

Mercy University Appoints Damia Harris-Madden and John A. Chabot to Board of Trustees

Appointments bring extensive expertise in public service, youth and family advocacy, healthcare leadership, and medical innovation to Mercy's governing body.

DOBBS FERRY, NY, UNITED STATES, July 22, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, Mercy University announced the appointment of Dr. DaMia Harris-Madden, M.S. '07, M.B.A. '22, commissioner of the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and Dr. John A. Chabot, chief of Hepatobiliary and Pancreatic Surgery and David V. Habif professor of Surgery at Columbia University Irving Medical Center, to its Board of Trustees. The appointments bring extensive expertise in public service, youth and family advocacy, healthcare leadership and medical innovation to the Mercy's governing body.

"We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Harris-Madden and Dr. Chabot to our Board of Trustees," said Susan L. Parish,

Ph.D., M.S.W., president of Mercy University. "Dr. Harris-Madden and Dr. Chabot are exceptional leaders whose careers have been defined by service, innovation and unwavering commitment to their communities. Their expertise and contributions will greatly enhance our Board's ability to guide the University's strategic direction and continue to fulfill its mission of empowering students to transform their lives and communities."



Mercy University logo



Damia Harris Madden

"Mercy University is a place where opportunity takes root, leaders are developed, and lives are transformed through education," said new Trustee DaMia Harris-Madden. "As a proud alumna, I am honored to serve on the Board of Trustees and look forward to helping steward the university's future, ensuring generations of students continue to have every opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed."

"I am pleased and honored to join the Mercy University Board of Trustees at such a pivotal time for higher education," said new Trustee John A. Chabot. "I look forward to contributing to Mercy's mission of developing the next generation of healthcare professionals, equipping students with the skills and leadership needed to transform healthcare delivery across the New York metropolitan region."

Dr. Harris-Madden serves as Commissioner of the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and is an appointed member of Governor Kathy Hochul's administration. With over 3500 employees and a budget of close to \$8 billion, Dr. Harris-Madden leads the state agency responsible for promoting the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, families, and communities across New York. Her appointment to Mercy University's Board of Trustees represents a homecoming for the distinguished alumna, who earned both a Master of Science in Human Resource Management and a Master of Business Administration from Mercy University.

Under Dr. Harris-Madden's leadership, OCFS is advancing evidence-informed reforms across childcare, child welfare, juvenile justice, and the broad spectrum of human services the agency provides. She has played a key role in implementing Governor Hochul's historic plan to expand access to childcare across New York State while ensuring significant public investments strengthen opportunities for children, families, and communities.

With more than 20 years of executive leadership spanning state government, local government, education, and the nonprofit sector, Dr. Harris-Madden has dedicated her career to improving outcomes for children, youth, and families. Prior to joining Governor Hochul's administration, she held positions within the cabinets of the Westchester County Executive and four mayors in the City of Mount Vernon, NY. Dr. Harris-Madden holds a B.A. in English and African American Studies, a master's degree in business administration, a master's degree in human resources management, a doctorate of education in executive leadership and an honorary doctorate in humane letters.



John Chabot

Dr. Chabot brings decades of surgical excellence and healthcare innovation to the Board. As founder and director of the Pancreas Center at Columbia/NewYork-Presbyterian—established in 2006—he has built one of the world's largest and most effective clinical cancer programs. The Center serves as both a premier treatment facility and a transformative research hub developing new pancreatic cancer therapies.

A surgeon who has performed more than 2,500 complex pancreatic procedures, Dr. Chabot has spent his entire career at Columbia/NewYork-Presbyterian, rising from intern in 1983 to chief of hepato-pancreato-biliary surgery and vice president of ColumbiaDoctors. His contributions to surgical advances have steadily improved outcomes for pancreatic cancer patients.

Dr. Chabot earned his Bachelor of Science in Engineering Science from Tufts University and his Doctor of Medicine from Dartmouth Medical School. He is a member of several prestigious medical organizations, including the American Medical Association and the American Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Association.

Their appointments underscore Mercy's commitment to bringing diverse perspectives and accomplished leaders to its Board of Trustees. Their insights and experiences will support Mercy's mission of academic excellence, innovation and service.

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About Mercy University

Mercy University is an independent, coeducational institution serving more than 9,000 students each year across campuses in Westchester, the Bronx, Manhattan, as well as online. It is a federally designated minority-serving institution and the largest private Hispanic Serving Institution in the state of New York. Mercy offers more than 100 undergraduate and graduate degree programs and certificate programs within six schools: Business, Education, Health and Natural Sciences, Liberal Arts, Nursing and Social and Behavioral Sciences. Mercy was founded in 1950 by the Sisters of Mercy whose mission of transformative education remains strong. For more information, visit www.mercy.edu.

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