



Jennifer Rhodes

Milwaukee Lutheran High School Class of 1993
Mount Calvary Lutheran School Class of 1989

How did you choose Milwaukee Lutheran for high school, and what was your favorite part of attending?

My family has a longstanding history of attending Milwaukee Lutheran. I also played basketball in middle school at Mount Calvary, and many of my teammates were going to Milwaukee Lutheran, so I was excited to attend there and keep playing with them. Unfortunately, I didn't get to play with them until later in high school because I got pulled up to varsity my freshman year. Aside from basketball, I loved being in all the extracurricular activities like band, student council, volleyball, track, fashion shows, and so on. In my senior year, I won state in the shot put (*pictured left*).

Milwaukee Lutheran has changed since you graduated in 1993. What excites you about the current direction of the school?

I'm really glad and appreciative that MLHS is still in existence because having a Christian foundation before college is so important. My son attended MLHS, and now, I have a young Christian black man out in the world exercising his faith. Milwaukee Lutheran prepared him for that type of maturity. He made relationships with the teachers there, and those teachers helped shape him into the person he is today.

You've been a board member for the past eight years and are wrapping up your tenure. What has that experience been like?

I always tell other parents that being on the board is a great way to

learn about all that our schools do and offer. At the end of the day, the board wants what's best for every family, to meet them where they're at, and for them to feel welcomed. It's a privilege to have served in that way for eight years.

How did MLHS impact you?

I had really positive relationships with students and staff. Milwaukee Lutheran helped me establish who I was as a person and gave me a strong foundation of Christian principles. I know I'm God's child, and I'll always be able to return to that.

What do you do for work, and how did you get started in that field?

I'm an attorney for the State of Wisconsin, but I refer to myself not as an attorney but as a public servant. I feel like God has used me as a conduit of information, so I've shifted my career path to do public servant work. I started as a social work major in college, then got my graduate degree, concentrating on advocacy for children and families. But I always knew I wanted to go to law school. Looking back, I've come full circle. I started my career doing social work, and now

I advise on policies and laws that impact child welfare. And in all of my jobs, I feel blessed to have been able to give back to the community I came from. I've been able to use the God-given talents I discovered at Milwaukee Lutheran, and they've flourished and blossomed.

Where did your passion for child and family advocacy come from?

It was community-based. I've worked in community centers and homeless shelters, and our kids need support. In my job, I try to be a voice for the community. It's challenging work, but it's also really rewarding. The people I work with all share the same goal of wanting to build better communities.

What is one piece of advice you would like to give to the next generation?

Never compromise your integrity. Another way to say that might be: don't compromise who you are to be someone you aren't. Those who can do that are natural leaders because they're comfortable with themselves and their talents and can lead others to step into their abilities.

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