

# 2017 S. Emmanuel Renner Award Telzena Coakley '62

*Among* unique elements that enrich the community of the College of Saint Benedict is the extraordinary relationship with the Bahamas. This robust partnership, which has drawn many Bahamian students to Saint Ben's and Saint John's, is largely attributable to Telzena Coakley '62. Telzena co-founded Saint Ben's Bahamas Extension Program in 1974 and worked tirelessly to foster connections between the Saint Ben's community and both the public and private school educators in the Bahamas. Under Telzena's guidance, the relationship between these communities (climatically disparate but equally warm in spirit) flourished.

Telzena served as a developer, student recruiter, program director and part-time lecturer for Saint Ben's from 1974 to 1990. She majored in mathematics and history at Saint Ben's while S. Emmanuel Renner chaired the department, and Telzena later worked closely with S. Emmanuel while running the extension program. It is fitting that Telzena receive the S. Emmanuel Renner award, which is not given out annually but rather reserved for the college to present to those who have gone above and beyond in well-rounded service to Saint Ben's.

Telzena received the President's Medal in 1979 and 2010. She accepted the college's Lumen Vitae Award in 1992. In 2013, she accepted the Saint Ben's Centennial Circle of Sisters Award on behalf of all Bahamian alums. Through retirement, Telzena's dedication to Saint Ben's lives on. She organized the Saint Ben's centennial gala in the Bahamas, and over the years, she has continued to host Saint Ben's staffers, faculty, presidents and visiting student groups in her home in the Bahamas.