one's career choice. So too, the gift to communicate precisely what it is you want to convey. In order to do that, it's best to understand what you're talking about and that starts with inquiry. Specifically, in politics, among the critical questions to ask are, "What is the issue? What are we debating? What are the facts as we understand them? Who are the decision makers and what are they saying? Who will be impacted and in what ways? What is at stake? Who opposes what solutions and why? Where can we find consensus?" Asking such questions and listening to those with differing views from our own, will help achieve a better policy outcome.

**Q:** You have given back to DSHA and that scholarship for a number of years. Why has it been important to give to the school?

**A:** I believe it's important to lean in and give back—whether to people or places—that are meaningful in one's life. I really loved my time at DSHA and think it is an amazing place dedicated to fostering leadership, fellowship, entrepreneurship, and civic mindfulness. DSHA thematically aligns to other giving I've done to advance women in leadership. My hope in giving to the scholarship, along with my fellow alums, is to encourage young women to engage in issues and ideas, be open to opportunities, to try new things, travel new places, and to celebrate the people and places in life that bring joy. The scholarship is really about an opportunity, a possibility, and something to think about. It's also about sharing one's thoughts and ideas with a group of alumnae who were once where they are. For the scholar recipient, perhaps it plants a seed for a path they may want to walk down one day.

**Q:** What impressed you about the 2022-23 recipient, Hannah Jochman, DSHA '24, and the 2023-24 recipient, Anne Klaus, DSHA '25?

**A:** Jochman's essay impressed the selection committee, in part, because she embedded questions into her essay. No student had done that before, and we found it impressive, as the foundation of good policy development is issue exploration and inquiry. Klaus' essay was equally well done. It was beautifully written, original, and fact-based. We had requested students compare and contrast the speech of Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to Congress in 2022 to another moment in history. Klaus compared Zelenskyy's speech to Winston Churchill's address to Congress during World War II which was nearly 80 years ago. It was a unique and thoughtful parallel.

**Q:** What are you hoping young women get out of their experiences at DSHA?

**A:** Whatever it is they hope to get out of it. Maybe they don't even know in the moment how powerful a teacher, a classmate, or a coach can be. But someday, an experience or a memory will present itself, and they will look back and realize it was instrumental on their journey. It doesn't take much to inspire greatness in someone. Often, it's just a matter of helping them see what was there all along.

**Q:** How did the all-girls environment at DSHA impact you?

**A:** I am a big believer in single-sex education during high school. There is a lot of change and growth happening during those years and there is something valuable in sharing that with individuals who are experiencing similar things. I also believe the single-sex

learning environment empowers young women to explore their own ideas and ways to communicate them more freely.

**Q:** How did DSHA's Catholic Identity impact you?

**A:** Life is full of twists and turns and highs and lows. Having a foundation of faith will absolutely carry you through. It has been the case in my own life when there are simply no answers to the questions I am asking. But I believe I'm not alone on life's journey, and that brings tremendous comfort.

**Q:** What were the most important skills you learned at DSHA that you still use?

**A:** Writing, oral communications, and critical thinking.

**Q:** What about DSHA impresses you today?

**A:** The academic rigor as well as the focus on leadership, physical fitness, mental wellness, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), and the arts.

**Q:** What are your hopes for DSHA in the future?

**A:** That DSHA holds onto the traditions it is known for, which creates wonderful memories across generations, while also innovating with the world around it. Giving students the awareness of where the world is going will help them to not only engage with the change, but to eventually lead it.

**Q:** What was your favorite part of your DSHA experience?

**A:** That's a tough question because it wasn't just one thing. It was about making friends with girls across the city, engaging in extracurricular activities, exposure to career fields, and so much more. ■



▲ *President Katie Konieczny, DSHA '92, and Brian Maddox (son of Lauren Dedinsky Maddox, DSHA '82) presented Anne Klaus, DSHA '25, with the 2023-24 Public Policy Scholarship at the 2023 Underclasswomen Honors Night this spring.*