



**Charlotte Catholic High School Announces the
2020 Verbesev Award for Excellence in Education
in Memory of Mrs. Tess Verbesev**

Each year at Graduation, Charlotte Catholic High School presents the Verbesev Award for Excellence in Education. This year's award both honors a deserving faculty member, and is a tribute to Tess Verbesev. CCHS mourns the loss of Mrs. Verbesev, who, along with her husband, had been a beloved member of the community for nearly 50 years.

Tess Verbesev served as a guidance counselor for thirteen years at CCHS, during the 1970s and 1980s. Mr. Verbesev became, and remains, a steadfast supporter of Charlotte Catholic.

Originally from Goa on the west coast of India, Mrs. Verbesev earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Bombay, and held graduate degrees from the University of Leuven in Belgium and from UNC-Charlotte. She served as Principal of St. Joseph Senior Cambridge High School in Bombay before coming to North Carolina. At Charlotte Catholic, she was known for her kindness, her wisdom, and her flawless and fashionable attire. Her particular interests were reading and the study of languages and music. Mr. and Mrs. Verbesev were noted patrons of the arts and of many charities, and together they enjoyed traveling the world.

On February 7th of this year, Mrs. Verbesev passed away at the age of 92, with Mr. Verbesev by her side. Upon her passing, Mr. Verbesev received countless messages from her students from all over the world, many from her time as Principal in Bombay, and many from faculty and alumni of Charlotte Catholic. In Mr. Verbesev's words, she was truly loved, because she herself loved others so genuinely.

In 2007, the Verbesevs established the annual Award for Excellence in Education, and Mrs. Verbesev herself wrote the criteria for the award. As a principal, she knew precisely the qualities a teacher must have in order to achieve excellence in education. In her words, the recipient of the Verbesev Award must have a record of contagious enthusiasm for classroom teaching, stimulate extraordinary accomplishments in students according to their abilities, build students' desire to learn, and treat students with dignity and respect. Mrs. Verbesev specified that juniors and seniors would nominate teachers for the award, ensuring that a much-loved teacher would be selected each year. The winning teacher receives a check for \$10,000.

As Charlotte Catholic honors this year's winner of the Verbesev Award for Excellence in Education, the CCHS community also remembers and honors Mrs. Tess d'Andrade Verbesev, whose boundless generosity and tremendous love for the students and teachers of Charlotte Catholic is demonstrated each year by the presentation of this award.

This year's recipient of the Verbesev Award has long been known for her commitment to excellence in education, and, in 2020, she was instrumental behind the scenes as CCHS shifted to distance learning. According to Principal Kurt Telford, "Her extraordinary response to the COVID-19 crisis has brought to light the full extent of her brilliance. She led the faculty at Charlotte Catholic to transition seamlessly to distance learning, implementing new software programs for faculty and students. With patience and kindness, she worked tirelessly to assist anyone in need of help so that teachers could continue to teach and students could continue to learn."

Charlotte Catholic High School is pleased and proud to announce that the 2020 winner of the Verbesey Award for Excellence in Education is Mrs. Beth Acitelli.

“Beth is someone who has always done so much behind the scenes to make everything run more smoothly. She is always sure to ask colleagues what they need when faced with a challenge either personally or professionally, and is someone who anticipates needs even before they arise,” according to faculty member JoAnne Winters. In addition, “she assists students with their technology needs in such a patient and loving manner,” she added.

Beth Acitelli is the Director of School Technology for CCHS, having joined the faculty in 1989. She has a Bachelors of Science in Computer Information Systems from Devry Institute of Technology as well as a certification in Technology Education.

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