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JOURNEY OF ONENESS UPDATE: Communications

Institute Communications Officer appoints two new directors

Institute Communications Officer Cathleen Farrell has named Beth Thompson, communications strategist from South Central, and Debbi Della Porta, communications director of Mid-Atlantic, as Institute director of internal communications and director of external communications, respectively. They will assume their new jobs effective July 1, 2020, when communications will transition to a single Institute function.

In their new roles, the directors will each oversee a team of Institute communicators tasked with content creation and audience engagement.

Beth joined Mercy in 2014, bringing with her years of experience in the newsroom and the classroom, as reporter, writer, editor and educator. “We have an amazing, multi-talented group of communications professionals across the Institute,” said Beth. “In this new role, I look forward to working with them and with Cathleen to develop new approaches to reach our internal audiences—sisters, associates, companions, volunteers and co-workers—and share information and inspiring stories of Mercy even more effectively.” Beth is a native of Clemson, South Carolina, and holds a bachelor’s in liberal arts from Clemson University and a master’s in journalism from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She has a daughter, Lee. Beth is an avid reader and has set a goal to visit the country’s national parks in alphabetical order, starting with Acadia in Maine.

Debbi has been communications director for the Sisters of Mercy, Mid-Atlantic, since 2005 and has more than three decades of experience in public relations and communications for nonprofit organizations. “My hope in this role is to collaborate with the communications team to bring the mission and message of the Sisters of Mercy, their faith-based commitment to improving the lives of people in need and their advocacy work for justice to a larger external audience,” said Debbi.

Debbi lives with her husband, Armand, in Merion, Pennsylvania. They are parents to John Michael (Meaghan) and Aimee (Joe) and the grandparents of Micah. Debbi is a graduate of Indiana University of Pennsylvania and La Salle University, and holds a bachelor’s in journalism and a master’s in communications.
Both directors will report to Institute Communications Officer Cathleen Farrell. Beth will continue to work from Belmont and Debbi from Merion, and as soon as conditions allow, they will visit their colleagues around the Institute.