

Mary Moynihan Underwood

Mary Moynihan Underwood graduated from Mark T. Sheehan High School in 1982. She went on to Juniata College in Huntingdon, PA receiving her degree in social work.

Even as a child Mary distinguished herself receiving her first humanitarian award in fifth grade and volunteering at Gaylord throughout middle school. A three-sport athlete, and a Mark T. Sheehan Hall of Famer, Mary was voted Outstanding Female Athlete and broke five school records in track and field at Sheehan. She continued athletics in college, again breaking a school record for shotput, a record that stood for over 15 years. After two years of college athletics, however, Mary's focus began to shift. Serving others became her true passion as evidenced by her volunteer work during college with Big Brothers/Big Sisters and by her chosen career path of social work.

After college Ms. Underwood became a social worker at Masonicare working in one of the first specialized programs in the state. Her career advanced as she rose first to the position of Dementia Care Program director for National Healthcare Associates, next to the Executive Directorship for Arden Courts, an all-memory care assisted living facility, and then to Regional Director of memory care services for Benchmark assisted living. Her path of leadership continued as she became Vice President of Memory Care Services for Maplewood and Artis Senior Living. In 2024, Mary started own consulting company, Empowermentia. Her expertise and first-hand experiences working in memory care led her to publish her first book, *The Heart Remembers: Touching Lessons from the Dementia Journey*, in April 2025.

Mary Moynihan Underwood's commitment to quality care has been recognized repeatedly through her receipt of numerous awards including two Caregiver of the Year Awards from the Alzheimer's Association, two Distinguished Service Awards from the Connecticut Assisted Living Association, and two "Best Practices in Care" awards from the Connecticut Assisted Living Association. Additionally, Mary has been honored with the Cheshire Education Foundation Community Service Award. She has presented at numerous state, regional and national conferences, and is a past board member for the Alzheimer's association, as well as the CALA and Orchard House Adult Day program.

Beyond Mary's career in memory care, she also has volunteered for the Alzheimer's Association for 35 years participating in 33 Walks to End Alzheimer's where she placed in the top 10 fundraisers for 10+ years, was the top fundraiser for 5 years, and placed in the top 100 nationally for 3 years.

There is no doubt that Mary Moynihan Underwood is, indeed, a very distinguished alumna.