

NEWS RELEASE

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University of Saint Mary Honors Students and Faculty at 2005 Spring Convocation Hooding Ceremony

3:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 3, 2005

(Leavenworth, Kan.)— As the academic year nears its conclusion, the University of Saint Mary will pay tribute to those that made it so special. Along with tributes and success stories, fresh dreams, new hopes and future aspirations are on the docket, as the University of Saint Mary community comes together in recognition of current and graduating students and faculty during the Spring Convocation Honors and Hooding Ceremony. Spring Convocation is open to the public. It will be held in Annunciation Chapel at 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 3.

In their full academic regalia, students and faculty will all be noted for their dedication throughout the school year. Several special awards give Spring Convocation its own unique flair.

The highlight of the ceremony is the “Hooding of the Seniors” – a ceremonial ritual where graduates are donned with cloth hoods to recognize their new degrees. The wider the velvet trim is on the hoods, the higher the degree. Hoods were worn as part of the original graduation dress in 12th and 13th Century Europe. The hooding ritual is unique to Saint Mary; very few colleges and universities have a hooding ceremony for their undergraduates, and in most cases hoods are only awarded to Ph.D. graduates.

“Hooding is a time-honored tradition at Saint Mary that our students truly enjoy, both the graduate candidates, and the under classmen. It’s a celebration of all the hard work by our entire Saint Mary family that went into the education of the Class of 2005,” said Sister Diane Steele, president of University of Saint Mary.

New to this year’s ceremony is the presentation of the Caritas Award. In the spirit of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, the sponsors of Saint Mary, the Caritas Award has been established to honor outstanding contributions in the fields of Catholic education and human services. The recipients are those who earned the respect of peers and leaders while bringing honor and respect to Saint Mary and the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. Saint Mary has only given the Caritas Award on two previous occasions.

Two other prestigious honors will be award at Spring Convocation as well. The Sullivan Award for Teaching Excellence, University Leadership and Service was created in the Spring 1990 to recognize supreme teacher achievement at Saint Mary. Named in honor of the late Sister Mary Louis Sullivan, who served for years at Saint Mary as academic dean, \$1,000 is awarded to a full-time faculty member. Nominated by students, faculty and staff, the Sullivan Award winner is respected as a person who has made a distinct difference in the teaching climate at Saint Mary.

The Mother Mary Ancilla Award is presented to a graduating senior who has demonstrated concern, commitment and Christian humanitarian service for others. The winner is one who demonstrates the same deep concern for the welfare of others that was lived out by Mother Mary Ancilla Spoor. Mother Ancilla served as dean of women at Saint Mary from 1931 to 1944 and later as mother general for the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. Saint Mary students, faculty and staff nominate candidates for the honor. The winner of the Mother Mary Ancilla Award also delivers the invocation prayer that opens Commencement on May 14. Both the Sullivan and Mother Mary Ancilla Award recipients will be announced at Spring Convocation.

Two USM professors from Leavenworth, Dr. Terry Brungardt and Dr. George Steger, who will retire at the end of the academic school year, will also be acknowledged for their many years of service.

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With their retirement, both Steger and Brungardt will be conferred with professor emeritus status, which is bestowed by the Board of Trustees on recommendation of the academic vice president, president and academic affairs committee of the Board. Tenured faculty who have at least 15-years years of full-time distinguished service are considered for the honor.

Chair of the psychology and sociology department, Dr. Brungardt retires after 35 years of service to Saint Mary. As his legacy to Saint Mary, Brungardt established the Dr. Terrance Brungardt Endowed Scholarship, which will be awarded annually to an upper-level student planning to work in the criminal justice field.

Steger, chair of the history and political science department, taught history, political science and global studies for 22 years at Saint Mary following a decorated military career. A retired Colonel and former Battalion Commander, Steger plans to take a little time off in Mexico after the school year.

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