



## 2022 Walks of Life Honoree

### Cheryl Hagan O'Malley

When entering Ursuline College after graduating from St. Joseph Academy, Cheryl Hagan O'Malley thought her career would be in education. But after her sister Kellie joined Ursuline's nursing program a year later, Cheryl decided that a nursing career might be more interesting.

She is very happy about that decision now.

As vice president and chief transformation officer at Southwest General Health Center in Middleburg Heights, Cheryl supervises nearly a hundred nurses along with nurse practitioners who work in home health, case management, the Seidman Cancer Centre, remote patient monitoring, and diabetes, palliative and hospice care. She and her team of nurses make sure that the hospital's patients can safely transition from one level of care to another, from the hospital to another facility or to home or home care.

After receiving her bachelor's degree from Ursuline College in 1983, Cheryl went on to obtain a master's degree in nursing and holds a doctorate in nursing degree from Chamberlain College of Nursing. She began her career as an intensive care nurse at the former St. John's Hospital in Cleveland; years later, Cheryl would serve as the chief nursing officer of St. John Medical Center in Westlake.

Prior to joining Southwest General, she served in management nursing positions at Lake Health Medical Center, Fairview Hospital, and University Hospitals, in addition to St. John Medical Center in Westlake.

Even with her administrative responsibilities, Cheryl said when she sees other nurses overwhelmed by patient needs, she always takes the time to help out. "Being a nurse is an honor and a privilege," she said, "because when patients are at their worst, it is very, very humbling to be able to care for them. I am very privileged to have an RN after my name."

Cheryl, 63, grew up in Rocky River, one of nine children of William and Mary Catherine Hagan. Three of her sisters are also nurses.

For the last two years she has served on the board of directors at St. Joseph Academy, where she enjoys introducing students to the nursing profession. Cheryl said she believes it is more important to be empathetic and caring, to be able to build relationships with others, than to be the top student in a class. When hiring nurses, she has never asked what GPA they received; rather she asks about how they interact with others.

Cheryl and her husband, Terence, are the parents of sons Matthew and Martin, and daughters Bridgid and Sarah. They have one daughter in law Tiffany, and a granddaughter Allanah Rose. A new little one is expected in June. The family home is in Fairview Park.

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