

Mortar Board

National College Senior Honor Society

Scholars... Chosen for Leadership... United to Serve



MEDIA RELEASE

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MORTAR BOARD PRESENTS ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD TO AWARD-WINNING ACTOR MARION ROSS

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Mortar Board National College Senior Honor Society announced that Marion Ross is the recipient of the 2013 Alumni Achievement Award. This honor was presented to Ross at the Society's national conference, held last month in Atlanta.

The Mortar Board Alumni Achievement Award is conferred annually upon extraordinary Mortar Board alumni who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in their professional lives, representing Mortar Board's commitment to the ideals of scholarship, leadership and service. Honorees serve as remarkable role models and are selected by a group of their peers, who consider contributions at the local, national and international level.

Best known for her 11-year portrayal of Mrs. Cunningham on the hit series *Happy Days*, Ross is an award-winning actress of film, television and theater. She appeared in many movies in the 1950s, such as *Forever Female*, *The Glenn Miller Story*, and *Operation Petticoat*. In 1997, Ross won a Golden Globe nomination for her role as Rosie in the film *The Evening Star* with Shirley MacLaine. Television credits include the acclaimed 1990s TV series, *Brooklyn Bridge*, for which she was twice nominated for an Emmy and twice named Best Comedy Actress of the Year by Viewers for Quality Television. She also played Drew Carey's mother on *The Drew Carey Show*, the feisty matriarch on *The Gilmore Girls* and Sally Field's mother on *Brothers & Sisters*. More recently, Ross has done voiceover work for the popular animated series *Spongebob Squarepants* and *Handy Manny*. Yet her first love is the stage, where she received critical acclaim for her Broadway and national tour with Jean Stapleton in *Arsenic & Old Lace* and the national tour of *Steel Magnolias*.

Originally from Albert Lea, Minn., Ross attended San Diego State, where she was initiated into the Cap & Gown chapter of Mortar Board in 1950 and served as the chapter's president. Voted San Diego State's most outstanding actress in her freshman year, she began her storied acting career after college under contract to Paramount Studios on live TV at CBS in *Life with Father*. In 2001, Ross received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame; and in 2008, she was honored by the renaming and dedication of the Marion Ross Performing Arts Center in her hometown. Ross is an associate artist at the Old Globe Theater in San Diego and last appeared there in the summer of 2010 in *The Last Romance* with her long-time partner, the late Paul Michael. Ross has two children who also work in the entertainment industry, actor/impressionist Jim Meskimen and producer/writer Ellen Plummer.

Mortar Board is the premier national honor society recognizing college seniors for outstanding achievement in scholarship, leadership and service. Since its founding in 1918, more than a quarter of a million members have held the honor of being initiated at 230 chartered chapters across the nation. Mortar Board provides its members with opportunities for continued leadership development, promotes service to colleges and universities and encourages lifelong contributions to the global community. Some notable Mortar Board members include professional football player and philanthropist Drew Brees and former United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Learn more about Mortar Board at www.mortarboard.org.

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