

# Support for Malone family part of IND's fourth straight win over Mercy High in 'The Game'

TOWSON - Cramming eight of her 19 points into a decisive flurry in the opening minutes of the fourth quarter of the 51st installment of "The Game" Jan. 27, Ja'Lyn Armstrong was motivated to lift the Institute of Notre Dame and her Penguin teammates, one in particular.

A 39-26 victory over Mercy High School before an estimated 2,800 at Towson University's SECU Arena meant that IND senior Eilish Gately, a member of the varsity since her freshman year, concluded her participation in the girls' basketball showcase with a rare 4-0 record.

"Honestly, the biggest thing on our minds was to get her to 4-0," said Armstrong, a junior. "I thought of us, having her back."



*From left, Ja'Lyn Armstrong, Eilish Gately and their Institute of Notre Dame teammates celebrate their 39-26 victory over Mercy High School in the 51st installment of "The Game" at Towson University's SECU Arena Jan. 27. (John Strohsacker/Special to the Review)*

Support for another member of the IND family was paramount in the build-up to what is every bit as much a reunion as it is an athletic contest.

Offering the pre-game prayer, Religious Sister of Mercy Mary Anne Smith, director of alumnae engagement for Mercy High, singled out the Malone family by name. Katie Malone, from the IND class of 1994, lost six of her nine children in a Jan. 12 house fire in northeast Baltimore.

Her alma mater has promoted awareness of a number of fundraising initiatives for the Malones, an effort that includes Mercy High, which will donate a portion of the \$16,596 it raised during its Alumnae Giving Challenge (Jan. 13-27) to the family.

"I spoke to Katie (Jan. 26), and she had no idea Mercy High was also helping," said Stephanie Horvath Smith, an IND classmate of Malone's. "I know there's always been a solid rivalry, but we're all still just Catholic schoolgirls at heart. The schools coming together like this, it just adds to the sense of the love the family has felt. It's a great comfort to them."



*Mercy High School freshman Charia Roberts draws a crowd of Institute of Notre Dame defenders in the 51st installment of "The Game" at Towson University's SECU Arena Jan. 27. (John Strohsacker/Special to the Review)*

That support has included President Donald J. Trump, who inquired about the family in a phone conversation with Maryland Congressman Elijah Cummings, whose office staff includes Katie Malone.

Smith's network includes Mary Beth Lennon, president of Mercy High and a fellow alumna of what is now Notre Dame of Maryland University.

"It's our faith, and our sense of sisterhood, that compels us to reach out to the Malone family in this way," Lennon said. "I always say, there can't be a Mercy without IND, and there can't be an IND without Mercy."

IND will celebrate Catholic Schools Week (Jan. 29-Feb. 4) with a Mass Feb. 1. Smith will attend the liturgy, and accept the gift cards - the preferred way to give - and monetary donations that have been collected by IND and the School Sisters of Notre Dame on behalf of the Malone family.

"I'm not surprised that Mercy High is responding in the same way," said Smith, a parishioner of St. Stephen in Bradshaw. "If a Mercy High alum was in trouble, IND would step up. That's the Catholic mission."

"When you're 14, 15, 16, 17 years old, you don't understand the relationships you're building when you go to a Catholic school."



*Institute of Notre Dame junior Ja'Lyn Armstrong dribbles in the open court as she leads the Penguins to a 39-26 victory over Mercy High School in the 51st installment*

*of "The Game" at Towson University's SECU Arena Jan. 27. (John  
Strohsacker/Special to the Review)*

The embrace shared by Armstrong and Gately after IND had secured an epic comeback victory would suggest otherwise.

They are the core of a Penguin team that came in unbeaten in the Interscholastic Athletic Association of Maryland B Conference, where Mercy High remained winless.

The Magic did not convert a field goal in the first 12 minutes, but they to got the free-throw line and the Penguins settled for outside shots, as Mercy High used a 10-0 run to lead 15-10 at the half.

The Magic started two sophomores and two freshman, and got 11 points from ninth-grader Charia Roberts. She had their lone field goal in the fourth quarter, when Armstrong and the Penguins asserted themselves at both ends.

"They played beyond themselves," Mercy High coach Steve Anderson said of his team.

Down 24-22 entering the fourth quarter, IND got a lift from Armstrong, who ratcheted up their momentum with a driving three-point play, a three-pointer from the right wing and a field goal inside.

No one was more relieved than Gately, the only senior on either team, who had six of her eight points down the stretch as IND matched its longest win streak in an event that began in 1967.

A parishioner of St. Pius X in Rodgers Forge, she is the daughter of David Gately, who starred for Mount St. Joseph High and what is now Loyola University Maryland in the 1980s. Eilish is a year-round athlete, also playing field hockey and lacrosse for IND.

"This is the most amazing feeling," Gately said.

She noted that every one of her teammates contributed to the "Penny Wars," one of

IND's traditions linked to "The Game." This year, all of those donations will go toward the Malone family.

*To help the Malone family, [www.gofundme.com/malone-housefire](http://www.gofundme.com/malone-housefire) or the Love for the Malones page on Facebook.*

To view more photos or order prints, visit our Smugmug page [here](#).

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